



*The Evening*

# Hatch

The Newsletter of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club

February 2024

## It's Showtime!



### *MFFC Members and Vendors Gear Up for the Midwest Expo*

It's like Christmas in March. The Midwest Fly Fishing Expo is just around the corner. Can't wait!

Our premier event is March 9-10 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Macomb Community College Sports & Expo Center in Warren. Scan the adjacent QR code to purchase tickets in advance and skip the long line at the ticket window.

Read about the great headliners speaking and giving casting demonstrations this year on **pages 5-6**.

If it's time to sharpen your fly-ty-



ing skills or learn a new pattern, there will be 11 guest tyers spinning deer hair and giving demos. That includes the always-popular Dennis Potter. See the entire list on **pages 7-8**.

For 50 years, Andy Renzetti has been designing and producing some of the best vises in the country. Enjoy his story on **page 9** and then stop at the Renzetti booth at the Expo.

Finally, The Evening Hatch has a new feature, highlighting the fly-tying desks of its members. Check out the first one on **page 11** and how to submit a photo of your special area.

See you at the Expo!

## *Michigan Fly Fishing Club* Calendar

**2/14/24** Board Meeting, Virtual  
**2/18-23/24** White River Trip, Cotter, AR  
**2/21/24** Activity Meeting, Tom Serwuck  
**2/23-25/24** Outdoorama, Suburban Collection Showplace, Novi

**3/6/24** Activities Meeting, Scott Freeburg  
**3/9-10/24** Midwest Fly Fishing Expo, Macomb Community College  
**3/13/24** Board Meeting, Virtual  
**3/20/24** Speaker Meeting, Jordyn Stoll of Michigan Trout Unlimited; Invasive Species Ecology & Didymo

**4/3/24** Speaker Meeting, TBA  
**4/6/24** Trout Tune-up, Huron River, Walled Lake Outdoor Education Center  
**4/10/24** Board Meeting, Virtual  
**4/17/24** Activity Meeting, Joe Sprys  
**4/27/24** Trout Opening Day & Remembrance, Gates Au Sable Lodge

**5/1/24** Activity Meeting, Dan Walker  
**5/4/24** Youth School, Tollgate Farm  
**5/5-7/24** Old Member's Outing, Wawa Sum Lodge, Grayling  
**5/8-11/24** Dick Schot New Member's Outing, Wawa Sum Lodge, Grayling  
**5/8/24** Board Meeting, Virtual  
**5/15/24** MFFC Club Banquet, Italian American Banquet Center, Livonia, speaker Dirk Fischbach  
**5/16-19/24** Smallmouth Outing, Blue Spruce Motel, Port Austin

Meetings are held at Clarenceville Middle School, 20210 Middlebelt, Livonia.

The President's Message...

*On Valentine's Day Do You Kiss Your Spouse or a Trout?*



Left: When we saw this photo of a guide for Fish Four Change kissing her permit in Punta Allen, Mexico, we thought: Hey that's our thing! MFFC is nothing if it's not a club of fish kissers. And here are a couple of big lip smouchers just from this year. Center: Tom Malbouef with what appears to be a reluctant rainbow from his West Yellowstone last summer. Right: Len Dixon showing his student at the MFFC Youth School in May. Need we have to say who had the bigger lips in that photo?

Valentine's Day is right around the corner so pucker up! Pucker up tight! Not for your Candy Apple or Honey Bunny, but for your catch! <\*((((((<

This May Len Dixon was spied teaching Youth School attendees how to properly kiss a fish. (One must appreciate what one receives in life, you know. We appease the tree gods with our tangled flies; the fish gods need their tribute as well.) Proper fish-kissing etiquette is key.

A month later *The Evening Hatch* featured a photo of Tom Malbouef so

ecstatic at catching a trout in West Yellowstone last summer that he was kissing his fish. I am certain he caught many more that day. We're not sure if he kissed them all.



*Sybil Hunter*

Things being what they are, it appears we at the MFFC are, believe it or not, trendsetters. Kissing one's fish is now a

trend, and it all started right here folks!

Have you kissed your fish lately? Of course, you have to catch one first, a

small technical detail that may befuddle a few anglers.

But for those who do, let's continue to show the world that we love what we're chasing in the rivers and lakes (that's metaphorically speaking mind you).

We started this new fly-fishing tradition so we're counting on everyone to keep it alive.

Just remember to wipe your lips off after you do. We want you around when it's time to pay your club dues.

May you all be blessed with tight lines and a fish to kiss!

*Sybil*



*Jim Aitken preps a booth table during the set-up phase of the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo. The MFFC still has a need for volunteers for the Club's biggest event that will be held March 9-10 at the Macomb Community College Sports & Expo Center in Warren.*

*See Michigan Fly Fishing Club News & Events on page 4 to sign up as volunteer for a session before, during or after the show.*

# Michigan Fly Fishing Club Business

## Michigan Fly Fishing Club Board of Directors Meeting

January 17, 2024

### Roll Call

Meeting called to order 7:30 p.m.

*Present:* S. Hunter; K. Lipp; J. Deputat; B. Green; J. Aitken; J. Eriksson; J. Bada; J. Aukee; N. Tabaka

*Absent:* B. Strachan

**Approval of Agenda** – Agenda from 1/17/24 approved

**Approval of Minutes** – Meeting-minutes for 12/13/23 approved.

### Officer's Report

**President:** S. Hunter

- Jim DuFresne is putting the final touches on The Evening Hatch.
- Jerry Deputat will help with updated addresses of undeliverable newsletters.

**Vice President:** K. Lipp

- The last Club meeting, which featured Jim DuFresne's presentation on Alaska's Katmai National Park, was well attended.
- Positive comments that many people enjoyed the non-fishing topic.

**Treasurer:** B. Green

No treasurer's report due to a bank technical issue getting bank statement.

**Membership:** J. Deputat

- 508 renewal letters mailed July 31, 2023
- 407 current active members
- 47 former members from 2022
- 54 former members 2021
- Member surveys mailed to 407 current members. 136 returned.
- As of January 15, 334 members

(85%) have paid their dues, 81% by check.

- 11 new members.
- Jerry to organize notes to send out for thoughts on retaining membership, notes sent to the board Feb 2, 2024.

**Corresponding Secretary:** J. Bada

- Eblasts: 4 monthly meeting announcements; 2 special announcements; 1 Hatch announcement.
- Contacts: 309.
- Open Rate: 75%.
- Upcoming Speakers: February: Lance Eveans of Gates Lodge; March: Jordyn Stoll of T.U.; April: open; May: Banquet Dirk Fischbach; June: open.
- Assistance required to find spring 2024 speakers.

### New Business

- Outdoorama Feb 21 needs volunteers.
- Expo booths are filling up. Kevin is working on putting the show together.
- Contract for the Vintage House extended through 2026.
- Election Committee states no one has stepped forward to run for office yet.
- Great Lakes Council of the FFI held their board meeting in January. MFFC is a member. Notes are available.
- Looking for Hatch editor(s).

### Old Business

- Volunteers needed to help with Zoom at meetings.
- Ultimate Fishing Show saw 15 new volunteers and 300 kids tying.

**Adjournment:** 8:55 p.m.

## 2023-2024 Officers

**President:**  
**Sybil Hunter**  
*president@mffc.org*

**Vice President:**  
**Kevin Lipp**  
*kjlipp@gmail.com*

**Corresponding Secretary:**  
**Jon Bada**  
*correspondence@mffc.org*

**Recording Secretary:**  
**John Eriksson**  
*recordingsecretary@mffc.org*

**Treasurer**  
**Barry Green**  
*treasurer@mffc.org*

**Membership**  
**Jerry Deputat**  
*membership@mffc.org*

**Immediate Past President:**  
**Bruce Strachan**  
*bruced0402@gmail.com*

## At-Large Directors

**Jim Aitken**  
*dznvvm@gmail.com*

**John Aukee**  
*j.aukee@yahoo.com*

**Norm Tabaka**  
*ntabaka@gmail.com*

### Hatch Editors

**Sybil Hunter** Submissions  
*evening.hatch.mffc@gmail.com*

**Jim DuFresne** Production  
*kidven@aol.com*

### Webmaster

**Sybil Hunter** Club Webmaster  
*sybilsvpemail@gmail.com*



*No Fish This Winter: The Michigan DNR canceled the 2024 Black Lake sturgeon season due to thin ice. DNR officials were worried about the safety of anglers and emergency teams who would have to rescue them if they fell through.*

## 2024 Sturgeon Season Canceled

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources cancelled the 2024 Black Lake sturgeon season, which was scheduled to start Saturday, Feb. 3.

This is the first time the Black Lake sturgeon season has ever been canceled. A harvest limit is set for each Black Lake sturgeon season and it's too soon to determine whether this cancellation will influence the harvest next year.

With the current marginal ice conditions and depletion of ice on Black Lake, there was concern about excessive harvest with the inability to effectively track harvests with limited DNR personnel on the ice.

"In addition to protecting the lake sturgeon population, the safety of anglers and staff is critically important," said Randy Claramunt, DNR Fisheries chief. "We encourage all anglers across Michigan to use extreme caution while on the ice, as we have been experiencing above-average temperatures."

## MFFC Searching for a New Editor for The Evening Hatch

MFFC is looking for a volunteer or volunteers to serve as editors of The Evening Hatch, the Club's monthly newsletter.

The final edition for the current editors will be the May 2024 issue, and then the publication will be on its summer hiatus until the September issue.

Members interested in the position should ideally have some desktop publishing experience and the software to produce an 8 to 12-page newsletter that is published September through May.

If interested, contact Sybil Hunter at [evening.hatch.mffc@gmail.com](mailto:evening.hatch.mffc@gmail.com).

## Help Wanted

### *Casting Call: for Activities Night Instructors*

**By Wayne Glessner**

The implementation of the Fly Casting Training and Education Center (TEC / Middle School Gymnasium) has brought many individuals of different casting abilities to the TEC. Their presence is a significant and positive step for the membership.

However, for the members to progress in their casting development, knowledgeable and proficient instructors must be available to address their various casting issues. Presently there are more members requesting instruction than there are available instructors.

To address the increased demand for assistance, we are seeking additional casting instructors for our team. Ideally, we would like to have a total of five to seven instructors to better serve the membership. (Alternates would be helpful too.)

TEC candidates are requested to meet on Wednesday, Feb. 21 at 6:30 p.m. in the TEC / gymnasium.

Anyone interested, please e-mail me at: [wayneglessners@gmail.com](mailto:wayneglessners@gmail.com).

### *Volunteer Tyers Needed for Outdoorama*

The MFFC will also staff an activity booth at Outdoorama to teach kids how to tie Woolly Buggers or guide them through fly rod casting fundamentals on an indoor pond.

Outdoorama is Feb.22-25 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and is also staged at the Suburban Collection Showplace, 46100 Grand River Ave. in Novi.

To sign up for a session go to [volunteersignup.org/8LPA7](http://volunteersignup.org/8LPA7) or scan the adjacent QR code.

For more information contact Jim Aitken ([dznvvm@comcast.net](mailto:dznvvm@comcast.net)).

### *Be Part of the Greatest Show on Earth*

MFFC officials report there are plenty of opportunities for volunteers for the Club's premier event: the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo.

The annual event is March 9-10 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Macomb Community College Sports & Expo Center, 14500 Twelve Mile Rd, Warren.

Join fellow members helping set up the arena or constructing the casting ponds before the show, staffing the Saturday or Sunday or most important knocking down the booths and stands after the event. The Expo is the most important event and biggest fund raiser the MFFC stages. To sign up for a session go to [volunteersignup.org/QT8BD](http://volunteersignup.org/QT8BD) or scan the adjacent QR code.





## 2024 Expo Headliners *Fly Anglers Who Know How to Catch a Trout*

### **Phil Rowley** *Canada's Stillwater Specialist*

Phil Rowley has been fly fishing for over 30 years. His love of fly fishing has taken him across North America pursuing trout, Atlantic and Pacific salmon, char, pike, walleye, and numerous other species on the fly. But Phil is best known for his stillwater exploits.

A former commercial fly tyer, Phil has written for almost



*Phil Rowley is a Canadian but has been fly fishing around the world for 30 years. He is best known for his flies and success on stillwater.*

### **Michael Mauri** *Innovative Fly Caster & Guide*

Michael Mauri is one of the world's outstanding fly casters. He was born and raised in Germany. He caught his first fish at age six in a small stream in Bavaria and, six years later, began concentrating on every facet of the sport of fly fishing including education as a technical engineer of aquaculture.

Since 1998, Michael has participated in international shows and conducted single- and double-hand casting workshops around the globe. As a professional fly-fisher, he has guided throughout Europe and the United States.

Michael is an innovator in all aspects of fly fishing, and he created his own unique casting method, the Effective Fly Casting Technique or EFCT.

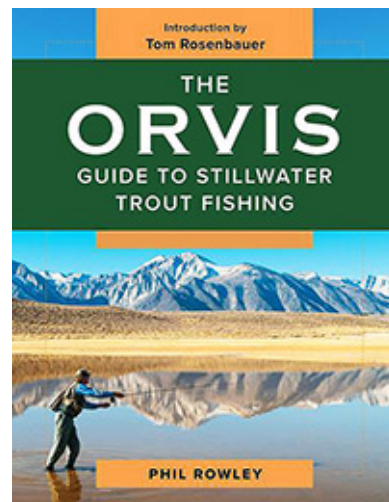
The secret of EFCT fly-casting is natural movement which makes it easy to learn – whether a beginner, novice, or seasoned casting veteran.

Don't miss an opportunity at the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo to join one of the most respected instructors in fly fishing and casting including all aspects of single-handed and

every major fly fishing publication in North America. He has authored three books and numerous feature articles and two regular columns. Phil's first book *Fly Patterns for Stillwaters* and his *Orvis Guide to Stillwater Trout* Orvis are best sellers. In addition to his writing, Phil has four instructional DVD's. In 2007, Phil was a member of the gold medal winning team at the Canadian Fly Fishing championships.

When he isn't on the water, Phil travels North America performing at outdoor shows, staging seminars, speaking to Fly Clubs, and conducting fly-fishing schools. Phil also provides instructional still water guiding on the lakes located a short distance from his Edmonton area home.

Phil has appeared on a number of television shows including, BC Outdoors Sports Fishing, Sport Fishing B.C., Fishing Alberta and Fishing with Shelly and Courtney. Phil is presently one of the co-hosts of the New Fly Fisher, an educational fly fishing production. Make a point of visiting Phil online at [www.flycraftangling.com](http://www.flycraftangling.com).



*Michael Mauri is an innovator in all aspects of fly fishing but especially with his own unique casting style.*

double-handed Spey casting and overhead casting.

Michael offers year-round guided trips and fly-casting lessons in Stuart, Florida where he and his wife Emily live with their daughter Emma.



*From West Yellowstone and Canada to North Carolina and Florida*

# Midwest Expo Draws Top Instructors & Guides

## Mac Brown *Fly Fishing Guide & Author*

Mac Brown, who created the first full-time fly-fishing guide service in Western North Carolina, is the owner of Mac Brown Fly Fish and Fly Fishing Guide School in Western NC. The first Delayed Harvest on the Upper Nantahala River in early 1993 was also a result of his efforts.

Brown is the author of *Casting Angles* which is a fly casting handbook for those on the journey of understanding the mechanics of the cast. The ACA, FFI, and others have endorsed this text as a reference for instructors as well. Mac is a Master Casting Instructor through the Fly Fishers International.

Mac was inducted into the Southern Appalachia Fly Fishing Museum Hall of Fame under recreation in August 2017. He was "Angler of the Year" in Field and Stream in 1999. His

articles have appeared in Fly Rod and Reel, Fly Fisherman, Angling Report, ESPN TV, Outdoor Life, Field and Stream, Fly Fishing America T.V., Fly Fishing the World, and many others.

He is a pro staff member of Ross Reels, Simms, Maxima, and many other great companies since early 1990.

He is an ambassador for the brands Patagonia, G. Loomis rods, Regal Vise, Richardson Chest Boxes, and Scientific Anglers fishing lines.

### Casting Angles

Mac Brown



A Fly Casting Handbook



Mac Brown (left) set up the first full-time fly-fishing guide service in Western North Carolina and is the author of "Casting Angles."

Brown's most significant contributions have been the push to longer and lighter fly rods and fly line designs.

For more guided trips in North Carolina or casting schools go [macbrownflyfish.com](http://macbrownflyfish.com) or contact Mac Brown Fly Fish in Bryson City, North Carolina at 828-736-1469.

## Alice Owsley *owner of West Yellowstone's Riverside Anglers*

Alice Owsley was born in Salem, Ohio where at the tender age of 8, she picked up her first fly rod and learned to pursue trout on the area's spring creeks.

While attending Warren Wilson College in Asheville, North Carolina she began working at a fly shop in 1996 and immediately became a member of International Women's



Alice Owsley (right) owns and operates Riverside Anglers, one of the top guiding companies in West Yellowstone.

Fly Fishers at its inception. She went on to attend the Orvis Guide School in 1998 and then Joan Wulff's School of Fly Fishing in 1999 before becoming a guide in Alaska later that year.

Alice has been a licensed outfitter in Montana since 2004 and is the owner and operator of Riverside Anglers guide service out of West Yellowstone, Montana.

Alice has been guiding for 15 years on the Madison, Henry's Fork, and waters of Yellowstone National Park, teaching clients of all skill levels her trout-catching ways.

Though Greater Yellowstone is her home, Alice is always planning her next fishing adventure whether it is Idaho's Clearwater River steelhead or Montana's Missouri River carp. She has also fished for tarpon, bonefish, permit and many other saltwater species throughout the Bahamas, Florida Keys, Belize, and Mexico.

She also guides fishing experiences for combat veterans with Warriors and Quiet Waters, and volunteers as a guide with Casting for Recovery—an organization that provides fly fishing retreats for women with breast cancer.

For more on Alice or her guiding services go to the Riverside Anglers website at [riversideanglers.com](http://riversideanglers.com).

# Expo Tyers *New Flies For Whatever You're Chasing This Season*

## Jerry Regan

Jerry Regan is a third generation fly tier. He is one of the true keepers of Michigan's Fly-Fishing History, along with being one of the best commercial fly tiers in the business. Just like Trout Unlimited, Jerry was born along the fabled Trout Waters of the Au Sable River near Grayling. As a youth he learned fly tying and fishing from Michigan's genuine legends including Earl Madsen and Ernie Borcher. Most unique about Jerry's fly patterns is he has never tied with synthetics but stayed true to the original natural materials.



## Bruce Derington

Bruce Derington took his first tying class in 1978 through a local high school evening course and later another through Challenge Chapter of Trout Unlimited. Bruce, an ever-busy Bass Guy, was reading a Rod and Reel article by Tim England (1985) about deer hair flies and fell in love with tying. The rest, as they say, is history. In the 90's he was intrigued with Atlantic flies and now focuses on these classic flies.



## Kevin Ramsey

Kevin Ramsey of Bellevue, Ohio, is a retired State of Ohio Wildlife Officer. Kevin is an avid fly tyer and fly angler. He fishes for trout across the country, but especially enjoys striper fishing on the beaches of Cape Cod. Kevin volunteers for Project Healing Waters and Trout Unlimited projects. A tyer for 43 years, he ties both trout and saltwater flies. Many of Kevin's flies are donated for organizational fund-raising campaigns.



## Dennis Potter

Before he was fishing on the Au Sable River, Dennis Potter was tying and has been for more than 30 years. He spent four seasons at the Gates AuSable Lodge as a fly fishing Instructor and still enjoys teaching fly tying instruction. His fly designs are fished extensively and with great success throughout the U.S. Dennis has various fly tying videos on the market and is the owner of Riverhouse Fly Company. You will be able to find him tying with his recognizable high-resolution video tying demo roadshow. Dennis' website is: [www.riverhouseflyco.com](http://www.riverhouseflyco.com).



## Cheryl Scherf

Cheryl Scherf is a school teacher in Cleveland, Ohio and has been fly tying and fly fishing for 17 years. Cheryl particularly enjoys tying striped bass flies, which she uses fishing the beaches of Cape Cod. She also ties trout flies and enjoys stream fishing for trout whenever she can. She has tied at multiple fly shows over the past several years.



## Alan Ritt

Alan "Al" Ritt grew up here in Michigan where his passion for fishing was born. In the early 80's while living in Northern California, he started tying flies before he started fly fishing. After moving to the Northern Front Range of Colorado. Alan received the highest honor as a fly tyer when he was awarded the "FFI Buz Buszek Memorial Fly-Tying Award" in 2022. He is currently on the Pro-staff of Whiting Farms, PEAK Fishing, Flymen Fishing Company, Performance Flies, Clear Goo Glue, Fishing for a Cause, Performance Flies, Daiichi Hooks, and a fly designer for Montana Fly Company. Al serves on the board of IFFF Fly Tying Governors and is a guide on Colorado for Sylvan Dale Ranch. Along with his articles in various magazines, he is the author of *25 Best Most Versatile Flies*. Alan's web site is [www.alrittflies.com](http://www.alrittflies.com).



*Continued on page 8*

# More Tying Techniques & Patterns to Learn at the Expo

Continued from page 7

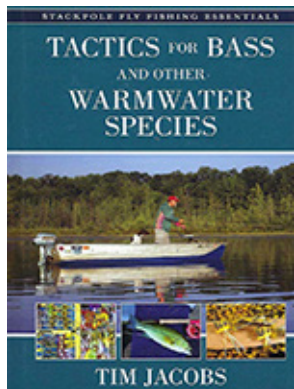


## Eli Berant

Eli Berant grew up and lives in Michigan, so he has been surrounded by big water all his life. After getting his first fly tying kit at the age of 15, fly fishing and fly tying has been a passion of his ever since. Even though he really likes the “traditional” fly fishing experience; he has taken the concepts of the huge saltwater flies and begun applying them to his exploits here back in the big waters of Michigan. If you are interested in “Big Flies” for Lake Trout, Musky, Bass, or whatever will consume them, you can watch Eli at the Expo or order them at Great Lakes Fly ([www.greatlakesfly.com](http://www.greatlakesfly.com)).

## Tim Jacobs

Tim Jacobs, a Michigan native, is a fly fisherman and fly tyer from the Roaring Fork Valley. He guided in both the Steamboat Springs area and Roaring Fork Valley. During the 1990's, he was an International Federation of Fly Fishers certified casting instructor who taught the Sage Casting Clinics. He works as an instructor at the Michigan Youth Trout Camp each summer and is a casting instructor for Project Healing Waters in western Colorado. Tim published numerous articles and authored two books *Tying and Fishing Deer Hair Flies* (2018, Stackpole Books) and his latest title *Tactics for Bass and Other Warmwater Species* which was released in 2023. Tim appears at numerous fly-fishing shows and fly shops as a demonstration fly tyer for Whiting Farms Pro Team, Regal Vise Pro Staff, and Nature's Spirit Pro Staff.



## John Satkowski

John Satkowski resides in Toledo, Ohio, where he fishes for all things that swim in waters of southeastern Michigan and northwest Ohio. An artist, fly tying demonstrator, and fly-tying instructor, John shares his love of fly tying and fishing as often as he can. John is an accomplished realistic tier and always tries to add a little realistic flare to his patterns. John is a pro tier for Flymen Fishing Company and a commercial tier for Rainy's flies with patterns ranging from dry flies, nymphs, steelhead, streamers, and saltwater flies. John's patterns often use creative fly materials and unconventional tying styles. You can find him at River Raisin Fly Company.



## Glenn Weisner

Glenn R. Weisner has been tying flies since a seventh grade science fair project. For the first 10 years, he was self taught and fished predominately for warm water fish. Glenn was a personal friend of the late Chris Helm for over 20 years. Glenn attributes most of his tying capabilities to the information he has “stolen” from Chris's warehouse of knowledge and experience. He is a tireless fisherman that can often be found fishing for trout on the cold streams of Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Michigan. He created or improved several patterns he finds invaluable for small stream trout fishing and enjoys tying most all trout flies, especially terrestrials and midges. His



## Todd Schotts

Todd A. Schotts is a custom production fly tier through Grizzly Flies by Schottsie located in Southeastern and a member of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club and the Huron River Fishing Association. In his tenure in the MFFC he has contributed articles since 2005 to the clubs newsletter, The Evening Hatch. In 2015 he was awarded MFFC highest honor; “Volunteer of the Year.”



Two of his designed flies appear in two different articles of the Eastern Fly-Fishing Magazine while five of his patterns appeared in the 2017 spring issue of Fly Fusion Magazine. He is the founder of “Michigan Bobbin Slingers” (fly tyers), a Facebook page dedicated to the Art of Fly Tying. His passion though, is creating new flies, being a Bass Bum, chasing panfish in ponds & lakes, and chasing trout in spring creeks. He is on the Pro Staff with Anadromous Fly Company; the Pro Team for Nor-vise and TFO Rods, and Ambassador for UV Craft. You can contact Todd at [GrizzlyFlies@yahoo.com](mailto:GrizzlyFlies@yahoo.com) or at Grizzly Flies by Schottsie on Facebook or Instagram.



# Renzetti *A Family, a Vise and a Beautiful Way to Spend a Life*

**W** By Jim DuFresne

What happens when a talented machinist from a family of artists develops a lifelong passion for fly fishing?

We get a damn-good vise for tying flies.

That's the equation behind Andy Renzetti and the successful fly-tying vises he has been designing and producing for half a century. Vises that are beautiful, functional, and artistically simple.

"Our vises are so beautiful," said Lily Renzetti, Andy's wife and president of the Florida-based company. "But they are also functional and very simple. Simple lines that make them very comfortable to tie flies."

You can see these pieces of art by visiting the Renzetti Inc. booth at the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo March 9-10 at the Macomb Community College Sports & Expo Center, 14500 E 12 Mile Rd. in Warren.

Renzetti was working full-time in a machine shop and fishing every chance he could when, in the early 1970s, he began making fly-tying tools in the one-car garage behind his house. Those late-night and weekend endeavors quickly spread to vises.

There were vises on the market and even rotary vises, but Renzetti focused on designing a true rotary vise. In 1972, Renzetti unveiled the Presentation

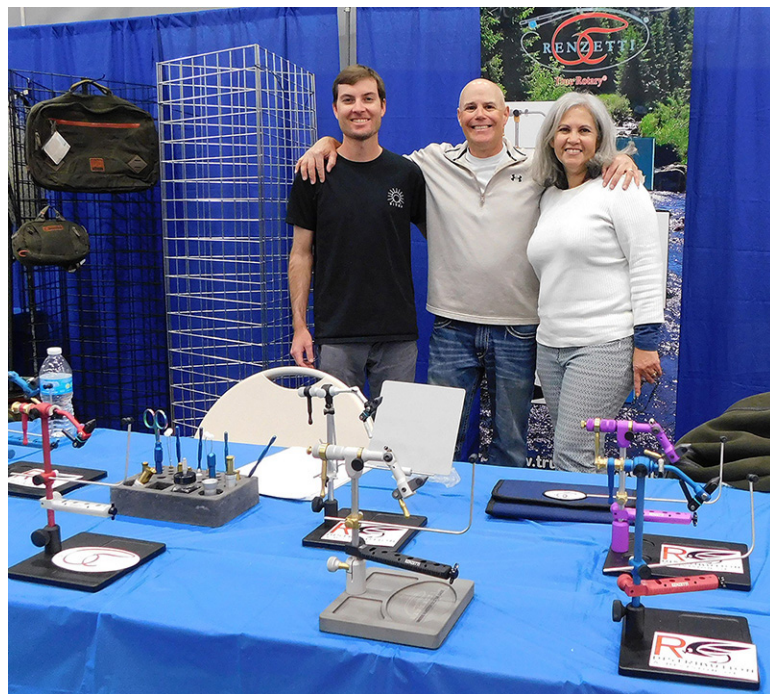
3000 at a fly-fishing show in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, the first vise featuring true inline rotary action.

"We were in Pennsylvania and Andy was tying a lot of wooly buggers," said Lily, explaining Renzetti's frustration with the vises he was using. "With (the Presentation 3000) the materials are evenly distributed on the hook, that's what a true rotary vise accomplishes."

The key to Renzetti's new vise was designing it with an adjustable jaw. When a jaw can be repositioned, then the hook shank can be perfectly aligned with the vise's axis of rotation. You simply hold one end of the chenille, and the rotating jaw produces perfect wraps. Then do the same with the hackle.

A perfect wooly bugger.

The Presentation 3000 was the most revolutionary vise at the time. It was also the most expensive with a retail price of \$199.95. But there was a market for top-end vises, and it wasn't long before Or-



*Lily Renzetti, president of Renzetti Inc. with her sales reps displaying their lines of vises in their booth at the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo last March.*



*The Renzetti Master M6014 Vise. At Almost \$1,200, it's one of the company's top-of-the-line vises.*

*"When you offer quality and function, there's a cost to that," said Lily Renzetti. "And quality and function is the most important thing for us."*

vis came knocking on their door.

"That was in the late 1970s, and Orvis was our first big distributor," said Lily. "But honestly, word of mouth is how we got started."

To meet the demand, Renzetti began renting after hours the machine shop equipment where he was still working full-time. By 1977, his hobby had become a part-time gig, and the following year, he quit his job, built a three-car garage, and hung a shingle on it that said "Renzetti Custom Machine."

It wasn't long before Renzetti was totally focused on vises and fly-tying tools so in 1985 he replaced the three-car garage with a new manufacturing facility and three years later Renzetti Inc., as it is known today, was formally registered.

The demand for Renzetti vises kept pouring in, especially after the Traveler series was introduced in 1988 as a more affordable and portable vise that was still True Rotary featuring unquestionable hook-holding power.

Up to that point, every part of

*Continued on page 12*



# Hank's *A Fly Shop with Everything I needed & Even More That I didn't*

**I** By Jim DuFresne  
 don't want to burst anybody's bubble, but I don't think there was a Hank when it came to Hank's Fly Fishing Unlimited, a pair of excellent shops in Novi and Lake Orion. There was a Ken, an avid fly angler who owned The Complete Companies, an engineering and manufacturing firm in Lake Orion.

I'm not sure how long Ken's fly shops were open, but they were closed by 2010. I never stopped at the Novi shop, but I did have a special connection with his other store.

I passed it almost every day on the way home from my athletic club. For five years, the temptation to check out the latest in the world of fly fishing was an incredibly powerful magnate pulling my car off Baldwin Road into the parking lot.



*Jim DuFresne*

"Be strong," I would say whenever I drove past it. And most of the time, I was but not the day I saw giant posters on the windows announcing a "Going Out of Business Sale."

Inside I noticed that most items were only marked down 10 to 15 percent and decided to return when the savings dipped to 25 percent or more.

I never did. A week later, the entire shop was empty, and Hank's logo was no longer on the windows.

I was kicking myself when someone told me Ken had to quickly vacate the place because the lease ran out. He moved all that merchandise to a small, empty warehouse at The Complete Companies, less than a mile away.

Then every Wednesday evening, Ken and a friend would be there to welcome anybody who wanted to talk fishing or search for bargains inside the cluttered warehouse.

And there were many to be uncovered.

Everything was 50 percent off from the marked retail price. But Ken hated adding in his head numbers with decimal points, so if a package of hooks was \$4.95, instead of charging you \$2.47, he would round it off to \$2. Easier to total your purchases.

There were also no receipts or a cash register, or at least I never saw one, and everything was cash. Need I say more?

At first, I stopped only for a few items I needed



for a weekly fly-tying class I was enrolled in that winter. Then I was buying supplies for any fly I anticipated needing the rest of my life. It was tough to figure out what I might want to tie 20 years down the road, so to be safe, I just bought a lot of stuff.

Then I was just buying to buy because I loved rummaging through all those boxes, drawers, and racks that filled four rooms.

My most expensive purchase was a pair of Scott rods that weren't exactly what I wanted but, for \$125 each, close enough.

I also purchased some used Renzetti vices leftover from the flying tying classes the shops offered every winter.

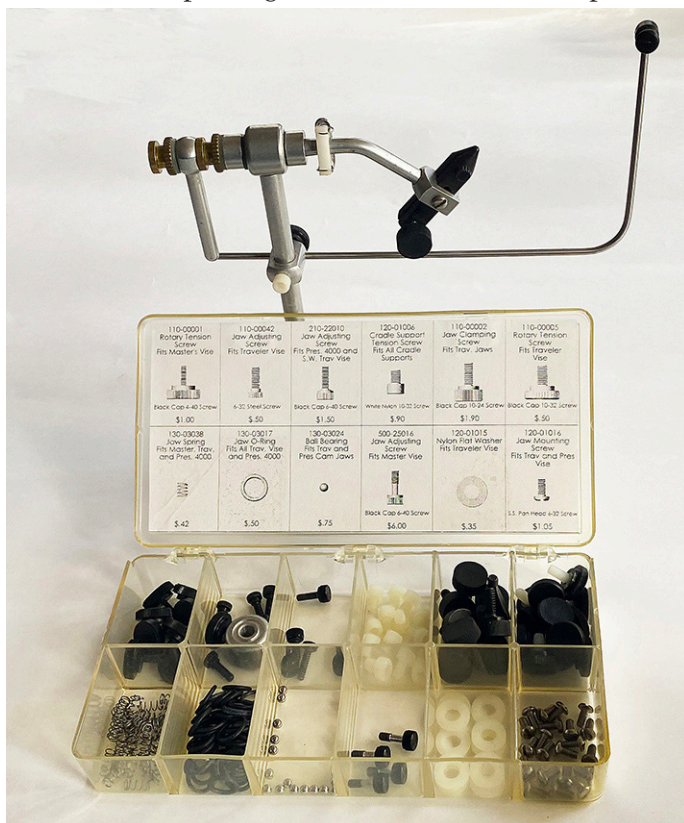
There was one for me, one for my cottage up north and a couple for whenever friends or my brother wanted to spin a bobbin. Or, I was thinking, when my grandchildren were ready to tie their first Woolly Bugger.

You might as well start them off on a Renzetti because at \$20 apiece, even I could afford them on my writer's salary.

When I got home, I discovered one was missing a rubber O ring, another a tightening screw.

So I checked spare part prices on the company's website and quickly realized buying another used vice just for parts would be cheaper.

And that was my intention the fol-



*Need a spare part for your Renzetti? DuFresne has it.*

*Continued on page 11*

# Where You Tie *We Want to See That Favorite Corner in Your House*

**By The Evening Hatch Editors**

Lefty Kreh passed away in 2018, but his fly-tying desk has been preserved at the American Museum of Fly Fishing, almost like the famed angler had just finished a dozen Lefty's Deceivers. MFFC member John Aukee was so impressed with the simplicity of the tying



bench that he sent us a photo of it.

And that got us thinking here at *The Evening Hatch*.

Fly-tying benches are as diverse as our members, and we would love to feature them in upcoming issues. Cluttered or neat, crammed with tools and spools of thread or nothing more than a vise, a pair of scissors, and a bodkin, they're all worthy of a place in our publication.

Our first selection is from Vince Caruso, who needed a few hours to "clean it off because it was piled with stuff."

"It might look impressive, but I haven't tied one fly this winter," Caruso said. "Also, it's in our family room, so it probably would look different (messy) if it were in the basement or garage."

It's okay, we love them messy, Vince.

*Left: Lefty Kreh's fly-tying desk at the American Museum of Fly Fishing.*

*Right: Vince Caruso's fly tying corner in his family room at home. It took Caruso "a few hours" to clean it up. We love the copy of Trout Madness on it.*



Want to feature your tying bench? Just snap a picture or two and add a few words about that favorite corner in your home. Email everything to Sybil Hunter at [evening.hatch.mffc@gmail.com](mailto:evening.hatch.mffc@gmail.com).

You don't even have to put away the patches of elk hair or calf tails.

## DuFresne: Hey Ken How Much for this Box of Renzetti Parts?

*Continued from page 10*

lowing Wednesday until I stumbled across a plastic box in the back of a large drawer. On the cover it said *Renzetti Vise Parts Kit* and inside were 12 small compartments of various spare parts, including the ones I needed.

I was on the verge of buying three of them, when I had a better idea.

"Ken, how much for this box of Renzetti parts?"

Ken looked at all those tension screws, ball bearings, and small springs – each with a different price ranging from 35 cents to \$6 – and said "How much you think it's worth?"

"Ten dollars," I said, and Ken said okay and still gave me the 50 percent discount.

Today a replacement Metal Jaw Adjusting Screw and a Metal Rotary Tension Screw for a Renzetti Master vise is \$14.99 (plus \$13.86 for shipping and sales tax) and I got 12 of them for \$5!

Of course, I will never be able to afford a Renzetti Master Vise – some mod-



*Who wouldn't want a logo Polo shirt from Hank's Fly Fishing Unlimited?*

els run almost \$1,200 – and the Renzetti vises I have are so well made I've never had to dip into my spare parts kit.

Doesn't matter. Not even the thought of my wife donating all those parts, vises and Scott rods to the MFFC for an estate sale the day after I'm cremated can't dampen my enthusiasm for that night.

What a bargain!

**Afterword:** I continued to visit Ken for another month or so then one Wednesday, when I was sneaking a brown paper bag full of fly stuff past my wife in the kitchen, I realized I had to stop. Among the items I purchased that night was a set of River Road Wing and Foam Body Cutters, complete with a wooden tool caddy and white cutting pad. Handing Ken the cash, I already knew I would probably never cut a wing with one.

I haven't. This was a bad addiction and I had to break it. It wasn't easy. On my final visit I think Ken knew I had hit rock bottom as a fly fishing shopaholic.

When I asked him how much was the Polo shirt with a Hank's Unlimited Fly Fishing logo on it, he smiled and said "It's yours."

# Andy Renzetti: A Half a Century of Prefecting the Fly Vise

*Continued from page 9*

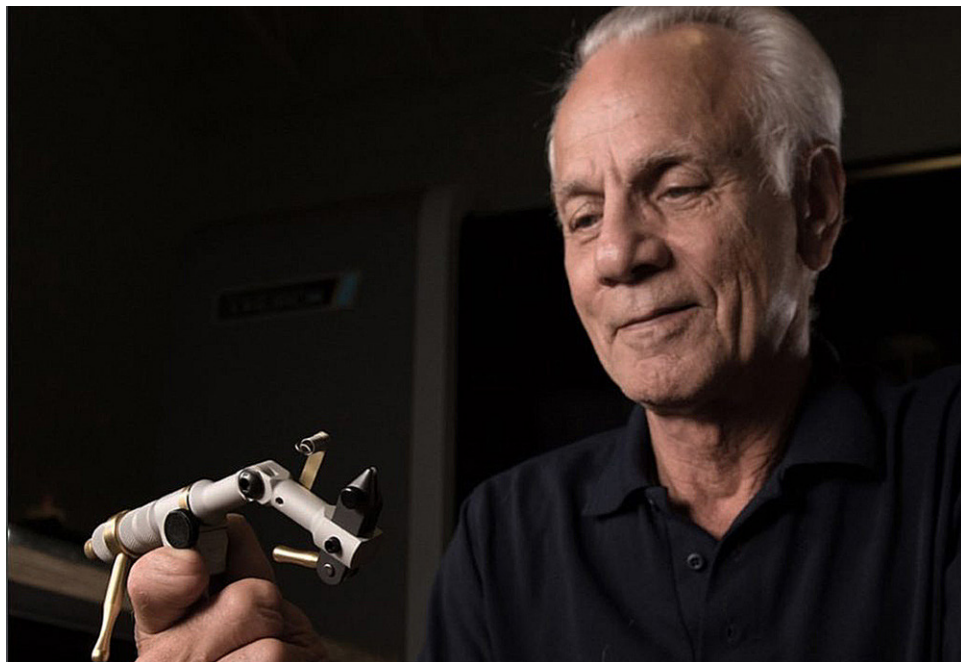
a Renzetti vise was handmade by a machinist. But increasing sales of the Traveler vises prompted Renzetti to invest in computerized equipment that overwhelmed his small shop.

So this time, longing to live closer to the ocean and tired of the long Pennsylvania winter, Andy said to Lily "The salt water is calling me."

In 1996, they packed up the company and moved their family and two key associates to Florida.

Renzetti Inc. is still family-owned but has 14 employees at its headquarters in Titusville and sales reps around the country. Their catalog also includes hand tools, from bobbins and scissors to hair packers and soft foam tool caddies to hold everything, as well as rod lathes and the accessories you'll need to build a fly rod. Everything is made in America.

But to most of us, Renzetti means vises that are beautiful, functional,



and artistically simple.

"It's been a beautiful journey," said Lily. "We've been blessed."

So have all of us who have ever slipped a hook into a Renzetti vise.

*Frustrated with vises on the market, Andy Renzetti designed and built the Presentation 3000, the first true rotary vise, in his garage in 1972.*



Michigan Fly Fishing Club  
P.O. Box 530861  
Livonia, MI 48153