Subject: : Gear Talk
Topic: : New fly shop opening in the Lehigh Valley
Re: New fly shop opening in the Lehigh Valley
Author: : GreenWeenie
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URL:

Unfortunately I personally think the big three retailers are probably both the best and worst thing that ever happened to fly fishing.

It is the best thing that has happened because it has made fly fishing more visible, accessible and less intimidating to many people who might not otherwise have gotten into fly fishing. 35 years ago fly fishing was still like some secret, snobbish, elite society practiced by a select few.

It is the worst thing because for the most part, their employees are completely clueless. They aren't trained in helping people purchase the right equipment for their budget and needs but rather professional sales people trained to sell you whatever they think it is that you're willing to buy even if that something is a 10 foot, 8 weight super fast action rod for dry fly spring creek fishing or a 7.5 foot, 3 weight for fishing the Delaware.

And these sales people are also trained to convince many that the more expensive rod/reel combo they get the better caster and fisherman they will be but the truth is they'd be better off buying cheaper gear, saving $200, and investing the $200 on casting lessons. Oh, but the big retailers don't sell casting lessons so these big retailers feed on the fact that most fly fisherman believe that every problem they have can be corrected by simply buying the most expensive equipment out there.

That's my personal issue with the big three retailers - they aren't true fly shops selling a service that will help you they are retailers simply taking your money. And most people have never visited a good, knowledgeable mom and pop fly shop to really see the difference. Walk into one of the big three and ask them if they can show you how to spin deer hair. I'll bet they won't but most good mom and pop stores will gladly show you how to spin deer hair.

The next worst thing to happen to fly fishing is on line discount shops. Everybody loves to save a buck or two but it upsetting when I see someone walk into the local fly shop wanting to buy a new rod. The owner spends 1+ hour of time with the person giving them a free casting lesson, rigging multiple rods, etc., so they can determine what rod is best suited for their needs and after all is said and done, the customer leaves and buys the rod over the internet because he can save $5. And when the customer slams the door on the tip, he brings the rod back to the local fly shop wanting them to handle the lifetime warranty service.

The big retailers have their place but if you can find a local, knowledgeable fly shop, please support them. They can help you with knots, equipment selection, fly tying techniques, casting techniques, local conditions, local tips and tricks, etc. You will never get that from the big retailers or on line discount shops.