



# The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild *Gazette*

Volume 26, number 3

May 2023

**The next in-person meeting of the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild is scheduled for Saturday, May 27, at 10:00 AM. We'll be meeting at the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum in Livingston Manor. The meeting will also be on Zoom for members who can't be there in person. Links and reminders with program details will be emailed to all members before the date.**

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

Here we are again, the advent of another spring, with the promise and hope of great early fishing. The recent heavy rains put a damper on some plans, but we anglers need to be patient and have the belief that we'll have much time ahead to fish. I hope that everyone is well, and you've had time to tie those special fly patterns that work and make this time of year special.

Our winter fly-tying meetings over Zoom were a success. Given the number of attendees each time, it seems that there was a lot of enthusiasm over the winter to get together (virtually) and tie flies. I'd like to thank guild vice president, John Apgar, for conceiving the idea and for his help in

coordinating the tying evenings, helping with the content, demonstrating the flies, and providing the materials lists. We have a writeup of the sessions later in this issue of the *Gazette*.

Our next in-person meeting will be held at the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum, on the same day (May 27) as their Annual Banquet Dinner at the Rockland House. Our meeting will start at 10:00 AM, and the dinner starts at 5:00 PM. A notice regarding our program for the meeting will be emailed to members as the date draws near. I encourage all of our members to attend the dinner, as it helps the museum, and the legends being inducted are Dave Catizone, Tom Mason, and Bruce Concors.

Also of note, later that day, there will be an Anglers Market at the Roscoe Fire Department's fire house. I encourage all to attend and take a look. Some guild members will be setting up tables with fly-tying items for sale. If you have things that you'd like to sell, it's not too late to secure a table. See the announcements section of this *Gazette* for details.

Wishing tight lines to all, and I hope to see you at the next meeting.



A Bradley Special, tied and photographed by Tom Mason. The Bradley Special is one of the flies that was featured during the guild's winter tying. See the winter tying article on page fourteen of this *Gazette*.

**Lois Marilyn Ostapczuk**  
**February 10, 1948 – March 2, 2023**  
**By Ed Ostapczuk**

My bride of over half-a-century was born to be an artist. It just took some time to realize that dream—one that she carried with her until her passing.

Lois grew up in New Jersey, one of six children of Robert and Doris Koch. In 1970, after we both graduated college and married, we relocated to New York, eventually settling in the Catskills. I stole her from family, inspired by my dream of exploring Cecil Heacox's Charmed Circle; as my life partner, she willingly came along.

Earlier in life, Lois wanted to become an art teacher, but her mother convinced her to pursue a college degree in elementary education. So, after raising our four children, Lois went on to a career teaching first-grade students in New York's public school system. Her passions were family, friends, and helping others—often found assisting at the Daily Bread Soup Kitchen in Woodstock, New York. Once she retired in 2008, Lois remained an active volunteer, while her hobbies evolved into quilting, reading, hiking, and landscape painting.

For the most part, Lois was a self-taught painter, but she took several classes with local artists and became an active member of Olive's Senior Art Class. Initially, she would dabble with acrylics and oils, but later became accomplished using watercolors. Her subject matter was found in plein air adventures, my outdoor photographs, or simply images from her own creative mind. Lois frequently donated pieces she painted to various charitable fundraisers, as helping others was a major part of who she was.

As for her love of reading, Lois often selected books from *The New York Times* Best Seller list, and she frequently chided me on my limited reading scope of fly-fishing-only subjects. Well, one such book Lois read was *Signs*, by Laura Lynne Jackson. She felt so passionately about that book, she made me promise to purchase five copies, one for myself and each of our four adult children. I did, and read my copy as promised, though I'm far from a believer of the book's message. In any event, shortly after her passing, I fished a small Ashokan Reservoir tributary that supports a thin population of little rainbow trout where six inches long would constitute a good fish. Just a few days earlier, I finished reading this book, so to humor myself I asked Lois, now in heaven, to allow me to catch a nine and a half-inch rainbow trout—an odd size and large fish for this brook. On the last cast of the day, I hooked and slid my net under a nine and a half-inch rainbow trout!

In late 2021, Lois was diagnosed with stage four cancer, and from that time forward painting provided her with peace and joy. She often watched YouTube, where artists demonstrated their skills as she joined in. Her last major watercolor—*Flugertown*—was completed earlier in the same day that she entered a hospital, only to return home under hospice care. Painting was an effort from that point on, yet she still loved doing it.

All of Lois's artwork can be found in her blog: <http://catskillwatersart.blogspot.com/>





*The Gazette gratefully presents all of the paintings here that Catskill artist Lois Ostapczuk submitted for our readers from September 2020 to March 2023, missing only one issue due to treatments for her illness. We are so very fortunate to have had Lois think of us and regularly contribute her artwork and special burst of color to our newsletter. Please take the time to look at each of these and have Lois, Ed, and their family in your thoughts.*



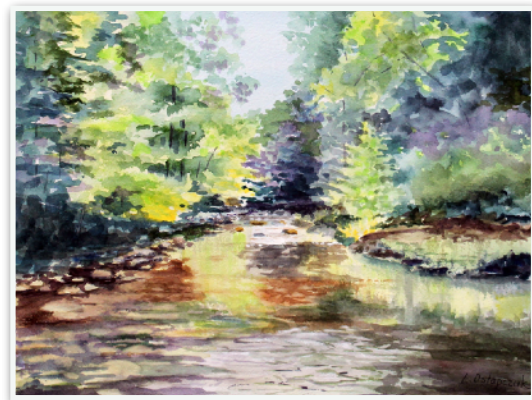
*Mount Pleasant, Esopus Creek*  
Appearing in September 2020



*October Whiteface*  
Appearing November 2020



*Halls Mills Covered Bridge*  
Appearing January 2021



*Morrell Field*  
Appearing March 2021



*The Rock*  
Appearing May 2021

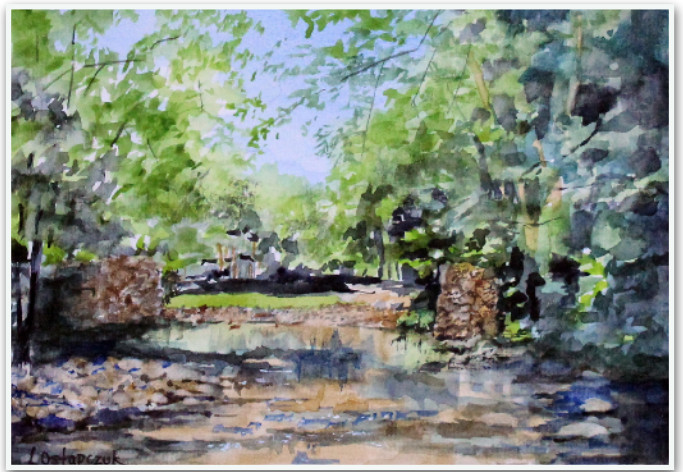


*Biscuit Brook Weir*  
Appearing July 2021





*Bomber and Hardy*  
Appearing September 2021



*The Abutments*  
Appearing November 2021



*The Cabin*  
Appearing March 2022



*The Rise*  
Appearing May 2022



*Esopus Creek Silver Bullet*  
Appearing July 2022



*Meadow Waters—Jones Flat*  
Appearing September 2022





*Eagleville Covered Bridge*  
Appearing November 2022



*Mothers Pool*  
Appearing January 2023



*Flugertown*  
March 2023

*Each of the fifteen paintings seen here were accompanied with a thoughtful narrative written by Lois. You can read the narratives that go with the paintings by searching the issues for the month of the painting in the Gazette archives: [Gazette Archives](#)*

*Again, we wish to say—Thank you, Lois!*

## The “Revived” Opener

Last April, when I wrote for the *Gazette*, I lamented, complained, maybe even whined a little that the celebrated season opener was over and forgotten. I quoted from Sparse Grey Hackle’s famous description of Roscoe’s Opening Day feeling, and I got the impression those days were over, and I started bracing myself and thinking *that’s the way it is going to be from then on*.

This year, I was invited to tie flies at Dette’s during their open house, season starter event, and I was excited and happy to be part of it. I told my wife I was so happy that they still feel like the April 1 holiday is still something to celebrate. Leading up to the day, I was talking to my upstate friends, asking who’s going to be up and where they planned to fish or hang out, and the more I listened, the more I started noticing others were getting back into the spirit of Opening Day. They had a guest to throw out the first cast at Junction Pool, Mike Canazon was having his bamboo rod casting at the high school, and the museum was preparing for a good crowd at home base, serving Agnes’s hot soups and cookies.



The fact that April 1 landed on a Saturday was strong. It only happens every seven years, and it's a real treat when you can be up on the actual day, not simply the first Saturday in April as in most years.

All this was starting to look and feel like a REAL opener. The gang was all here; there was that distinct "buzz in the air" as they say.

I decided to drive to Junction Pool first, as that location generally has the first and earliest showing. I made the left past the hotel, and much to my amazement, there were cars in every spot along the road across from the access. It's happening—the opener is back!

From there I was off to the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum, and sure enough, cars were in the parking spots, the office door was open, and things were getting set up for the crowds that were actually going to be here this year.

After a snack and visiting with friends, I drove to Dette's to set up and tie flies into the early afternoon. The turnout at Dette's was really good, with wader-clad anglers shuffling in and out, grabbing leaders and flies for the afternoon, which was looking good for fishing.

There was an on-and-off drizzle all morning, but the air temps were decent in the 50s. Every now and then, the sun shone strong, and at times it was downright warm outside. I was thinking that I may be able to hit a piece of stream before I headed home.

Pulling my waders on, I scanned the small stream to my right that was only 100 feet from my truck. *I won't be here long* I told myself; it was a long day, and I've got three hours plus ahead of me on the road, so I will just slip in, swing a pair of Quill Gordon wets through the tail-out over there, and when my right sock completely soaks up the water leaking through the waders on that side I can call it a day.

That prediction changed immediately when I stepped into the stream. The exact moment I pulled the leader through the tip top, not twenty feet away, the water exploded with a trout chasing something to the top. That's the kind of vision that alters your plans completely. Active fish take you from being hopeful, to being downright sure, and I was feeling pretty good about my situation.

I instead tied on a size 14 Quill Gordon dry, and I drifted that thing over and around the area I saw the fish. Moving upstream a bit, I finally connected to a taker that made the trip from the bottom to the surface. Nothing big, but he ate a dry fly—and it's the first of April! That is a win; I don't care who you ask.

I clipped off that fly, put it in my hat to save, and tied on a pair of the wet style, leading to a few more fish landed, plus one that shook off. I was seeing bugs around the stream, a few in the air, and some floating in eddies, but that first splash and the one that took the dry fly were the only two rises I saw for the hour that I was there.

Walking off the water with my truck in plain view the whole time, I played over the day in my head. It went by so fast, but the entire day had that "Opening Day" feeling. Maybe this open-year-'round season idea will be harmful to the fishery, or maybe it won't. Time will tell, and I feel like in a few years we will notice a difference one way or the other.

But one thing that should stay the way it's always been is the tradition of trout season having a day of its own. The way it always was. To keep the history alive, to pay homage to the past Catskill anglers who acknowledged it—something to look forward to as it's been all along. It is not about catching trout. It's about respect: respect of our past and the enjoyment of fishing the most beautiful streams on earth, being good stewards of our waters, while fishing ethically and honestly. That's what is important—the catching is just your reward.



## *Up on the Esopus*



With Ed Ostapczuk

## **The Lime Trude and Gary LaFontaine**

In *Fly-Tying* (1940), William Bayard Sturgis boldly ended chapter seven, on hair-wing flies, with the following: “Thus was born the A.S. Trude fly, the forerunner of all hair-wing flies of today, and an outstanding contribution to the art of angling.” That was more than eighty years ago, yet the 2023 J. Stockard Fly Fishing catalog is

currently graced with a Royal Trude, perhaps popularized by Dan Bailey as well as Gary LaFontaine.

According to Sturgis, and also Terry Hellekson’s *Fish Flies*, the first Trude was created in September of 1901 by Carter H. Harrison, a former Chicago mayor. Harrison and his friends were guests at the A.S. Trude ranch, adjacent to the Big Spring branch of the Snake River in Idaho. Near the end of their stay, on a whim in appreciation of Mr. Trude’s hospitality, Harrison tied a wet fly using the hair of a red spaniel that rested on a rug for a wing, red yarn from that same rug, and red rooster for hackle. As a hoax, Harrison named his creation the “A.S. Trude.” Ironically, the next day that very fly accounted for several large trout—an instant success for which Harrison was offered the sum of five dollars for the fly. Five dollars in 1901 currency—value no less!

Clearly, there were other hair-wing flies before Harrison’s Trude, but few enjoyed the celebrated success of his pattern. And while this pattern was originally tied as a wet fly, over time it morphed into the celebrated dry fly that it has become. The basic style features a downwing made of animal hair (often white calf tail) slanted back over the fly’s body. And nowadays, fly-fishing catalogs often offer several different Trudes: black, orange, red, yellow, royal, and lime, plus others.

One of the most innovative fly tyers of our time—Gary LaFontaine—spoke highly of Trudes, and the Lime Trude specifically. In his first book, *Challenge of the Trout*, LaFontaine wrote: “The Trude series of down-wing patterns, a versatile type of dry fly, were the forerunners of all the current hair-wing dry variations. Historically effective on western rivers, initially as a wet fly, the type simulates the stone fly and caddis fly silhouette; later hair-wing imitations derive from these patterns.” LaFontaine also wrote, “The flies of the Trude series are valuable on the riffle structure of a trout stream, but there are two Trude patterns I tie especially for the chop-water.” His Trudes of choice were a Royal Trude in sunshine—which he called a low-profile attractor pattern—and a Lady Heather for overcast conditions. He tied these using very fine monga ringtail for wings.

LaFontaine likewise referenced Carter Harrison’s letter (already noted above). He added, “The prolific professional flytier from Chicago, Benjamin Winchell, supplied well-to-do sportsmen of the early decades of the century. He touted the Trude fly, spreading its reputation and selling so many of a green-bodied variation that in the popular fishing regions of eastern Canada a dry-fly version acquired the title of Quebec Trude.” He also specifically referenced three other Trudes in his list of these dries: Quebec Trude, O’Conner Rio Grande King, and the Lady Heather, to which the author wrote, “On a grey day, the Lady Heather is a fine fly to pop onto rough water.”

In *The Dry Fly*, a later LaFontaine work, in his chapter discussion on “A Theory of Attraction,” the author wrote, “my selection of attractor patterns is set—for the moment. The main low-profile flies are the Trude and Double Wings.” Additionally, the author went on to say that the Lady Heather was created by him, and named after his daughter.

Once again, LaFontaine dedicated thoughtful space to the Trude series stating, “These flies became my favorite attractors through simple experience,” noting the Lime Trude, Quebec Trude, Rio Grande Trude, and Royal Trude were “all important for him.” In a later chapter, LaFontaine reintroduced his Lady Heather. Finally, as this book draws near completion, the author wrote this about Trudes, “If nothing specific was happening, it was time to experiment. Trudes were frequently the fly type that caught trout.”

He then sang the praises of the Lime Trude noting the One Fly Contest created by Jack Dennis: a contest where participants were allowed to use but a single fly, no matter what. He added, “The best dry fly over the years has been a Lime Trude.” However, LaFontaine concluded this write-up by stating between 1980 and 1985, except for 1984, he caught more trout on a Royal Trude than any other dry fly. In fact, he wrote that he caught more than five times as many trout on a Royal Trude than any other dry.

### My Lime Trude:

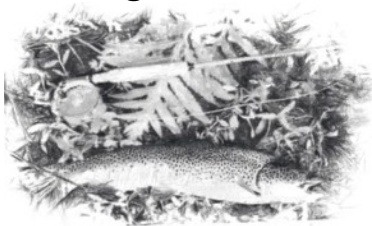
Hook: Mustad 94840, size 16  
Thread: 6/0 black  
Tail: Golden pheasant tippet fibers  
Body: Lime-green Antron  
Downwing: White calf tail  
Hackle: Ginger or brown



Lime Trude, tied by Ed Ostapczuk

Thus, with the passage of time, this western fly prank grew into a dry-fly pattern with quite the pedigree. When summer fishing Catskill headwaters, populated with little lime-green and Yellow Sally stoneflies, make mine a size 16 Lime Trude. That’s not too bad a choice, either, when those trout are on caddis. However, perhaps I’m selling this fly pattern short and should use it more often than just for searching for my beloved *Salvelinus fontinalis*?

### *Casting Catskill Cane*



With Mark Sturtevant

## **Hello (and Goodbye?) to the Hendricksons**

For those familiar with my blog, you may know I have my own personal countdown to track the last 100 days or so of *the madness*, otherwise known as life through a Catskill winter. Given even chances of success for some actual dry-fly fishing to emerging spring mayflies, I annually hope to begin my season during the second week of April. Weather, and the mysteries of



Catskill rivers being what they are, that second week is generally the week I at least begin haunting certain reaches of those rivers. In good years, I find a little fishing.

I was expecting that kind of early spring this year after a mild winter and a general lack of floods, anchor ice, and related natural enemies of good fishing. My anticipation got the best of me a day early, and I was out on the ninth of the month, a Sunday, with my Leonard 66 in my hand and hope in my heart. The Beaver Kill made it to forty-six degrees and displayed a good number of buzzing stoneflies and little black caddis, but with no rises, swirls, or other evidence that a trout lived there. The classic Catskill Quill Gordon knotted to my tippet remained in the Leonard's hook keeper throughout.



The very next day, I wandered back to the river, full of the joy that comes with an incredible forecast for the week ahead. I found two trout rising at the first little pool, and presented that quintessential Catskill dry fly on an esteemed classic Catskill dry-fly rod, taking my first surface feeding trout of 2023—a nice, fat brownie! Its twin failed to show the same reverence for tradition, requiring a couple of fly changes and a size 20 Olive to accept my invitation to the dance. I was ecstatic to find success on *the day: Zero Hour!*

Later that afternoon, after switching pools, I encountered one more rising trout who proved more than willing to bow to tradition and take the Quill Gordon. It fought hard in the forty-nine degree water, stretching the tape when I measured it, and brought another wide smile to my face. The only thing lacking in this lovely *opening day* reverie were mayflies. I saw none of them.

Ah, what a week! Sunshine and its wonderfully comforting warmth soothed my tired, wintered spirit—as well as my muscles. The days brought me everything an angler welcoming springtime could wish for, except for either mayflies or trout, that is. By Friday, it soared to ninety degrees, the river temperature to sixty, and at last I witnessed the season's first Hendrickson mayfly drifting proudly upon the surface. It looked quite lonesome out there by itself. I broke my cardinal rule and fished the weekend, seeing a few more flies each day, but with no trout even timidly feeding upon them. Our *Gazette* editor joined me on Saturday afternoon, after we retired from the guild meeting, and we each coaxed a heavy brown to take a fly—once.

The weather cooled, and so did the water. Finally, the Hendricksons came on Monday. I found three rising trout throughout the hatch, landing one, missing another, and failing to get my fly in front of a fish that cruised all over a tricky-looking run devouring every dun that it wished. Cooler appeared to be better, but a frigid night drove Tuesday's water temperature down to forty-five degrees and shut down the trout and the hatch that had just truly begun. After ten straight days of fishing, the cold finally convinced me to take a day off, as the chill grew deeper on Wednesday.

More springlike conditions returned the following day, and the hatch returned. I celebrated by working on one difficult trout for close to an hour. Oblivious to Hendricksons of any description, I finally fooled this connoisseur with an olive size 18, 100-Year Dun, presented with my eight-foot hollowbuilt rod beautifully crafted by friend Dennis Menscer. The battle played out in the boiling



currents of a boulder-filled run. Gratefully, the small fine-wire hook held, and I subdued this gorgeous brown trout, stretching a bit over twenty-four inches from nose to tail!

As the wild trout finally began to reap the bounty of the Hendrickson hatch, another experiment at the fly-tying vise emerged. Along with studying the dry flies of the late John Atherton during the winter of 2021, I was fortunate to acquire the materials needed to blend various dubbings to his specifications. As a byproduct of those efforts, I mixed a new Hendrickson blend inspired by Atherton's writings. Blending various colored fur from a red fox skin, natural fox squirrel fur with guard hairs, and a little golden tan Antron dubbing, I tucked this new, buggy mixture into a dubbing dispenser. The *A.I. Hendrickson* was born, though with last April's flood spoiling the hatch, it failed to get a trial on the water. I remedied that this year, tying 100-Year Duns and CDC Sparkle Duns with the Atherton-inspired dubbing. How would it fare?

Though I witnessed some thrilling hatches, I failed to find more than a couple of good fish rising to Hendricksons on all but one afternoon. The A.I. Hendricksons took all six of the trout I landed that day, three of them in excess of twenty inches long. Yes, I fished to these trout with similar flies tied with my standard dubbing blends (all have been proven producers), but the casts that resulted in hookups were those carrying the buggier, somewhat impressionistic A.I. Hendricksons. Coincidence? Possibly. But in ten days of fishing through the Hendrickson hatch, seven of the ten largest trout I caught ate A.I. Hendricksons. Did I begin to see a preference and fish these patterns more during the latter days of the hatch? Certainly I did, particularly the 100-Year Duns I tied with Charlie Collins's beautiful barred rusty dun hackle cape. That pattern, in that color combination, produced as the fishing became more technical. Mr. Atherton had some very interesting ideas, and I welcomed another chance to learn from history.

A blizzard hatch came through with the weather front of April 26. The sky blackened, and the air temperature dropped ten degrees, but the hatch intensified. I credit the temperature drop with shutting down all signs of rising trout during the peak of the emergence. The next day, only frail remnants of that multitude appeared, wholly insufficient to entice the trout from the depths of the rising river. Once the sun had warmed the river somewhat, I stalked a flat that had produced earlier in the week as the daily hatch tailed off. My eye caught a single ring dissipating in the wind, and I cast my fly toward the



disturbance, taking the only trout of the day. The fly? What do you think?

The Hendrickson hatch has come and gone for another season—or has it? The mid and upper reaches of the West Branch of the Delaware River have had colder water and marginal surface activity. Reports indicate that early May could bring the river’s typical strong hatch of Hendricksons to the forefront. Fishing pressure will be extreme, no doubt, and the opportunities hard won. Now, writing on the next to last day of April, it does not look like there will be good wade fishing, so anglers may be doomed to a terrific boat race to every rising trout the river holds. By the time you read this column, there will be answers rather than supposition. I hope my arthritic bones prove they are up to the rowing, and that the West Branch’s browns appreciate Mr. Atherton’s influence, too.



The A. I. (Atherton Inspired) 100-Year Hendrickson tied in the 100-Year Dun style

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

## **Cane Rod Builders and Collectors: Mike Canazon** **By Ed Walsh**

Mike Canazon grew up in North Branch ( Sullivan County), New York, where he spent a lot of time exploring the great outdoors, fishing the local brooks, hunting whatever was in season, and staying out of trouble. He became an accomplished high school student/athlete participating in basketball and football. He continued his academic career at the University of Oklahoma, majoring in engineering.



Mike shows Tom Roberts how to file down nodes on a cane strip

Mike moved to Dutchess County and pursued a career in the construction industry. With a very active work schedule and family responsibilities, fishing was not on his list of priorities, until he moved back to Livingston Manor in the late 1980s. He was intrigued by fly fishing and began spending as much time as possible on our local waters after purchasing the necessary equipment. As the old cliché goes—he was hooked.

It was on a visit to the Upper West Branch of the Delaware River where he noticed a fellow fly fisherman casting a bamboo rod. He was intrigued by its flowing action, and when both men sat down together on the river bank, he started asking questions about the rod. His new friend asked if he wanted to cast it and

Mike accepted. He didn't know much about cane rods, but he knew that this wonderful fishing tool felt like nothing he had ever held before. It wasn't long before he decided that he wanted to purchase one for himself. After examining all available options, Mike realized a rod like the one he cast was way out of his price range.

Most people at that point would have abandoned the idea of owning a bamboo fly rod, but Mike developed a plan that he hoped would somehow end with a cane rod of his own. He started reading everything he could get his hands on related to cane rods. When he got a copy of Everett Garrison and Hoagy Carmichael's *A Masters Guide to Building a Bamboo Fly Rod*, he decided he was going to build his own rod. He also started attending the Catskill Rod Makers Gathering to listen, and learn, from some of the best craftsmen on the east coast, and beyond.

Mike knew this would be a time-consuming endeavor and set out to purchase the necessary tools and supplies. It wasn't long before he had assembled enough of both to start the process. With a little guidance from friends who had built rods, he painstakingly followed the directions laid out in Garrison's book, and after a significant amount of trial and error he completed his first rod.

Around this time, Mike met Bobby Taylor, who worked at the Leonard Rod Building Company, in Central Valley, New York, before they closed their doors in the mid 1970s. Taylor was considered a master rod builder and continued in that trade until retirement. Bobby quickly realized how dedicated Mike was, and he willingly helped him improve his already visible skills. They became close friends, and it was that relationship that convinced Mike to continue building rods.

It wasn't long before Mike was producing quality cane fly rods for himself, and he even made a few for close friends. As his reputation grew, and requests for his rods increased, he started selling his products. To date, he's made more than 100 rods of various lengths, weights, and tapers. I've had the pleasure of talking to many of his customers and all are extremely satisfied owning, and fishing, a rod with the Canazon name on the butt section. Mike was certainly guided by Bobby Taylor, but it seems to me that his rod designs were equally influenced by Everett Garrison. Garrison was an engineer by trade. Functionality over esthetics were always his priority. Mike builds classically functional rods.

The respect for Mike's ability is well recognized, as he's received the prestigious Bellinger Award from Chet Croco, the CEO of Bellinger, Inc. (Bellinger is one of the world's largest manufacturers and suppliers of cane rod supplies and rod making equipment). He's also been presented The Rod Maker of the Year Award from the Catskill Rod Builders Gathering and The Lifetime Achievement Award from the New York State Chapter of the Brotherhood of the Jungle Cock for his work teaching kids fly fishing and its importance in our environment. Mike was inducted into the Catskill Legends by the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum (CFFC&M) in 2022.

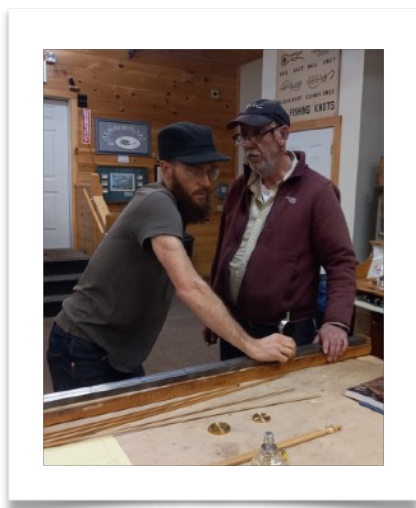
Mike’s love for cane didn’t stop with him building rods. He now teaches classes in cane rod building at the CFFC&M. First-time rod builders come from all over the USA and Canada to learn the craft from one of the masters of the art.

Many of his former students now assist Mike with these classes. All have a deep respect and admiration for the man who drew them into the world of cane rod building. Here are a few of their thoughts:

Gerry McVicker: “Everyone who is intimately familiar with bamboo rod building and the CFFC&M rod shop knows Mike Canazon—the man, the myth, the legend. Mike is the curator of the rod shop and teaches a class in bamboo rod building. I was fortunate to take the class from Mike, develop the joy of planning cane, and deal with some of his idiosyncrasies. First thing with Mike, is making sure he knows where his glasses are, that his hearing aid is on and turned up, and never ask him engineering based questions regarding rod building. I have now caught the rod building disease from him and cherish our discussions about the building process. I have known Mike for about ten years now and have fished with him on our local Catskill trout waters, and also on the Salmon River for steelhead. Mike summed himself up when he said in the fly-fishing documentary *Land of Little Rivers*: ‘I Fly Fish, that is my world. It is the dark hole I've fallen into—I like it here.’ I consider myself fortunate to know Mike as a friend and mentor.”



Jerry McVicker and Mike checking cane tapers



John Flynn and Luc Tilly checking bamboo strip dimensions

John Flynn: “Making a bamboo fly rod with Mike Canazon was a truly transformative process for me. He helped me learn how to read cane and understand the intricacies of this beautiful live material. He cares about his craft and refuses to accept anything other than perfection. As we got further along in the rod-making process, we started developing a true friendship. Our love of bamboo, fly fishing, wild trout, and good times brought us together in a way that is now inseparable. To sum it all up, Mike is a professional bamboo rod maker, a great teacher, and a fantastic friend.”

I spent many hours with Mike preparing for this article. Luckily, we live close to each other, because getting this modest man to talk about himself is not an easy task. But the one thing that became obvious



during our conversations was his passion for all things fly fishing. Not only does he build exceptional rods, but he also ties wonderful flies and is one of the best casting instructors and part-time guides in the region. And more importantly, he's one of the good guys and a cherished friend.

When I moved to Livingston Manor three years ago, purchasing a cane rod was not on my to-do list until I watched Bruce Concors's documentary. I watched Mike talk about the feeling he has when hooking a fish on a cane rod and how natural it felt. I must have watched that movie a dozen times, and I always found myself focusing on Mike's reaction. I knew I wanted to sense that same feeling, so I asked Mike to build me a rod. Getting the rod in my hands took awhile, and I can't say I've felt the same reaction Mike described, but I do know that every time I load the car up to go fishing, a cane rod is always included and usually the first to be used. Maybe, just maybe, that feeling is there, but I'm not able to clearly describe it yet.



Whether he's building or fishing, it's hard to find Mike without cane in his hands.



Mike with a nice cane-subdued brown trout

## The Guild's Winter Tying

As most members are aware, the guild conducted weekly fly tying during the winter months. Our wonderful membership responded with an average of slightly more than twenty members regularly participating in the Thursday-night sessions that were held virtually. The winter tying was nothing short of a great success, and we thank guild vice-president John Apgar for conceiving the idea and for putting it into practice. Most sessions had a fly (usually one of historic significance) to get the tying night

started. When we hit our stride during the last ten sessions, we sent out a PDF providing background and a description of the pattern.

Although the weekly sessions have ended during fishing season, we plan to start them again in November. In the meantime, John Apgar is starting a summer list of flies for the guild to consider. We welcome your thoughts regarding flies you'd like to see on the list; send them to [catskillflytyersguild@gmail.com](mailto:catskillflytyersguild@gmail.com). Look for an email in the coming weeks containing ideas for the summer tying.

If you missed any of the winter sessions, or if you just want to revisit some of the patterns, we've got a list here of the flies and a link to the PDFs that were sent. Just click on any of the following for a refresher:

Hendricksons: [Winter Tying April 6 Hendricksons](#)

Atherton Number Five: [Winter Tying March 30, Atherton Number Five](#)

Olives: [March 23 Olives](#)

Pink Lady: [March 16 Pink Lady](#)

Bradley Special: [Winter Tying for March 9](#)

Cross Special: [Cross Special for March 2](#)

Small Black Stoneflies: [Winter Fly Tying February 23](#)

Walt's Riffle Dun: [Winter fly tying Feb 16](#)

The Conover: [Flies and Materials for February 9](#)

Hendrickson Comparadun: [Flies and Materials List](#)

## Obituary

**Hank Rope, Jr.** Hank Rope passed away on March 19, 2023 at the age of eighty-two. Hank was president of the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild from 1999 to 2006. Born in Brooklyn, New York, he married Muriel E.

(Broadhurst)

Rope, and they were married

for fifty-six years until her passing. Hank served in the U.S. Navy from 1958 to 1962, and he was the founder and owner of Big Indian Guide Service, taking clients fishing on Catskill waters. In addition to his tenure as guild president, Hank was an active participant in many groups: American Legion Post 950 in Phoenicia, Trout Unlimited, Casting for Recovery, and Trout in the Classroom, which he did for students in the Onteora Central School District. Hank is survived by his beloved family: children Lori Lynn McLaughlin and her husband Edward of Yorktown Heights, New York, and Charles S. Rope of San Bruno, California, and his granddaughters—Danielle T. McLaughlin and Grace M. McLaughlin.



Hank Rope (on left) tying with Kurt Huhner in 2007

## Our Mysterious Chicken

You may have noticed that the logo for the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild features a beakless chicken. Why doesn't that chicken have a beak? One widely circulated story has it that the beak was purposely left off of our patch, because roosters that are raised for fly-tying hackle have their beaks clipped (according to the story) so they don't peck each other and damage valuable feathers. The topic came up at the last in-person meeting of the guild, where we had the good fortune to be in the company of Dave Catizone, Ed Van Put, and Judy Van Put. Judy seemed to have the inside scoop on the real story of the patch, and she sent an email with the details after checking with Agnes Van Put.



Where's the beak?

Judy wrote:



Judy Van Put's guild patch with the added yellow beak from Agnes.  
Photo: Judy Van Put

I spoke with Agnes about the CFTG patches that Dave Catizone had designed years back. Agnes told me that she and Judie Darbee (Vinceguerra Smith) had gone to Boiceville to pick up the patches, and when they arrived and saw the patches, Agnes noticed and pointed out that the chickens in the patches had no beaks! She said that the woman who gave them the patches said they "forgot" to add in the beaks! Another story that someone said was that they thought the added yellow thread was too costly, but Agnes said no, it was just that they forgot to add them in. And so she offered to anyone who desired, she'd embroider a beak on their patch. I had her do so on mine, which I have proudly worn on my fishing vest all these years.

Joe told me that the explanation had to do with the fact that some hackle raisers would debeak their chickens (evidently to prevent feather pulling - but it is very cruel and can result in pain throughout their lives), but he was winking when he said that, and so I wonder if he does know the real story as related by Agnes. She has a very sharp memory for things like that!

All best,  
Judy

So there you have it. That's the real story explaining our beakless chicken. Thank you to Judy and Agnes Van Put for setting the record straight. Now don't go bothering Agnes to embroider a yellow beak on your patch to match Judy's, but you can still get the patch on a guild hat—with our chicken remaining beakless!

—Chuck Coronato



## Guild Hats are Back!

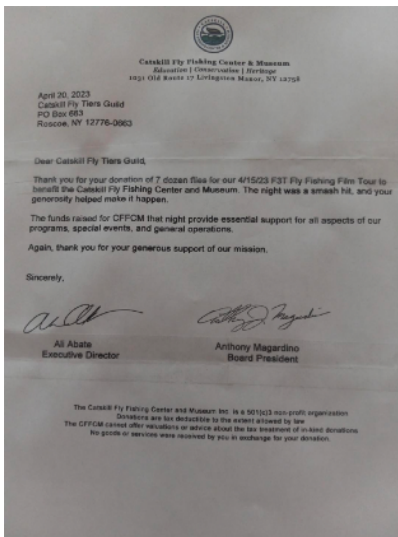
Technically, guild hats never went away, we usually had them to offer at in-person events, but they were discontinued from our website as they became problematic to sell and ship. Our guild secretary, Ed Walsh, is taking charge of orders for hats.

Anyone interested in purchasing a CFTG hat should contact Ed Walsh at [walsh78946@gmail.com](mailto:walsh78946@gmail.com). The cost is \$15.00 per hat, plus shipping. The shipping cost is determined by location. Ed will let you know the total cost when a request is made. You'll need to send a check for that amount to the guild's address (below), and when the payment is received, the hat will be shipped soon thereafter. Please don't send the check until Ed contacts you via email with the total cost after shipping charges are added.



Send your check to:

Catskill Fly Tyers Guild  
P.O. Box 663  
Roscoe, New York 12776



## A Thank You to the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild

The guild received a very nice letter of appreciation from the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum for our donation of seven dozen Catskill-style flies that were part of fund raising during a benefit at the CFFC&M on April 15.

Special thanks go to the tyers who contributed the flies: John Bonasera, Tom Mason, Mark Sturtevant, Chuck Coronato, Joe Cabellos, John Apgar, and Ed Walsh.

A thoughtful note such as this reminds us that our mission is not going unnoticed, and perhaps the summer tying list coming from John Apgar will produce more flies from our members for a future donation.

## Bing Lempke's Tiny Flies

The photo at the right of this page shows five flies small enough to easily fit on a wooden matchstick. The flies were tied by western tyer Bing Lempke. This photo was taken by Tom Mason, and it comes to us courtesy of the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum.

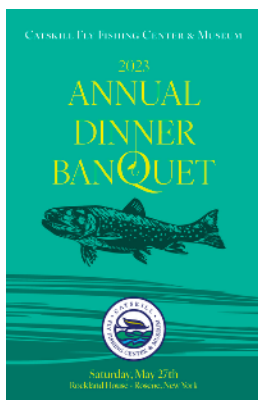


## Announcements:


### Annual Angler's Market:

Judie DV Smith would like to remind everyone that the 11th Annual Angler's Market will be held on Saturday, May 27, 2023, at the Community Hall near the firehouse in Roscoe, New York. The hours will be from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Everyone is welcome! Tables are available for \$15.00 each and may be shared. If you have some items that you no longer need or want, this is a good way to move them along. Contact Manny Zanger at [beamoc@hvc.rr.com](mailto:beamoc@hvc.rr.com) or 607-498-5464 for a table or two and for any information.

### Annual Dinner Banquet and Catskill Legends Awards:



Celebrate the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum and the induction of this year's Catskill Legends at the museum's Annual Banquet Dinner. Gather to enjoy a fun evening of food, drinks, and auctions, and recognize individuals who have made significant impact on the Catskills and our fly-fishing community. This year's legends are Dave Catizone, Bruce Concors, and Tom Mason. Each is an accomplished fly tyer in their own right, and they have contributed an incredible amount of volunteer time and knowledge to support the CFFC&M. The dinner will be at the Rockland House in Roscoe, New York. Tickets are \$65.00 for members of the museum, and \$75.00 for nonmembers. To purchase tickets, click on this link: <https://cffcm.com/eventscalendar/2023-annual-dinner>

 Please write for the *Gazette*! This newsletter depends on all guild members for its content. Our many thanks go to our regular contributors who faithfully write, and there is also plenty of space for additional members to add their musings to these pages. 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.

Here are a few of the flies that were tied during the guild's winter tying sessions:



Atherton Number Five, tied and photographed by Chuck Coronato



Pink Lady, tied and photographed by Seth Cavarretta



Small Black Stonefly, tied and photographed by Jose Venalanzo