



# The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild *Gazette*

Volume 25, number 5

September 2022

**The next meeting of the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild is Saturday, September 17, at 1:00 PM. The meeting will be held at the outdoor pavilion of the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum.**

## **President's Message** **By Joe Ceballos**

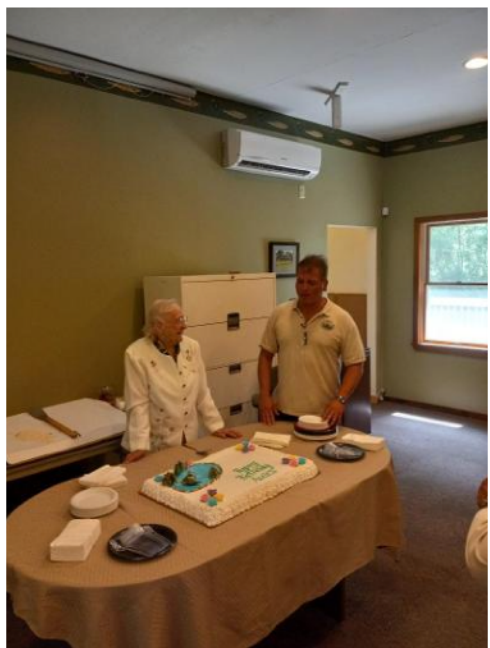
Welcome members to the start of another season. It will soon officially be fall, and that means cooler temperatures and Blue Winged Olives. BWOs are the first and last mayflies to make appearances. So hopefully, if we get some more rain, our freestone rivers will be back, and trout will be willing to take dries.

There are a couple of changes to note regarding the way the guild is doing things. We are using a new email program: Mailchimp. This will give us the ability to email all members at once and be timelier with notices. Our webmaster, John Simonson, is in the final stages of completing what will be a new membership program that will be part of our website. It will make joining and tracking memberships much easier. The guild's website continues to add content, and *Gazettes* from the previous four years are now available there and just a click away from enjoying. Our website could still use more content, so suggestions and submissions are most welcome: send to [catskillflytyersguild@gmail.com](mailto:catskillflytyersguild@gmail.com).

As a heads up, webmaster John is planning to visit us next year from Wisconsin, and I encourage all in the guild to help take very good care of him and make his trip memorable. Consider sharing a day's fishing or two on some of our hallowed waters.

The guild's September meeting will be held outdoors at the pavilion that is located on the grounds of the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum. The date of the meeting is September 17, and the starting time is 1:00 PM. The meeting will focus on the tying and history of spinners. Some of my thoughts regarding spinners are included in the September *Emerger* that was linked in the email notification of the meeting that all guild members received. You can also click the following link to read the September *Emerger*: [The Emerger for the guild's Sept 17 meeting](#).

On September 27, at the CFFCM, there will be a Fly Tyers Roundtable event featuring many well-known Catskill tyers. See the notice and the flyer in this issue of the *Gazette* for more details.



Happy Birthday Agnes! Agnes Van Put celebrating her 106th birthday at the CFFCM. Museum president Anthony Magardino looks on.

The guild will be attending the International Fly Tying Symposium that takes place in November. Although that is still more than two months away, I'd like members who are willing to help staff the guild's table and to tie flies to please make it known, so we can start to plan our activities for the event.



*Meadow Waters-Jones Flat, Painted by Lois Ostapczuk*

## **Meadow Waters – Jones Flat** **By Lois Ostapczuk**

As acknowledged before, many of my paintings are done from photographs that my husband takes while fishing or hiking. Recently, he shared a photo with me of a meadow of wild flowers, captured along the West Branch of the Neversink River in a section known as Jones Flat at Winton. What first caught my eye was the light on the S-shape of the river. I didn't change much, except adding a few more purple flowers to the image, endeavoring to make the foreground a lovely feature of this painting.

View more of Catskill artist Lois Ostapczuk's paintings by visiting:  
<http://catskillwatersart.blogspot.com/2014/02/blog-post.html>

## **The Hare's Ear Challenge** **By Chuck Coronato**

How well do you recognize your own fly tying? A couple of friends told me that they saw one of my flies in a display at the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum. I was not aware that I had a fly

there, so I made a point to stop in and have a look. When I saw the fly (a Hendrickson) with my name on it that was behind the glass in the display, I immediately said out loud, “That’s not my fly.” It was obvious to me that I hadn’t tied that fly. That brief experience got me thinking about whether most fly tyers can recognize their own tying.

I believe that fly tying is as unique as handwriting. We’re all instructed at an early age on how letters are supposed to be formed, but we display our own style when printing or writing in script, and the same is true for techniques learned at the vise. The differences when applying those individual techniques is often subtle and almost imperceptible from tyer to tyer, but the cumulative effect of those small differences produce a fly that is singularly yours.



Pile of the exact materials give to each tyer to keep the flies consistent.

The guild’s Rendezvous presented an opportunity to conduct a little experiment to test the hypothesis that tyers can recognize their own work. The plan was to ask ten guild members to tie the same pattern. The flies would be collected, then presented to the group of tyers, who would each be asked to identify their fly. I wanted to choose a pattern that everyone knew, had prior experience tying, and one that wouldn’t have a lot of fancy parts that would be easily identifiable. The more generic the fly, the more it would indicate that there was something subtle, yet distinctive in the tying that set each fly apart from the others.

A standard Hare’s Ear Nymph became the fly of choice. Producing a Hare’s Ear would be easy peasy for our talented guild members, and because variables such as material choice would have to be controlled in the experimental

design, I provided each tyer with a little packet of identical ingredients to be used that included the hook, tailing material, dubbing, ribbing, and the wing case. I asked everyone to use only black thread, not to use head cement, and to refrain from debarbing the hook. Obviously, the real purpose of the experiment had to be hidden. If a tyer knew that they’d be asked to pick their fly out of a lineup of nymphs, then they would examine their contribution very closely before they turned it in. Knowing the real purpose would’ve defeated the point of the investigation, so the task was named “The Hare’s Ear Challenge,” and everyone was shown a fly to serve as a model, with the stated goal of the challenge being to have each person make their fly look the same as the model fly, and that we’d convene at the end to see if the resulting flies were in fact uniform.

Ten tyers, with experience levels from two to forty-nine years, very kindly agreed to interrupt what they were doing at the Rendezvous and tie a Hare’s Ear. As you would expect of such a skilled group, all of the flies looked like dead ringers for the model that I’d shown them. Upon their collection, each fly was tagged with a randomly assigned two-digit number, so I could match the bug with its creator. When I revealed the true purpose of the activity and asked the group to select their flies, several (generally the more experienced tyers) expressed that they’d definitely be able to pick out their fly. “That’s my fly!” was expressed with confidence by most people in the group. I think it’s interesting to note that Aaron Miller, who has been tying for four years, not only made a fly that he was able to identify as his, but that his fly was incorrectly chosen by two of the most experienced tyers in the group as being the one that

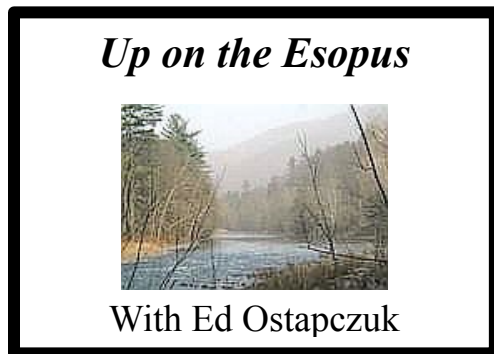
they had made. It was a testament to how closely everyone truly accomplished the stated mission and copied the model.

The end result was that five out of the ten flies were correctly identified. Five out of ten may not be interpreted by some people as significant; after all, you might say, “Isn’t that just a fifty percent, flip-of-the-coin result?” But in fact, it is quite significant, because if the ten flies were drawn from a pile by ten tyers without first inspecting them for differences (just selected randomly), then the expected number of people who got back their fly would be only one out of ten. A success rate of fifty percent, compared to ten percent, is therefore a strong indication that tyers do in fact recognize their own tying, even when the fly pattern is as nondescript as a generic Hare’s Ear Nymph. My untested assumption is that almost every tyer would have identified their fly if the pattern had more features, such as wings, or some choices in the materials used, as was the case when I was able to easily discern that the Hendrickson on display at the museum was not mine.



The pile of Hare’s Ears awaiting judgement.

People posting on social media often display a photo of a fly, sometimes accompanied by a card or some other attempt at establishing provenance, and ask if the fly looks as if it was tied by a famous tyer who supposedly produced it at their vise. Looking for telltale signs of the masters of our sport is certainly fascinating, but it’s also satisfying to remember that we’re all engaged in an art form in which each of us leaves an indelible imprint, and every fly that you tie is in its own way your unique contribution.



## Fran Betters and his Ausable Wulff

A hot, dry last few months have elapsed, which isn’t news to anyone in the northeast. Finding the time and places to fish, or even exercise outdoors, has been challenging. Fishing my normal summer waters has been almost nonexistent, while a treadmill in a cool, darkened family room has provided my daily workouts. To help pass treadmill time, I’ve fished virtually, watching fly-fishing YouTube videos—several featuring the West Branch of the Ausable River. One can’t ponder the Adirondack’s Ausable

without thoughts of Fran Betters, who was one of the most creative fly tyers of his time.

Back in the mid-60s, my college buddies and I made our initial fishing trips to the Ausable’s West Branch. It was big, bold, physically challenging, and unlike anything we Jersey boys had ever soaked flies in before. On those early trips we’d always stop at Betters’ Wilmington fly shop to pick his brain and buy some flies. Since those outings, which have long since passed, several of Betters’ fly patterns still remain mainstays in my fly boxes some sixty years later. One of them is his Ausable Wulff, which rarely lets me down when used under the right conditions.

Lady luck shone down upon me when I acquired a copy of *Fran Betters’ Fly Fishing, Fly Tying and Pattern Guide* in 1986—the year it was published. It has since gone out of print and become a

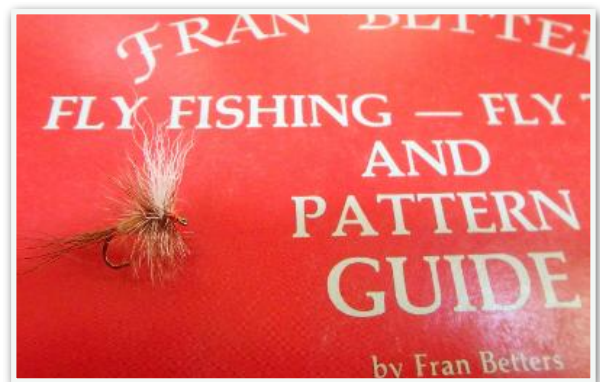
collectible reference. Almost anything one wants to know about Fran Betters' flies can be found within its pages. Regarding his Ausable Wulff, Betters wrote the following:

Most fly tyers like myself tie thousands of different patterns and do much experimenting in their formative years hoping to develop [sic] that one pattern that will outproduce any other pattern that exists. Sometimes a few of us get lucky and with the use of innovative materials and techniques combined with some of the best characteristics of other patterns, we do manage to come up with a pattern that outperforms most other patterns under certain conditions. The Ausable Wulff is such a pattern. Over the past dozen years or more, I've had literally hundreds of letters from happy anglers expressing their belief that it's the most productive dry fly ever developed.

Though I never wrote Fran such a letter myself, I'm fairly sure that I expressed that same sentiment in person to the pattern's creator, as well as any other fly fisher who lent me an ear. Fran went on explaining "the birth of the Ausable Wulff," attributing that event to 1964. He specifically wanted a dry fly with a slightly rusty orange coloration and some red in the head. Plus, it had to float well in heavy currents, and while doing so be highly visible to angler and trout alike. Thus, he decided on a Wulff pattern, creating his Ausable Wulff. Betters then discussed the first time he fished this dry fly, catching several brown trout, the last one measuring twenty-one inches in length. Betters continues that if he had to pick two materials from animals most valuable to a fly tyer, his choices would be deer hair and woodchuck. He loved the barred appearance of woodchuck in the tails of his flies.

From Betters' reference book above, his Ausable Wulff pattern is:

Hook: Mustad 94840 or 9671  
Tail: Woodchuck guard hair  
Wings: White calf tail  
Body: Australian possum dyed rusty orange  
Hackle: Grizzly and brown  
Thread: Hot orange



The author's fly resting on the cover of Fran Betters' book

I also tie my Ausable Wulffs on Mustad 94840 hooks, in sizes 12 to 16. However, it used to be that I'd tie a few size 10s, plus I'd tie this dry fly with or without calf-tail wings, altering the bulky appearance and silhouette. Back in the day, I found that a size 10 Ausable Wulff would fool a few Beaverkill trout locked in on Green Drakes, and smaller, wingless versions of the fly worked okay for me when Cahills and Hendricksons were about on freestone pockets, riffles, and runs. That's all before I started tying Comparaduns—replacing the wingless Ausable Wulffs. Since checking off that box, I now tie only Betters' original, winged versions. That said, I have a few Ausable Wulffs acquired directly from Fran, and their bodies tend to appear more buff in color than orange. Therefore, I've never dyed my Australian possum. Also, I tie my dries using fluorescent white calf tail.

I truly believe that the late Fran Betters' words still ring true today, when he wrote that the Ausable Wulff is a highly effective dry fly. Blue Ribbon Flies—a fly shop in West Yellowstone, Montana—

carries the pattern, and their website notes the following: “This Fran Betters classic is still a highly effective fly all over the country, even many years after its introduction in the Adirondacks. It floats high and is easily visible, which makes it a real fan favorite.”

The Ausable Wulff is one of my “don’t leave home without it” dry flies some sixty years after first being introduced to it.

## A Very Old Sulphur Pattern By Tom Mason

Fishing here in the Catskills lately, the Sulphur hatch has been heavy, but it’s starting to wane. The fish rarely eat the duns. It must be that the duns are too hard to catch. The trout seem to prefer emergers—I thought—but not so! Observing carefully, I noticed many cripples lying in the film with their wings together on one side, like a half-wing spinner.



Stewart’s Number One Winged Spider, tied by Tom Mason

The pattern that I’ve tied here is one that goes back to the 1850s by W.C. Stewart. It is a North Country Fly that comes from his book *The Practical Angler*, published in 1857. Stewart did not name his flies, but this one has become known as Stewart’s Number One Winged Spider. I tie it on a Daiichi size 16 hook that is 2x short and 1x fine, making it roughly equivalent to a size 20. The wing is rolled Starling, in light dun. The body is bright yellow Pearsall’s gossamer silk and waxed. The hackle calls for Landrail, but I substituted an American woodcock under-covert feather, which is an orange ginger. The fly is effective when fished in the film.

After about forty years, another observation I’ve made is that when a fish comes up and follows your fly downstream three feet and then rejects it, it is not to inspect the various components, but to just smell it. I guess mine do not smell that good!

## Pondering Autumn

High summer still reigns over the Catskills. In the last week of August, I was still awaiting relief from a long, breathless summer. Rain has been a continuing promise that never seems to be delivered. It is sunrise as I write these words, and the cherished Beaver Kill trickles along at less than 59 CFS, with a daybreak water temperature of sixty-nine degrees.

### *Casting Catskill Cane*



With Mark Sturtevant

Twice now in the past ten days, on two mornings, I have perceived an early hint of autumn in the air. Rain was promised, but only the barest hint of moisture came upon a cool, freshening breeze. The signs of changing seasons were there: the first glimpses of yellowed leaves on the mountainside and the joy of drifting in my boat down the slow current of the river after a quick, wild burst of freshening wind. I expect an early autumn, and, as much as I love the Catskill summers, I would welcome it heartily.



Low water on the Beaverkill River

It has been a difficult summer for the angler. The tailwaters have sustained us, but they have their limits. Too many anglers and too many boats make it difficult to find the touch of solitude my soul requires, to say nothing of a rising trout to beguile me and draw me into the game. I took to walking in the low rivers, avoiding the reaches that the boaters chose to beat into submission, seeking a few hours alone under the summer sky, with cool water around me—and hope. I celebrated the arrival of August with one such walk.

The morning was bright as I began. Just a few anglers were about, but they quickly hustled into the river to begin casting to nothing, as if a trout might simply appear beneath their flies. I noticed a wink in the distance, walked past these hopefuls and discovered a pair of stealth sippers near a vacant bank. The new sun still glowed at a low angle, illuminating tiny specks of life in their line of drift. I knotted a size 22 Art Flick Olive and sent it out to join the drift. Ah the joy of that low sun, easily tracking my little bit of nothing amid all of nature's minute fare, yet I was too quick when takes came. And so I walked . . .

I took my time, walked the shallowest path, and watched for any subtle signs of life. I found them eventually, where the current began to slow and perform its dance amid the weed beds. That first hour took me back to the Cumberland Valley and the challenge of fishing dry flies over weed beds. The long, down and across casts common on Catskill rivers don't work too well where the weeds animate the

surface currents. Before my little fly could reach the ring of the rise, the weed eddies would do their job on my tippet, and the fly would drag just enough to put down the trout beneath. My kingdom for a George Harvey leader and a short, upstream cast!

I've learned that I have become too set in my ways, too adjusted to big water, for I failed to recognize the need to revert to my old spring-creek methods. I should have given that run a wide berth, crossed the river and waded down, then back up to engage the risers closely, from below. That mistake turned out to be the best move that morning.

A mid-river ring caught the corner of my eye. The trout was above me, not far, so I turned as gently as I could to watch. I noticed a few larger pale summer Olives bobbing along, and then one vanished in another little ring. I had tied a new pattern just for those fellows, and I knotted one in size 18 onto my 6X tippet. My cast might have been twenty feet, certainly no more than that, and I thanked my luck that



The author's Pale Olive Parachute.  
Hook: sizes 18 to 22. Tails: Medium dun barbs. Body: blended silk dubbing. Wing: E.P. Trigger Point Fibers in "baetis." Hackle: Collins golden grizzly.

I had been stationary for some time while frustrating myself with the weed-bed fish. My consternation allowed the unseen mid-river trout to remain undisturbed.

Oh what a time that old brown gave me when I tightened the line! It was running and dodging, while I prayed that it wouldn't bury its face in the weeds. Even average-sized trout will fight hard in good current, and big ones, well they tend to have their way. The stress and excitement was high until I finally managed to slide the net beneath the fish and raise it triumphantly. I never expected such a trout was lying only twenty feet away.

I slipped the Olive from the trout's jaw, dipped the net and straightened the fish out for a

measurement: twenty-five inches and a smidgen more—an amazing wild summer brown!

That Olive hatch was short lived, and by the time I got my heart rate back to normal, the first Sulphur drifted past. Increasing numbers of flies on the water brought small, subtle rise rings that began to appear out in the thread of the current. I had taken my 100-Year Dun design to the limit of diminution during a month of fishing the summer Sulphur hatch, so I immediately selected a size 20 Classic Sulphur, the fly that would complete my banner day.

My nerves got the better of me when the next fish sucked that tiny Sulphur from the surface, and I whisked it right out of its mouth. I settled myself down after that, getting serious about the work before me. While there were trout working out in the main river current, I completely ignored the weed-bed fish. My Sulphur disappeared into another little ring, and I found myself battling another big, agitated brownie, doing my best to preserve the delicate 6X tippet, yet keep the fish out of the weeds and other bankside cover. The trout proved to be a big, bright twenty-incher with a wide head, and I thanked the fish as I slipped it back into the river.

Taker number three proved to be more determined to have a little salad with its mayfly, and my heart nearly stopped when it bulled its way into the weedy run behind me, halfway through our engagement. I worked the rod and changed position, changing angles and maintaining as much pressure as I could, using the current to swing my foe away from each clump of weeds it aimed for. Happily, I



won the battle, hoisting twenty-one inches of Catskill brownie skyward! Another that looked to be that fish's twin battled to within arm's length of the net before the tiny hook pulled free.

My mid-river luck ran out on the last fish to take my Sulphur as the hatch dwindled. It jerked its head hard, an instant before my hand could relax my hook-setting grip on the line, and the fish kept my 100-Year Dun as its badge of victory. I caught my breath, searching for rises to the curtain call of the little yellow duns. I found my last one behind a weed clump in the run.

The water had slowed somewhat since morning, the last of the overnight thermal bank release passing on downstream. Perhaps the reduced current let me get enough drag-free float amid the weeds, or maybe just the shorter, across stream slack-line cast solved the riddle. In any case, I hooked my last trout for the day behind one of those undulating clumps.

The fish was energetic, but it was immediately clear that it wasn't a champion. I netted a fat brown that was several inches shorter than the others, and I smiled, wondering if all of those trout I couldn't catch amid the weeds that morning were members of the junior brigade, hiding out from the big boys that are in the main river. A casual walk along the riverbed had led me to quite a day's fishing, some of the best dry-fly action of the summer.

Things have changed in these last three weeks, and the summer Sulphurs have bid us adieu. The remaining fly life nearly requires a microscope for close examination. I yearn for the coming of autumn, for the gift of gentle, soaking rains to replenish our rivers and brooks, that we might spend quiet afternoons on the Beaverkill before the season ends. Should those signs of early autumn bring ample rainfall, I am all for it!

For the moment, I reflect upon the trials and victories of another Catskill summer, and I am grateful for the hard days, as well as the glowing victorious ones that have blessed my life here. To autumn and season's end!

Mark Sturtevant can be followed on his blog, *Bright Waters Catskills*: <https://brightwatercatskill.art.blog/>



The Classic Sulphur 100-Year Dun.  
Hook: sizes 18 and 20. Tails: medium dun hackle barbs. Abdomen: blended yellow silk dubbing. Thorax: blended light orange silk dubbing. Wing: wood duck flank. Hackle: Golden straw rooster.

## *Looking Back Upstream*



## **The Secret Spot** **By Chuck Coronato**

There are some places to fish that we vow never to share. There's an old hunting joke that includes bringing two cloth sacks when taking a friend to your secret woodcock cover. The first sack goes over your friend's head while riding to and from the spot, and the second one goes over the head of your friend's dog, so the dog can't squeal, either. But we're social creatures, so telling "nobody at all" tends

to get modified to “I’m only telling *you* about this spot,” when you’re dealing with a particularly close friend. It’s the kind of inside information that solidifies special friendships, and knowing that the person that you told didn’t share the secret with anyone else is the yardstick by which anglers measure trust.

Bees are quite different. Honey bees do what is called a Waggle dance to alert other members of their hive to the location of a good source of nectar. Isn’t that nice? Bees are so community minded. People do the opposite sort of thing. In Mark Kurlansky’s *Cod: A Biography of The Fish That Changed The World*, Kurlansky expressed his belief that the Basques of northern Spain were catching cod in the New World, years before the arrival of Columbus, but they kept the discovery a secret, so they’d have the bountiful fishing all to themselves. Nothing has changed. We fly fishers are known to come up with names that deliberately obfuscate the true location of good fishing, so if someone hears me say that the fish were rising at the Lodi Pool or the Paterson Pool, don’t go looking on a map or searching the Internet for those spots.

A short time ago, I visited a river (or maybe it was a pond or a tiny creek) that holds lots of carp, is lined with impenetrable thorn bushes, and the surroundings are full of snakes and hungry bears. I wasn’t there to fish. I’d done poorly everywhere else that day, and I just wanted to check out my secret spot—my ace in the hole that nobody knows—to see if anything was rising. (And when I say “anything,” you know that I’m referring to the aforementioned carp.) I parked, wondering as I always do at this spot if it’s safe to leave my car in such a dicey location. Leaving my rod behind and well covered, I squeezed through the long, tight path, dodging the thorns that have torn a thousand holes in my waders.

As I broke free of the thicket, I was surprised to see an angler stringing up his rod. I wasn’t pleased that someone else knew about this spot, but I wasn’t going to fish, so I chatted with him. He was very friendly. We swapped fishing advice, and I gave him a fly that works for me (Hey, he already knows about the place, so . . . ) His friend who drove with him—making two people besides me who now know about this place—was quieter and more deliberate with his movements as he trailed behind in neoprene waders. We all walked to the water’s edge to have a look. Fish were rising. There was the occasional ring in the water the size of a holiday wreath to tell you that some sizable fish were intercepting bugs. Upstream, I noticed a guy wading the flow and making gentle presentations to several active risers in the subtle ripples of a current break. I realized that I know the upstream guy—he’s a guild member. Several minutes passed before he broke his focus from the fish, giving me the opportunity to wave hello.

The three people with rods were throwing every trick in the book at a slew of rising fish that were doing everything in plain sight except allowing themselves to be caught. There’s a certain camaraderie that you share with other fly fishers when you’re all getting skunked, and those fish were doing their best to make sure that everyone was getting along, with the anglers asking each other where they’re from and all of the other stuff that passes for fishing talk when it’s clear that nobody can figure out how to hook a fish.

Talking with the first guy, it turned out that he’s from my hometown. He lit a cigar and mentioned that his friend who came with him was a teacher. I soon learned that neoprene guy was actually a teacher and football coach at my high school when I was a student. The three of us ran through the list of people that we know in common, and it looked as though the small world of fly fishing had picked this day to converge on my secret spot. Cigar guy then shouted upstream to the guild guy, “Hey, you said that you’re from Maryland? I’ve got a friend in Maryland. Maybe you know him.” This seemed to me to be a ridiculous question. It should be noted that the U.S. Census has Maryland’s current population at more than 6.2 million, so you don’t need to be a math wiz to put the probability of guild guy knowing cigar

guy's friend at 1 in 6,200,000. We're talking jackpot lottery odds here. But guild guy said, "Yeah, I know him." (Damn. Fly fishing *really is* a small world.)

A few minutes later, the thick sticker bushes parted, and out stepped a well-known bamboo rodmaker. He was also just looking. A week later, I was back on the same water—this time to fish—and a former president of a well-known Catskill organization stopped by to have a look.

I'm trying not be discouraged by the sudden popularity of this place, but it's not easy. I'm holding onto the faint hope that everyone with a fly rod will find themselves touched by a wave of fifteenth century Basque-like secrecy. That's probably not going to happen, but I need to believe. And don't go getting the idea of trying to figure out who these people are from my descriptions and asking any of them where this place is. We all drive there wearing a cloth sack over our heads. After all, this is a secret spot.

## Meet Our Local Catskill Guides

### By Ed Walsh

As a young man, Luc Genovesi spent a lot of time at the family cabin on the East Branch of the Delaware River. On their property was a small pond that was stocked with brook trout. He was always intrigued watching family members cast flies to the rising fish. One day, he grabbed one of their fly rods, caught a few fish, and a fly fisher was born.



Luc Genovesi in a serene moment

His Uncle John, a passionate fly fisher himself, took Luc under his wing and taught him the basics of the sport. With homes in the Catskills and near the Croton Watershed in Westchester County, Luc tailed his uncle on many of the small streams in the area and during regular trips back to the family cabin. A willing student, he learned to cast, read water, catch and release fish, and tied some very representative dry flies.

As his experiences grew, and he started to catch fish on a regular basis, he also learned much about the river system: the flow patterns, water temperatures, hatch schedules, and its pools and riffles became second nature. It wasn't long before he was the one sharing the lessons he learned with family and friends who spent time at Camp Genovesi.

Uncle John introduced Luc to Ken Tutalo, owner of the Baxter House Fly Shop and Guide Services in Roscoe. He started spending more and more free time at the cabin and working part time for Ken doing odd jobs and learning the business side of the fly-fishing industry. Ken realized that Luc had a lot to offer and got him involved by guiding half-day wade trips. Clients always gave Luc high praise, which led to more opportunities. Luc loved what he was doing.

After high school, he enrolled in the criminal justice program at Westchester County Community College. His family operated a successful carpentry and home-building business, and Luc worked for them during the off season. Although he was becoming a skilled carpenter with a soon-to-be Associate Degree in Criminal Justice, the call of the river was always in the back of his mind.

When it was time to decide if he should pursue a bachelor's degree, continue with carpentry, or become a full-time Catskill guide, Luc followed his heart and started guiding. When Baxter House reduced its schedule a few years ago, he had already made a name for himself and was offered a position with Cross Current Outfitters in Starlight, Pennsylvania.

Luc now spends most of his time on the West Branch and Main Stem of the Delaware (weather permitting). He has averaged 100 trips per season for the last few years.

I asked who has influenced him most during these early years in the fly-fishing business. Luc is quick to name Ken Tutalo and Joe Demalderis as tutors, but he gives much of the credit for his early involvement in this wonderful sport to Uncle John Genovesi.

I want to add that John Genovesi is a past president of the Croton Watershed TU Chapter, and since his retirement to Rhode Island, has become very active in the Rhode Island 225 Chapter. I've known John for many years and he is a class act.

As with all of the guides that I've interviewed, I asked Luc to share what he says to folks that he guides. Luc's response: "I always tell my clients to take their time, the fish aren't going anywhere. I'll also talk about river conditions and how they might influence fishing. I also want them to realize just how lucky we are and how valuable this resource is to them and the local economy."

One more note of interest: Luc has rather longish hair, and I asked if it becomes a problem with all the small insects he might come in contact with on the water. He said it does, but he told me that he grows his hair long so he can donate it to Locks for Love, which provides hair for kids suffering from cancer. You are a good man, Luc Genovesi.

Luc can be reached at Cross Current Outfitters: [luc@crosscurrentguideservice.com](mailto:luc@crosscurrentguideservice.com), at the office (800) 463-2750 or his cell (845) 519-0530.



## Membership in the guild

It's fun to share, and if you're sharing this issue of the *Gazette* with friends who are not currently members of the guild, please encourage them to join the mission of the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild by becoming members. The cost of dues remains \$20. New memberships and renewals are both accomplished by using the following link: <https://cftg.limitedrun.com/> or by visiting our website at [catskillflytyersguild.org](http://catskillflytyersguild.org).

## Fly Tyers Roundtable

On September 24, area fly tyers will be holding a roundtable event examining the history and tradition of Catskill-style flies. The event will take place from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM, at the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum. Many of the featured tyers include names familiar to members of the guild: Del Mazza, John Shaner, John "Catskill John" Bonasera, Jose Venalanzo, Bruce Concors, Matt Grobert, Tom Mason, and many others. Also at that time, the museum will be selling fly-tying

materials of great quality at very reasonable prices. The event is open to the public for anyone who would like to tie, or you can just attend and observe the skills and instruction of some of the best tyers in the Catskills. Admission to the event is free. Donations to the museum are always welcomed.



**Fly Tyers Roundtable**


WITH CATSKILL FLY FISHING HISTORIANS AND MASTER FLY TYERS

- DEL MAZZA
- DAVE CATIZONE
- TOM MASON
- JOHN SHANER
- "CATSKILL JOHN" BONASERA
- SETH CARRAVETTA

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24**  
11AM - 4PM

**AT THE CATSKILL FLY FISHING CENTER AND MUSEUM**  
OLD ROUTE 17  
LIVINGSTON MANOR, NY

- ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION "HISTORY AND TRADITION OF CATSKILL STYLE FLIES"
- OPEN HOUSE FLY TYING SESSION AND DEMONSTRATION

 This newsletter depends on all guild members for its content. Items from nonmembers are welcome at the editor's discretion. Your articles, cartoons, paintings, photographs, reports of information, and bits of whatever else is interesting and fun are vital to this newsletter. Send submissions to Chuck Coronato, [coronato3@verizon.net](mailto:coronato3@verizon.net) or 412 Highland Avenue, Wyckoff, New Jersey 07481 (201) 723-6230

Note: *CJ's Flies* with "Catskill John" Bonasera will return in the November issue of the Gazette..

