



LINES & LEADERS

Newsletter of the Connecticut Fly Fishermen's Association

Volume 21, No. 8

April 1994

Organized "To Preserve and Promote the Pleasures and Traditions of Fly Fishing and to Conserve Game-Fish Waters."

APRIL MEETING Rainbow Fishing Dr. Carl Sieracki

Carl will present a slide show on fishing for rainbows on both the East and West Coasts, including steelhead. Carl is a well known local photographer, who has published articles in *Fly Fishing Magazine*, including one on the Farmington River.

PLACE: Veteran's Memorial Clubhouse
Sunset Ridge
East Hartford, CT

DATE: Wednesday, April 13, 1994

TIME: Fly Tying - 7:00pm
Program - 7:30pm



CLUB TRIP Cape Cod Fishing 11-12 June 1994 (First weekend filled)

Come and join fellow club members for fishing at the Cape. Here's your chance to fish the Cape's famous kettle ponds or go fishing in the surf. The stripers were lots of fun last year. In the ponds you can find smallmouth bass and rainbow trout.

Lodging will be at The Moorings Lodge in Falmouth Heights for the nights of 6/10 and 11. There is room for 16 people. Since there is limited room, the first 16 to sign up will get reservations. Your cost of \$75.00 per person includes two nights, two breakfasts and one buffet dinner on Saturday. If you would like to stay additional nights it will be \$25.00 extra.

Make your check payable to CFFA in the amount of \$75.00 for each person.

Send to: Gary Steinmiller, 26 Pennwood Lane, Wethersfield, CT 06109.

From the Vest of the President



Finally! At last! They're here! Spring, fishing season, and "The Flyfisher's Companion." Our CFFA book is in stock and shipping. Two years in the making, cast of thousands (or is that thousands of "casts?"), and available for your perusal and purchase.

If you haven't ordered your copy or picked one up at the Civic Center Fishing Show, you can get one (or more) at the April meeting.

A crowd of 60 braved the elements to attend our March meeting. I looked into my files, and I said just about the same thing last year. I like winter, but I hope we set our snow record and get it over with! Our program was presented by HFFA member and FFF N.E. Council president John Bellows. John gave a really nice talk about out of the way fishing spots in and around Yellowstone National Park, and his fall slides were a welcome relief from what was going on outside. John mentioned that he has a friend who lives and works in the park, and he's "forced" to go out there every year for the national FFF conclave. Not a lot of sympathy for you on that one! John is obviously the one to see if you're heading out that way soon, especially if you're willing to do a little hiking away from the crowds.

The Civic Center Fishing Show is underway as I write this, so I don't have any opinion on whether direct management by CMTA has made any difference this year. Several of the clubs were concerned enough about the lack of fly fishing attendees and activities at past shows to consider dropping out. We'll see what you all think at the April meeting.

I mentioned at the March meeting that the DEP has dropped its plans for a fishing stamp, and put in legislation for fee increases, including an increase to \$18 for a fishing license. Next year they will put in for a salt water fishing license as well. The driving force for this is declining federal resources for fisheries and the amount of new revenue that can be raised, especially with salt water licenses.

The main problem here, beyond paying more money, is that we're being forced to give in on fee increases (no money, no hatchery staff, no fish) without getting something else we want from DEP, more CO's and more visible enforcement in the management areas. We need a strong, coordinated voice at DEP and the capitol, one which stresses the revenue and income generated by sports fishing as well as the cost. Someone mentioned at a recent Conntac meeting with DEP that we need a lobbyist. I think they may be right. The present lobbying groups stress firearms and hunting. Maybe the Fish Lobbyist is an idea whose time has come!

Tight Lines,
Larry Johnson



In Memorium - We have received word that Larry Johnson's mother recently passed away. Our sympathies go to Larry and his family. Memorial contributions may be made to Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford, 56 Arbor St., Hartford 06106.

Newington Children's Hospital - Many thanks go to S & M Quiet Sports for their donation to the NCH's Fly Tying Program of vises, fly tying tools, fly tying materials, hooks plus storage bins. Thanks also go to the Orvis Company for their donation of an outstanding collection, in terms of quality and quantity, of dyed grizzly saddles.

New Advertiser - Elsewhere in this issue is an ad from Greycliff Publishing of Helena, MT for CFFA member Gary LaFontaine's and Dale Spartus' audio tape, "Fly Fish the Housatonic." I have this tape and its a reel joy to listen. I frequently (I am almost embarrassed to tell you how many times) listen to the tape when I am on the road during business trips. If anyone has ever fished the Hous you can easily visualize the tape's descriptions. A real relaxer and informative!

Salmon River Stocking - Stocking is scheduled for 8 April at 10:30am. Meeting place is at the Routes 2 and 149 Parking Lot. Arrive 1/2 hour before stocking. If you would like to help call Tom Welch, DEP Conservation officer, 873-1065. Call Kurt Jagielow for live cart. His number is on the back of this issue. Bring your waders and we suggest you bring a PFD.

Ed.

COMING EVENTS

CFFA Board Meeting	6 Apr 94
CFFA Membership Meeting	13 Apr 94
CFFA Fly Fishing School	9, 23 Apr 94
CFFA Board Meeting	4 May 94
FFF - Northeast Council Conclave Hilton, Lake Placid.	9-12 June 94
CFFA Trip, Falmouth, Cape Cod MA	4-5 & 11-12 Jun
CFFA Membership Meeting	11 May 94

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APRIL 1994 SEMINAR AND WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

April 2 - 10am to 1pm
Saltwater fly fishing on foot with Mark Lewchik

April 9
Saltwater fly casting clinic - reservation required.

April 23 - 10am to 1pm
Trolling Techniques for stripers and blues with Marshall Greene

April 30
Orvis Saltwater Fly Fishing School with Lou Tabory
Reservations and Fee Required.

Seminars are free except where noted. Reservations are suggested since seating and parking may be limited. Please call the shop for further details.

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Also available: New York's Beaverkill River

FISHING CONDITIONS HOTLINE NUMBERS



Willimantic River, Farmington River and Connecticut in General	664-3688 (CFFA)
Farmington River	738-7327 (FRAA)
Housatonic River	248-8616 (HFFA)
Housatonic River Flow	824-7861 (NU)

"From A Catskill Diary" by Mike O'Neil The series begins!

May 20 - (drizzle/50 degrees) Opening Up the Cabin

I arrived this afternoon to open up the cabin and found signs of porcupine damage to the porch - great chunks of wood chewed from the edges of the tool shelves. Steel wool, a can of WD40, a clawhammer, trowel and weeder were scattered on the porch floor. I assume porky was clambering up the shelves to get at the cardboard box that houses the steel wool, since that too got chewed, and knocked the rest of the stuff down getting it.

Pete next door told me he was wakened last night by a great clatter coming from his woodpile. His chainsaw (really MY chainsaw, that I lent him last fall) has toppled to the ground. He discovered a porky nibbling away at the tenderest logs atop the pile. Pete said he whacked it a few times with a two-foot length of lead pipe to discourage it and send it on its way. I asked him if hitting the beast with the pipe slowed it down or made it move faster.

"Faster," he said (Yup - right on down to my porch).

May 31, Memorial Day (Rain / 50 degrees) Trout Stocking Day

We stocked the two and a half mile "Fly Fishing Only" stretch of Woodland Brook with 515 fine brown trout in a record-breaking time of well under two hours. The last 15 were released into the big pool in back of Randolla's at around 1:40pm. Speed was prompted, no doubt, by the miserable rain that kept away the usual volunteer gaggle of butterfly admirers, kibitzers, and poetizing nature lovers out for a spring day frolic (trala, trala). Though their company is always pleasant in

certain respects, it slows us down some. The twelve who did show up to help were fly fishermen mostly, and needed little direction on how to handle the trout (handle them as little as possible), and knew what I meant as I gave them general directions on where I wanted the fish placed.

Later in the afternoon Dave and I started driving to Phoenicia to buy necessary supplies (toilet paper, cigars and bourbon being high on the list of priority) when we spotted a tall thin lad in a yellow rain slicker walking down the road near Gillespies' carrying a spinning rod in one hand with a copper lure attached at the top ferrule, jauntily swinging one of the 12" browns we'd stocked - for FLY FISHING ONLY - just an hour before. To add insult to injury, he was carrying this lovely fish on a grubby rotten twig that he'd forcibly punched through the fish's gill vents. I pulled the car over and gave him the "fly fishing only" speech, pointing out our garish yellow and green posted roadside signs that proclaim WARNING - FLY FISHING ONLY. He was a bright and attentive lad, with sincere sparkling eyes, and lied wonderfully well. He told me he'd gotten lost in the woods - he was not good with directions, you see - and so got, essentially, well, lost, and so didn't see the signs. It is axiomatic that these local kids know these mountains and streams like the backs of their own hands, but I didn't question his alibi. What good would it have done? I told him where he could fish legally with his spinner - go downstream below Randolla's or better yet, go down to the Esopus. Or, if he switched over to a fly fishing rig, he was perfectly welcome to fish these waters. He thanked me. What a fine upstanding liar of a lad he was. But at least he made as if to leave the area.

Continued on page 4

A Catskill Diary - continued

No less than twenty-seven yards further down the road, I pulled over to admonish a smartass little poacher in a mud colored poncho who was cutting across Gillespies' lower property and making a beeline straight for the long deep pools old Charlie Brown used to like to fish. The kid clutched a flyrod, but it was rigged for bait, and he was holding a suspicious looking styrofoam container that certainly held worms. I shouted across to him that he wasn't allowed to fish with bait. It slowed him down a little. He shouted back, "Okay, Okay," but continued cutting a swath through the wet underbrush towards the stream. No doubt he was hoping to become "lost" in the forest like the first young fellow.

Now, around the next turn in the road we ran into the ULTIMATE slack-jawed meatfisherman. He was an ill-shaven 17 year old lout, haphazardly carrying a spinning rod. His fishbelly-white gut bulged out at us through the straining buttons of his army surplus camouflage as he trudged along. He was literally dragging his aluminum framed plastic net along the ground. His fishing line also trailed behind him and, skewered on a mammoth snellhook, a single pathetic kernel of corn bounced along the wet macadam (bump-buda-bump-buda-bump-bump). When I stopped him and explained that the land was posted for fly fishing only, he began spouting an ill-conceived litany about "free and public land access" and how he had the right to go any damn place he wanted. "No, this is private land," I pointed out. I also pointed out that the landowner, whom I intended to visit in a minute, was a rabid fly fisherman. He would certainly call the Shandaken Constable to come and explain the legal definition of trespass and its consequences to him and his two buddies in a more forceful way than I just had - that is, if they were still here to attend the constable's lecture.

Well the rain kept raining. Dave and I trucked down to Phoenicia to buy the toilet paper and cigars and booze, and the other stuff we needed, like food (priorities being what they be). And by the time we drove back, the poachers had found some other place to fish. There'll be more of them. There always are.

Wanted

Older vices and fly rods & reels no longer used. To be used by Gary Bogli and his fly fishing club at Timothy Edwards Middle School in South Windsor. This equipment will also be made available to the CFFA. Call Gary at 649-4227

VIDEO TAPE LIBRARY RULES

- 2 tapes per person.
- \$2 per tape per month.
- Return at fly tying classes, board meetings, monthly meetings, etc. - to any Board member.
- \$2 late fee per tape per week.
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Newington Vignettes by Phil Brunquell

We are now well into our second year of fly tying at the Newington Children's Hospital. As the fishing season will soon be here to claim most of our attention, now seems to be a good time to pause and look back at some of our experiences.



Members often ask me why we teach fly tying to children who are unlikely to ever cast a fly to a rising trout. While I am certain that our sessions have spawned a few young fly fishers, a mass conversion is clearly not in the offing. Perhaps the answer lies in some of the fleeting impressions I would like to share with you. The names of the patients have been changed and, when necessary, some of the circumstances have been subtly altered to protect confidentiality. But what follows is the essential truth as far as my memory allows.

Jack Marchessault is tying with Cliff, a youngster who is no stranger to the rough realities of the street. Cliff's arm was broken in a fight. He now wears a cast that extends from the palm of his dominant to above his elbow. He doesn't care about the cast. He wants to tie. Jack shows him how to wrap a chenille body and then offers assistance. But Cliff is fiercely independent. "I'm not disabled," he says, "I can do it." And so he does: by standing up and elevating his shoulders, fingers are able to bring the chenille tightly over the hook shank. "Show me more!" he exclaims.

On the other side of the room is Cynthia. She is eleven, a polite child with a warm smile. She is delicately spiraling hackle over the body of her wooly worm. Although this is her first fly, she is the model of control as the hackle barbs obediently fan out, forming a perfect aureole about the fly. Her parents enter the room. Her father bends down and kisses her lightly on the cheek. Her mother remains upright, visibly trembling with what can only be joy. Our stares break her reverie and she explains. Three weeks ago Cynthia could not have tied flies. A devastating illness charged across her body. In a matter of hours this previously well child was paralyzed from the neck down, too weak to even breathe on her own. She was rushed to an intensive care unit and placed on a mechanical respirator. She could communicate only with her eyes. The inflammation caused by this disease had rendered most of the nerves travelling to her muscles useless. A treatment was given, but there were no guarantees. Cynthia fought back hard. Now, not only free of the respirator, she is walking independently. "To think that she would regain enough

function to do something this fine!" says her mother, pointing to the fly. As if in response, Cynthia finishes off the fly with a series of deft half hitches, pulls back from the table and admires her creation.

Edith and Brad McClure, mother and son, join the volunteers this season. Each is teamed up with a child from the psychiatry ward. Hackle, tinsel and yarn are passed genially, fluidly among the four of them. From the children, there is periodic laughter and surprise as the flies take form. From Edith and Brad, there are smiles and encouragement in return. The children ask if Edith and Brad will come back soon. Yes, says Edith, they will. I look at them, startled at how this shared activity is bridging three generations, binding them together.

Back to Jack. He's discovered that a bag of hooks has mysteriously vanished from the table. He pauses from the tying and looks at Cliff. "I wonder where my hooks went?" he says. Cliff avoids eye contact and mutters, "Dunno". "Gee, I know they were here a minute ago," Jack counters. His gaze does not leave the boy. Although the gaze is not critical, it starts to have its effect. Cliff finds it increasingly difficult to concentrate on his fly. He shifts about nervously in his chair. "Sure wish I could find my hooks," Jack says. Beneath the table, Cliff's left leg begins to do a little dance. Eventually the bag of hooks falls out of this pants leg onto the floor. An embarrassed pause, but Jack does not let on that he's seen. "Oh, here they are!" says Cliff, reaching down. Carefully he places the bag in Jack's hand. "Hey, thanks for finding them," Jack says. "Now let's tie an *Isonychia* nymph".

Adam is eighteen and has spinal muscular atrophy. This disease produces progressive weakness for which there is no cure. He is wheelchair-bound. Most of his large muscle groups have shrunk incredibly over the past several years, but he retains reasonable facility with his fingers. A vise with hook inserted has been clamped in front of him on the table. He attempts to raise his arms and tries to get the tread over the shank of the hook, but he can not. We both stare at the bare hook, puzzled. Then an idea comes. I loosen the set screw on the vise and lower the jaws so that they hover just inches above the surface of the table. Adam tries again. The thread goes over. We both sigh with relief. But now what to do with the bobbin? I incline the jaws slightly toward Adam. The bobbin is now hanging below the surface of the table



Continued on page 6

Newington Vignettes - continued from page 5

where Adam can easily reach it. He completes the fly with minimal assistance.

One of Adam's flies was mounted by George Degen in the shadow box that Roger Plourde built for the hospital. A few weeks after Adam's first efforts, I'm walking down the corridor and notice a cluster of teenagers standing in front of the box. As I near, the group parts, revealing Adam sitting in his wheelchair. "I've brought my friends here," he explains, "to show them what I'm able to do".

Don Rose brings the exquisite vise and tying chest that he built many years ago. The tying tools were used for awhile, only to be put away as other of life's necessities claimed his attention. Then, a few years ago, the spark was reignited. Don took out the chest and started tying again. He joined the CFFA. And now he is tying with Tim, who patiently follows Don's lead on a Marabou streamer. The two work quietly together; hard to believe that they know each other minutes and not years. Tim's mother just got out of work and enters the room. She stares at her son and says, "I can't believe it" over and over, like a mantra to some unseen deity. It turns out that Tim has an unusually severe form of Attention Deficit Disorder. His extreme hyperactivity, distractibility and impulsivity had torn at the fabric of his family. Friends in the neighborhood and at school had long ago forsaken him. Even sitting down to watch T.V. became an unrealistic expectation. To envision him tying a fly would be remoter still. And yet this night he ties six patterns, and wants to tie even more, although the nurse is waiting to take him back to the ward. Tim's mom reaches out and takes Don's hand in both of hers. "Thank you," she says, "you don't know how much you've done". Don smiles and reaches into the tool chest. He extracts some particularly fine pieces of marabou and saddle hackle and gives them to the woman. She holds them, almost reverently, materials used to break through the fortress of her son's symptoms.

The children are now told to return to the ward. As they file out, each carries a plastic box containing their creations. Not all of them, of course, experienced the sudden dawning that came to Tim. But their comments are nonetheless heartening. "When are you coming back?" they say. "Can you come back before I'm discharged?"



When the last child has left to join the others for a bedtime snack, we pull out a cart of edibles and libations of our own. Someone asks Jack to demonstrate his

dubbing technique using a physician's tongue depressor. The volunteers huddle around, munching and drinking as Jack works his magic. George Degen leans over to me and says, "This hospital thing has given me the opportunity to get to know some of the other club members really well". Many heads nod in agreement.

Ultimately the equipment is packed up and the volunteers are leaving. As they exit the main entrance of the hospital, Cynthia's family is standing outside, enjoying the fall evening. The volunteers smile and nod good night. The family does more than acknowledge the greeting.

They cheer.

The fly tying program with CFFA volunteers and Orvis working with Newington Children's Hospital began October 1992 with three volunteers. The program has been well received by the children, NCH staff and the volunteers. This program has now expanded to 31 volunteers. Ed.

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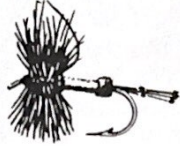
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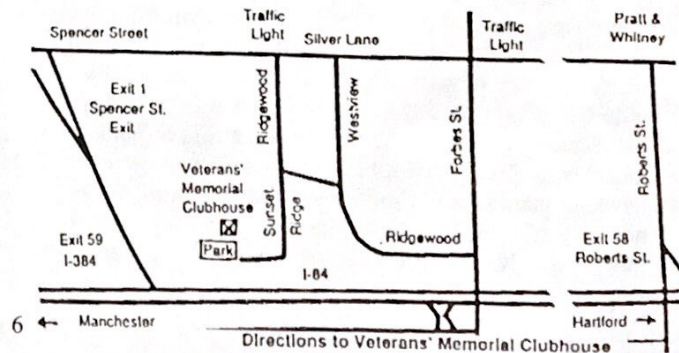
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Call Ray Riley, 289-1225 Ext 3002 (work) or 721-7110 (eves).


Welcome NEW MEMBERS!

The CFFA would like to welcome all new members.

Edward Biske	Melvin Crockett
Gregory Ashford	Kenneth Carpenter
Tom Rogers	Michael Williams
Alan Grann	Colin Metz

You folks are encouraged to participate in all the activities CFFA has to offer. That way CFFA grows and becomes more vibrant. IF you have any questions or suggestions please do not hesitate to approach any of the board members listed on the last page. Your suggestions regarding the **Lines & Leaders** are most welcomed.

Ed.



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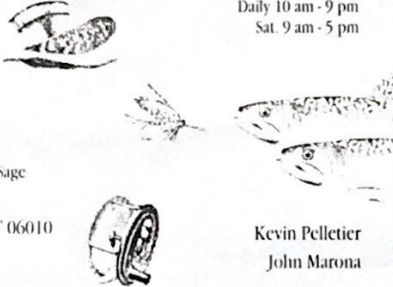
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The Connecticut Fly Fishermen's Association, Inc. is organized "To Preserve and Promote the Pleasures and Tradition of Fly Fishing and to Conserve Game-Fish Waters." CFFA membership meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month, September through May. Meetings are held at the Veterans' Memorial Clubhouse, Sunset Ridge Drive, East Hartford, CT.

"Lines and Leaders" is the official publication of the Connecticut Fly Fishermen's Association, Inc. and is distributed to its membership and allies of conservation. Business card ads may be placed at a cost of \$5 per ad or \$40 for 9 months. CFFA members may place for-sale or want ads of a non-commercial nature without charge. Newsletter correspondence should be sent to Lynn & Mike Stewart, 10 Bradley Brook, North Granby, CT 06060. Change of address notices should be sent to CFFA, P.O. Box 380260, Silver Lane, East Hartford, CT 06138-0268.



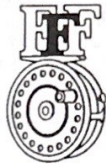
APRIL MEETING: RAINBOW FISHING - DR. CARL SIERACKI - APRIL 13, 1994

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