



**Rhody FLY RODDERS**

*America's Oldest Saltwater Fly Fishing Club*

# THE CURRENT

*"The lifeline of the estuary and knowledge"*



**"Pass on to all, who  
ask, what you learn  
here"**



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@Rhody\_Fly\_Rodders



Gee! ... It is already the 2nd week of February. That means we are over the hill and heading toward spring. We do deserve a break from all the snowfall and bitter cold weather. We are going in a positive direction now.

January's meeting was a Block Buster. There were lots of good vibes and knowledge being shared. The snow storm and frigid weather made things difficult, but we were able to get the word out through social media. That paid us dividend. We had almost a dozen new visitors at our meeting. Chris Kokorda held our attention and he invoked dreams of fishing in warmer temperatures again.

Have you noticed more individuals tying flies before the meeting? Many members have an interest in learning or increasing their tying skills. Tying together in a group allows us to learn from each other and communicate with different people within our community. Everyone is welcome to join in.

### **Pay your dues**

If you haven't done so please pay your dues. It supports so many wonderful club activities. Dues can be paid at the meeting. You can also mail them. Dues are \$30.00. Payments can be mailed to John Pope, 6 Canonchet Drive, Portsmouth, RI 02871.

### **Buckle Raffle Items**

We seek your help with donations. If you have any fly fishing materials hanging around, please consider a donation. The raffles help support our club treasury and defray increases in membership dues.

### **Rods and Art Auction**

This is the last chance and the final month to make bids on some fantastic bargains. See page xx for more details.

*Capt. Ray Stachelek*



President  
Rhody Fly Rodders

*Capt. Ray Stachelek*

## Preview



**Tuesday, February 17, 6:00pm**

Riverside Sportsman Association  
19 Mohawk Dr., East Providence, RI 02915



### February Presentation

Have you ever had your fly reel drag cooked by a screaming albie? Nothing compares to this mind boggling experience of man vs. tuna. See why so many fishermen call this, “The ultimate adrenaline rush.” Learn how to greatly improve your odds. A culmination of information and photo sequences have been compiled from 20+ fishing seasons and will be presented at this meeting by Cap’t Ray Stachelek.



Ray is a RI based guide and fly tier. He has owned and operated Cast a Fly Charters for 28 years. In his sixty years of experience on the water, he has witnessed many of the changes that have impacted Narragansett Bay. Capt. Ray is known as an innovative fly designer. His nationally known “Angel Hair Series” pioneered the use of Angel Hair in saltwater 30 years ago. He is a member of the Umpqua Feather Merchants professional tiers team. In 2024 he was Honored as Man of the Year, by the Connecticut Fly Fishing Association. His latest project designing Micro-Flies for false albacore is now in the works.

### Before Meeting Fly Tying

We will be tying flies before the meeting. Participants should bring needed tools, materials, and their vice.

### Three Fly Rods and Artwork for Sale!

This is your last chance! Three fly rods and an original art piece are being auctioned in a running silent auction that ends this meeting. Take a look and make a bid!

### Directions

From Providence take Rt.195 to Exit 2B. Bear right on the ramp and follow Rt. 114 S for 2 miles. Look for WPRO Studios on the left, then take first U-turn back to Rt.114 north. Continue north and look for the Riverside Sportsman Club (blue) sign on the right.

# the 'Run' ...a Striper Odyssey

*...some rhyme & verse to their autumn migration*

*They 'run' in the fall ...from Atlantic waters' foam  
The sun with the tides ...signal them to journey home.*

*This drama of nature ...starts in the Northeast  
A build-up of factors ...serves up this aquatic feast.*

*It just seems to happen ...it spans ocean's range  
A migration of life ...launched from bays of Maine.*

*The baitfish leave first ...sand eels, bunker, et al  
A 'symphony of passage' ...like horns, drums, cymbals.*

*This 'existence sonata' ...feed 'till winter arrives  
Means endless hunting ...or risk the chance to survive.*

*Aroused summer waters ...revive all of sea's life  
This awakening call ...brings bait and fish to strife.*

*It triggers the flow ...predators track hordes of prey  
Transition back ...to River Hudson or Chesapeake Bay.*

*It's routine for game fish ...Striped Bass at its heart  
Sought by anglers all ...obsessed from the start.*

*For the Striper harvest ...gauge success for that year  
It's the targeted quarry ...no matter your gear.*

*The chase for them starts ...at Maine's rocky shores  
Kennebec, Casco Bay ...and the point at New Harbor.*

*They move past Great Bay ...then stage at Marblehead  
Onto the Cape's neck ...bait 'du jour' in their tread.*

*Turn 'round Race Point ... waters cold meet the warm  
Drawing Albies 'en masse' ...to add to the swarm*

*Nauset Beach, Chatham light ...past Monomoy flats  
They move down the Cape ...where the action is at.*

*With stops at the Vineyard ...thru a series of Sounds  
Then Jamestown, Watch Hill ...the momentum resounds.*

*Raging currents take hold ...disperse those confused  
Fisher's Isle? Rocky Neck? ...what's a Striper to do?*

*Then 'that major encounter' ...in the rip at Montauk  
Bluefish join in ...from Caswells to Shinnecock.*

*Small pods or huge schools ...their movement fluctuate  
It's not science, nor art ...it all depends on the bait.*

*City slickers engage ...at their Coney Island rip  
East River, Jamaica Bay ...past the Staten Island tip.*

*Sandy Hook to Cape May ...as the run nears its peak  
To DelMarVa grounds ...and the hallowed Chesapeake.*

*But some just keep going ...all the way to Nags Head  
It's a harried affair ...with little time for your bed.*

*The run hits full gear ...it's fish versus man  
The waiting is done ...fly fishers make their stand.*

*Frenzied anglers pursue ...it's seek, search and cast  
Day, night, 'round-the-clock ...the happening is vast.*

*The birds point the way ...all join in the mix  
This fishing addiction ...demands constant fix.*

*It's a frantic event ...lots of hype with crazed news  
'Bout Albie sizzling runs ...or dog-fighting Blues.*

*But the Striper's the game ...we all came to play  
It's what 'its about' ...greatest gamefish, they say.*

*Fly-fishers hunt'em ...all through their long flight  
A special breed of anglers ...with special insight.*

*A challenge for all ...but the 'fly' draws the stock  
As you search for the blitz ...from shore, craft or rock.*

*Hour by hour ...your cast grows intense  
Driven to connect ...requires a 'sixth sense'.*

*Then though it all ...your persistence pays off  
Hook a 'good' Striper on fly ...sends you aloft.*

*You fight and release her ...then she swims out to sea  
You've now etched your mark ...in this Striper Odyssey.*

*By Bob Signorello*

*...dedicated to those helping to  
preserve this precious resource*

## **Alan Caolo**

Westerly, RI

### **How long have you been a member?**

About three years

### **Favorite flies?**

Freshwater: Woolly Bugger; Saltwater: The Bendback

### **Favorite places to fish?**

Freshwater: Great Brook, Westfield, MA,  
Inshore Saltwater: Middle Keys, FL,  
Bluewater: southeast of Block Island

### **Boat or shore fishing?**

Done plenty of both. shore - it's pure

### **Favorite species to catch?**

Freshwater: Atlantic salmon, Inshore Saltwater: bonefish, Bluewater: white marlin

### **Favorite fishing partner?**

I have two - solitude and peace . . . no small talk, no compromise, which frees the mind to wander and wonder. It's refreshing, not weird.

### **How long have you been fly fishing and tying flies?**

50+ years, saltwater fly fishing for 35 years. Started tying in 1992

### **Any notable catches?**

A few

### **Any notable stories?**

Wading the Keys for bonefish, I caught a 25-pound tarpon that fought to exhaustion. I patiently revived it till it kicked free of my grasp. Next day, on that same flat, that same fish silently appeared and swam right beside me for some time before easing off and out of view. It was not frightened and seemed to associate me with its rescue and liberation, not the harm it perhaps associated with the shiny little object it ate . . . incredibly fascinating.



# Major Bunker



**We all need at least one big fly, but the price of larger flies and the time it takes to tie them is not for everyone. Here is how I tie a Klintz Major Bunker for when I need a quick and easy big fly.**

- 1) Tie in at the hook bend. Add a small amount of bucktail laying straight back. On each side attach 3 long, broad feathers with the fluff still attached.
- 2) Add the flash material of your choice before using a hollow tie to veil the feathers in bucktail. This will support the synthetic back.
- 3) Tie in the synthetic of your choice in the middle of the hank on top of the hook. It needs to be soft and long like slinky fiber. Fold it over itself to form a back.
- 4) Add any body wrap you want and wrap forward about 1/4 inch behind the hook eye.
- 5) Again, add a hollow tie of bucktail for support and then tie in your synthetic material over the top once more.
- 6) Add one more shorter tie in of synthetic material this time on the top and bottom of the fly. You can hollow tie this if you want to be fancy.
- 7) Glue on eyes and use the eyes to help form the shape of the fly. Coat with flexible resin or UV epoxy. Be careful to maintain the hook gap. Trim the synthetic and fish.

## Materials



Any standard hook 5/0+



Mono thread



Bucktail



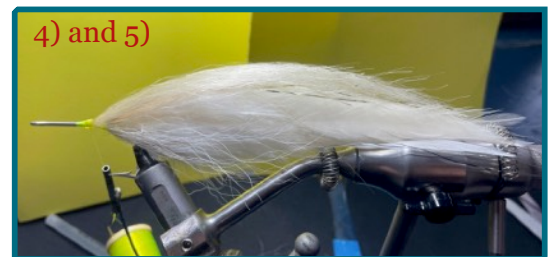
Broad features with fluff on



Ferrar blend or syn yak



Large eyes



# Spring Fly Fishing Narragansett Bay

With four hundred miles of coastline that includes islands, bays, coves, river mouths, estuaries, deep channels, sand bars, mud flats, sandy beaches and sheer cliffs, how does one begin to write about springtime fly fishing in Narragansett Bay? My way is to focus on fishing for striped bass and bluefish, to separate shore fishing from boat fishing, and to consult an expert authority regarding each mode (While fly fishing the worm “hatch” is a spring time event, that subject was covered separately).



## Shore Fishing

My authoritative shore fishing source is J. Kenney Abrames, a Rhode Island fly fishing legend and noted author of *Striper Moon* and *A Perfect Fish*. Years ago, I hired Ken to guide and teach me where and how to fly fish for striped bass from shore around Narragansett Bay. We spent two successive twelve-hour sessions together, from dusk to dawn, in mid-May, driving from spot to spot in his truck. We covered the Bay from Narragansett to Tiverton. I had a then-current, spiral bound AAA Rhode Island Street Map, and I marked each location and made notes about when and how to fish each place. Within a few days, I reviewed my source material and put together a two-page “Guide to Spring Fly Fishing Locations.” I printed a copy to keep with the AAA Street Map for my own personal use. Since then I seem to have forgotten in which file on which computer I saved the original text, but I still have that copy of the Guide tucked in that same Street Map under lock and key in my truck. Although there



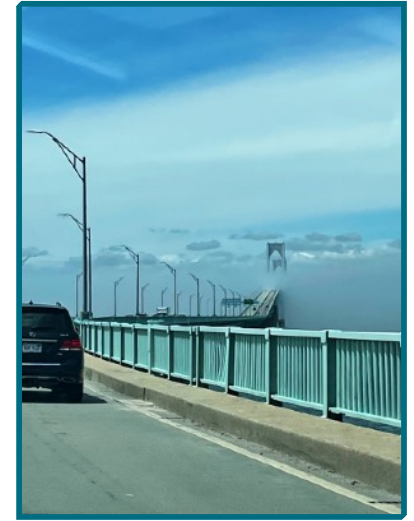
are holdover stripers that can be caught on fly in March and early April, fishing really gets underway when migrating fish invade the Bay. The first migrating stripers typically show up at the West Wall of the Point Judith Harbor of Refuge within a week of April 10, and by May 1 just about the entire Bay has seen an influx of migrating bass. Typically these fish are schoolies in the 16 to 24 inch range, and they are hungry. By mid-May, there will be a fair distribution of slot-size bass; that is, 28 to 35 inch fish, with a few over-slot cows mixed in.

Early in the season bait may be scarce. Certainly there will be shrimp and perhaps some silversides and mumichogs. Bass will be looking for these critters to flush out of rivers and ponds that open to the Bay. Consider fishing places like the Narrow River, Wickford Harbor, Bristol Harbor, Colt State Park and Sapowet. You can catch stripers during the daytime at these locations, but you will do better at night.

# Spring Fly Fishing Continued

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I opt for a 7 or 8 weight rod with a floating line because these early spring shore locations are generally not very deep. And, as Ken Abrames recommends, I start fishing with a multi-fly rig of two or three flies, (You can find detailed instructions for fabricating a multi-fly rig on Steve Coulton's website, [www.currentseams.com](http://www.currentseams.com).) Early in the season, a combination of a small shrimp fly, a small baitfish imitation (e.g., a Ray's Fly) and a cinder worm or clam worm pattern would be appropriate. Later in the spring, after squid have made their appearance in the Bay, you might substitute a squid pattern for the shrimp fly and also increase the size of the baitfish patterns. The fish will tell you which pattern they prefer, and then you can adjust your fly selection accordingly. Presentation is important. You are not likely to find large schools of blitzing bass accessible from shore in the early spring. It's more likely that the stripers you encounter will be holding in current breaks or current seams waiting for food to come to them. In such case, you generally can't just cast, rapidly strip your fly and expect a jarring strike. You will do better by casting somewhat up and across the flow and mending your line as necessary to achieve a more natural and realistic presentation. If you are new to this kind of fishing, then read about, or watch YouTube videos about, these topics: Mending, wet fly swing, greased line swing and dead drifting. Also, when fishing at



night, be mindful of the shadow line, especially when fishing around bridges or lighted piers. Bass will often hold in the dark, waiting to pick off bait that has been attracted to the light. You certainly want your fly to come from the light toward the dark.

As for bluefish, they tend to show up later in the spring when there are more baitfish available as prey. Also, since they are generally more accessible from a boat, more about bluefish below.

**Ken's Boat Fishing Primer is coming in March!**

# January

February, 2026



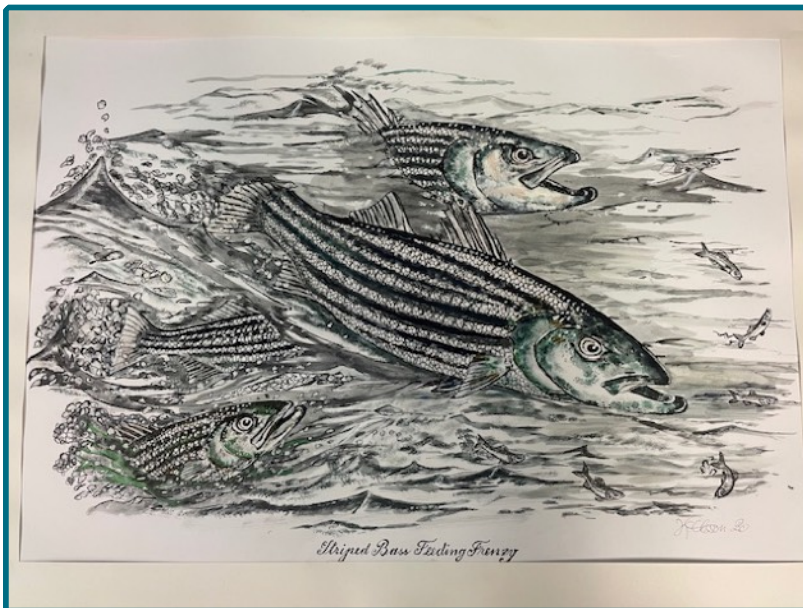
# Fly Rod and Artwork Sale

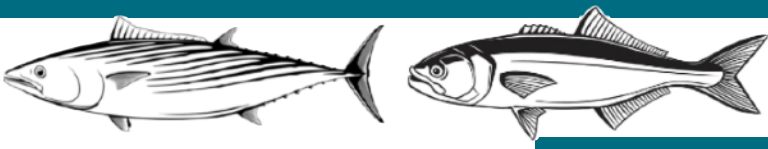
**The silent Auction will end in February**

**Temple Fork Ti Cr X, 8 wt. 9 feet, 4 piece: Minimum Bid \$70.00**  
**Temple Fork Ti Cr X, 7 wt. 9 feet, 4 piece: Minimum Bid \$70.00**  
**Pflueger Medalist, 6 wt. 9 feet, 2 piece: Minimum Bid \$35.00**



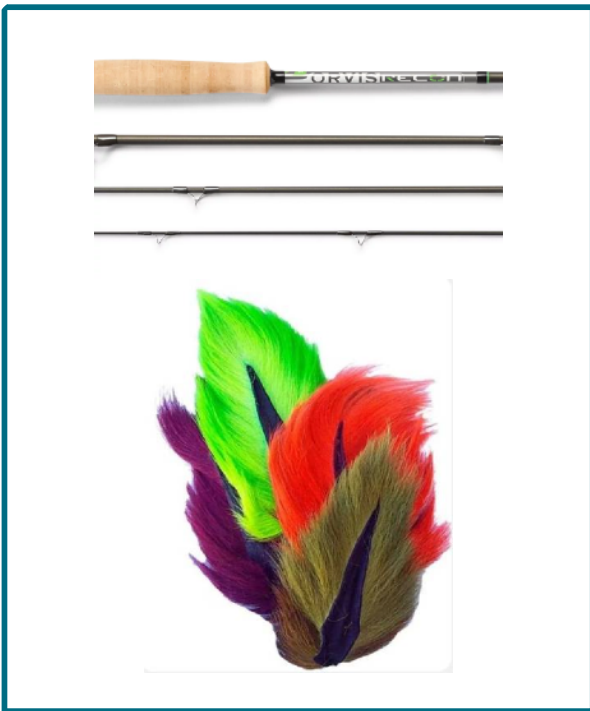
**Original Artwork by Keld Olson: Minimum Bid \$60.00**





## What's New?

Orvis released its new version of their **Recon Rod** series. Rods from the prior Recon lineup were always a solid option with good customer service. Like all rods, it's hard to imagine that the newest model could be significantly improved enough for anyone except the best caster to notice. Personally, I'd wait for more reviews to come in before committing to any newly released rod over \$300.



## What's Worthless?

Surprisingly, I don't have much to complain about. I could rehash complaints about rising prices or fragile gear. I could complain about the cult-like status certain brands developed due to people falling victim to marketing ploys. I could complain about how some people think of flies as the most important factor for success whereas getting anything in front of a fish is the most important part of this game. I could complain about those who count bucktail fibers and ruin the fun of fly tying. But, I'm not in a complaining mood.

## What's Worth It?

Checking out **B grade bucktail** in person at a fly shop is always worth it. Fly shops make mistakes. Sometimes A grade tails make it into the B grade pile. Sometimes a B grade tail just has more hollow stiff hair or a mix of short and long hair. Both of these situations are not limiting. You can learn to work with the hollow hairs and how to preen short hairs before cutting. Bob Popovic was an expert at this. He could separate short hairs and long hairs before cutting by how he held the hair which preserved short hairs for clousers on the hide. This made little waste. He also knew how to use thread pressure, super glue, and veiling materials to lay the stubbornest stiff and hollow bucktail hairs down into shape. The point is learn to use the full tail and imperfect materials to get the most out of your budget and fly tying. Remember, the fish don't really care if the fly is perfect. They care a lot more about the fly getting in front of them.

# Maybe Shark?

Four miles down Sandy Neck Beach and past a random nude sunbather, Cape Cod felt empty in the best way—just sand, sky, and a few coyotes. We were mid thigh-deep in crystal clear water, sight fishing for striped bass, moving slowly parallel to the drop off on the edge of the flat 10 feet away. Stalking our quarry we were focused and quiet, hoping stripers would enter the the flat in our path.

Out on the horizon, there were a few splashes, which is normal to see on the seal dense Cape beaches. At first we paid little attention to it —probably just a seal, maybe even a whale. The splashing continued periodically. A few minutes went by before a dark shape broke the surface. It disappeared, came back, disappeared again. As it moved closer, it looked like a curious seal’s head, bobbing calmly toward us to ruin the miles of effort we had put in.

My fishing partner squinted. She questioned “Is that a shark?” “No,” I said, too quickly. “Just another fucking seal” Fifteen seconds passed and the object was now closer, but still unclear. I recanted, “No...Maybe its a shark? It’s definitely a fin and not a seal, but could be a whale.” Whales are very common where we fish.

We laughed. Not really thinking it could be a shark we began to sing “Baby Shark” but with the words “Maybe Shark.”

But it kept coming. Slowly gliding towards us. The water between us seemed to hold its breath as it became clearer this could be a shark. We took a few careful steps back as the unknown creature approached the edge, and that’s when the animal turned sideways, as if to look at us.

The truth slid into focus all at once. A great white shark passed in front of us, close enough to see everything. The dark eye, the gill slits, the pale belly glowing beneath the surface, and an open mouth allowing water to flow past the gills were now clear. It moved smoothly and calmly with effortless power, not rushing, not changing its speed or body language, not threatening in the slightest. It seemed curious about what we were. Then it was past us, fading back into blue. We stared at the drop off with amazement. What an awesome experience.



## Spotlight: LaFarge Park (Narrow River)

*This section is meant to highlight well known fishing spots in order to provide information to new saltwater fly fishermen.*



LaFarge Park is located off Walmsey Lane in Saunderstown, RI. This park is one of the few access points for shore fishing in the pond section of the Narrow River. This location is also where the URI Crew House is located. In winter the upper ponds will contain striped bass, white perch, and a small number of Atlantic herring and winter flounder.

The pond portion of the Narrow River is most productive winter through early spring. A decent number of striped bass overwinter in the two ponds below the Gilbert Stewart Museum, and these ponds are quite deep. However, most years the two ponds only have oxygen in the top 13 feet of the water column. The limnology does not allow for the water to mix as frequently as we see in a typical lake. This lack of mixing causes a significant anoxic layer at the bottom. The fish cannot enter this anoxic zone and must stay in the top 13 feet of the water column.

Fishermen should focus their efforts in the evening and the first two hours after dark. This is the time when the water is at its warmest. When you arrive you will need to wade into the pond and along the shore to access good water. Don't be afraid, but wade slowly and with caution as the shoreline drops off in several spots. In places, submerged trees, leaf piles, and oyster beds may cause snags if your fly drags on the bottom. Due to the cold water and drop offs, its best to fish this with a friend.

LaFarge Park is easily accessible, but there are a few nuances to know before you drive there. Parking is limited and the dirt access road off of Walmsey Lane is narrow and rough. A truck or SUV with high clearance is recommended. The parking area can get quite muddy. This is not the place to jump out of your car in flip flops.

# Volunteer Opportunities

**This is a preliminary list of volunteer opportunities to help Ed with the ARE fly fishing program. The complete list will be published when available. All questions should be sent to Ed Lombardo.**

1. Saturday, April 18th. 2026, Kids Day / Fly Fishing School at Addieville East Farm. Kids, Parents, & Guardians, lunch and all equipment provided for all who attend. Time 8:15 for volunteers and 9:00am for students.

Free of charge

2. Saturday, May 30th. 2026, Adult Freshwater Fly Fishing School at Addieville East Farm. Lunch and all equipment provided for all who attend. Time 8:15 for volunteers and 9:00am for students.

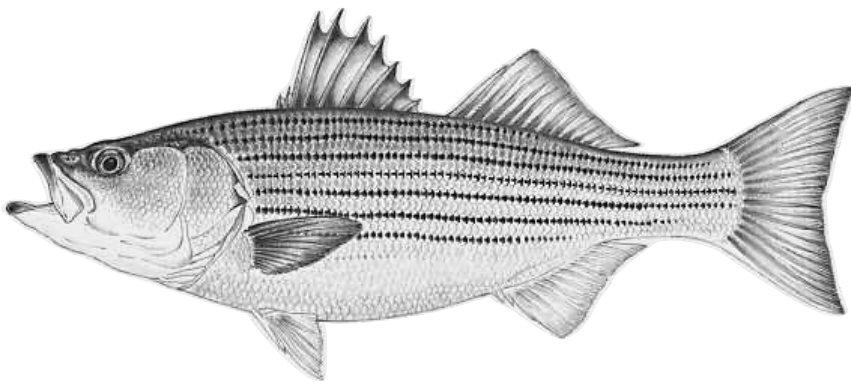
Cost: \$30.00 per person

3. Thursday night, June 11th. 2026, Hexagenia Hatch Presentation and Fly Tying Class. Time, 6:30pm to 8:30pm. At Camp E - Hun - Tee, Exeter, RI Division of Fish & Wildlife Outdoor Education Office. All fly tying materials and fly tying vices provided.

Cost: \$10.00 per person

4. Saturday June, 20th. 2026, Veterans Fly Fishing School At Deer Creek Farm, Foster, R I, 59 North Road 02825. Starting time; 8:15 for volunteers and 9:00am for Veterans. Lunch and all equipment provided for all who attend. Time 8:15 for volunteers and 9:00am for Veterans. This program is a Dare to Dream Ranch.

Free of charge



## We Need Your Help!

Did you read a good fishing book or go on a trip somewhere? Do you want to share your knowledge of a **well known** spot with members new to the area or new to fly fishing? How about just some pictures of the fish you catch? ***U dun't hav 2 worry about gramma or speling***, we can fix it! Let us know and we will include it in the next issue.

Contact the newsletter team:  
[Rhodyflyrodder.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:Rhodyflyrodder.newsletter@gmail.com)

### Officers and Board

#### President:

Capt. Ray Stachelek  
 401-884-3794  
[castaflycharters@cox.net](mailto:castaflycharters@cox.net)

#### Secretary/Treasurer:

John Pope  
[jpope@johnspopecpa.com](mailto:jpope@johnspopecpa.com)

#### Vice President:

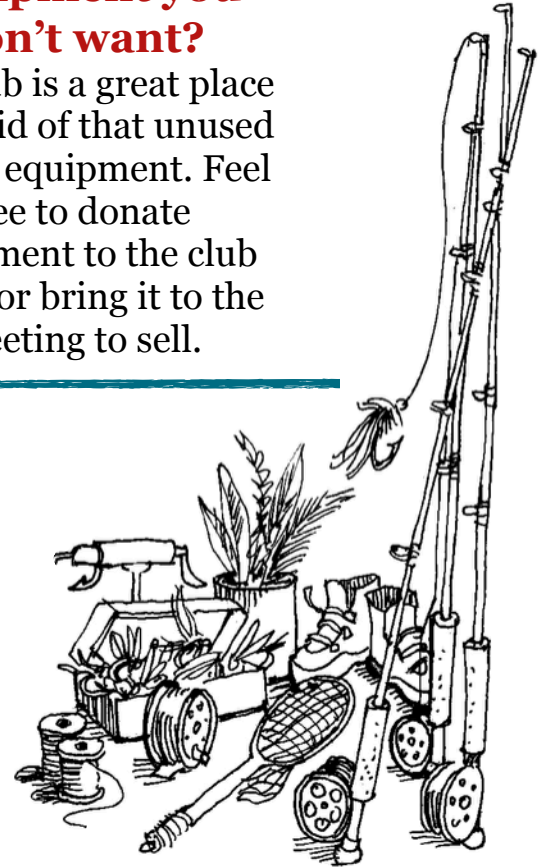
Paul Burmeister

#### Directors:

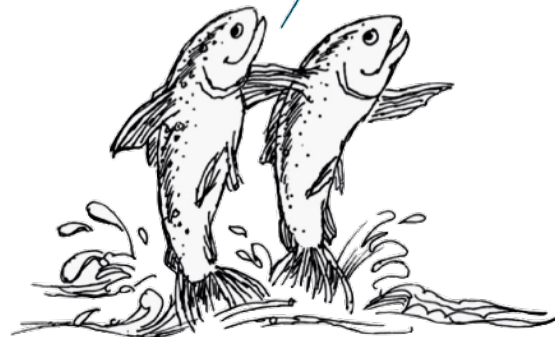
Jon Avery  
 Mark Ellis  
 Susan Estabrook  
 Gary Menard  
 Patrick Williamson

## Do you have unused fishing equipment you don't want?

Our club is a great place to get rid of that unused fishing equipment. Feel free to donate equipment to the club raffle, or bring it to the meeting to sell.



Good Times!



Artwork by: **Peter Nilsen**