



“THE FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL” TACKLE SHOW

Daytona Beach, Florida

March 2nd, 3rd and until noon 4th, 2012

*Return for the SUN, Return for the FUN, Return for the hundreds tables of
ANTIQUÉ FISHING TACKLE!*

The F.A.T.C. “Florida International” is back to the Plaza Resort and Spa on the beach in Daytona Beach. Room nights will be a low \$108.00 a night and will be available with FREE parking.

Join antique fishing tackle collectors from around the world for tackle collecting’s second largest show. Join us for over 340 tables of antique lures, reels, rods, creels, fish decoys and much more including our famous Saturday Night Auction.

Here is your chance to escape the frigid north, and enjoy the warm tropical breezes and watch the waves roll up on the beach while buying and selling old fishing tackle. Truly tackle trading in PARADISE!

The Plaza Resort and Spa is located right on the Atlantic Ocean and has two restaurants a small convenience store, a very large pool facing the ocean, a few tiki bars and dozens of great restaurants within walking distance.

SHOW LOCATION: PLAZA RESORT AND SPA

600 NORTH ATLANTIC AVENUE, DAYTONA BEACH, FL

ACCOMMODATIONS: PLAZA RESORT AND SPA 800-874-7420

Room rates \$ 108.00 per night.

TABLE AND REGISTRATION: Registration is \$ 15.00 per member.

8 ft. tables, \$ 25.00 each, wall or aisle. Membership dues must be current to register.

REGISTRATION FORM AND SHOW HOST INFORMATION:

PRINT OUT THIS PAGE, Please make checks payable to F.A.T.C and mail to:

**Bonnie Saliba
1038 Riverside Dr.
Holly Hill, FL 32117**

Or call show host, Larry Lucas 386-527-4338 porterman@cfl.rr.com

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone # and E-Mail _____

Guests Name(s) _____

Registration _____ **at \$ 15.00 each for a total of :** _____

I would like _____ **Wall Tables at \$ 35.00 Each** _____

_____ **Aisle Tables at \$ 35.00 Each** _____

Membership dues (if unpaid, please pay with separate check): \$35.00 _____

Total Enclosed _____

Payment must accompany registration – Refunds for cancellations must be requested 30 days in advance. You must be an FATC member to exhibit, trade or buy at the auction. Membership renewal at the show will involve waiting in two lines so pay your membership dues now!

The Florida Surprise Minnow

Part 2

By Ed Weston

Let me first give you a quick review of how the Florida Surprise Minnow came into existence: In September of 1983 Jim Fraizer and I decided to have three dozen surprise type wood minnows made by J.C. Griner of Orlando, Florida to use as Christmas presents for our close lure trading friends. The surprise minnows were 4 1/8 inches long, two treble hooks and in a frog color pattern. The original cost was three dollars per lure, although they now trade for over one hundred dollars each. Now for the rest of the story!

At the time in addition to collecting antique lures, I was addicted to bass fishing and was fishing at least one amateur bass tournament each month. My favorite bass lures were: a yellow Devils Horse for top water. A silver Rapala or Bagley as a shallow crank type bait, a Snagless Sally to pull through the weeds, and, of course, a blue or motor oil plastic worm. At the end of the fishing tournament when anglers were putting up their equipment and tackle boxes were being opened, I would go around looking for a collectable lure in one of these open boxes. If I found one, I would offer to trade this custom made and rare wood Florida Surprise minnow for the lure I was after. In no time I was down to my last few Florida Surprise Minnows.



I called Jim Frazier and told him I was going back up to Orlando and see Mr. Griner and have some more Florida Surprise Minnows made, and did he want any more? Jim told me that he did not care for any more. I phone Mr. Griner and made an appointment to see him on the upcoming weekend.

I was really having fun with the Florida Surprise Minnows, so I decided to order some in different sizes and different colors. If I got stuck with a few, I could always take them to a lure show and sell them for five or six bucks and double my money, The following is a list of Surprise Minnows from memory that I had Mr. Griner produce, so it may not be exactly perfect.

- Six Florida Surprise Minnows in the original size and color but three treble hooks instead of two.





- Twelve Florida Surprise Minnows in a larger size for big bass, musky, and snook, three trebles – 6 1/2 inches long – frog paint pattern.
- Three in original size, two trebles – blended red head with white body
- Three in original size, two trebles – blended blue head with a white body
- Three in original size, two trebles – black back, green side scale, and gold bottom
- Three in original size, two trebles – all black
- Three in original size, two trebles – spotted ape
- Three in original size, two trebles – silver back, blue, side scales, and a silver bottom
- Three in original size, two trebles – silver back, gold side scales, and a gold bottom
- Three in original size, two trebles – Christmas tree – white body, green and red spots



- Three in original size, two trebles – yellow body, black and red spots
- Three baby Surprise Minnows, 3 1/4 inches – two trebles – frog
- Three baby Surprise Minnows, 3 1/4 inches – two trebles – yellow body, black and red spots
- Three baby Surprise Minnows, 3 1/4 inches – two trebles – all black

That is all that my brain can conjure up at this time. I suspect that there might be some size and color out there that I cannot recall. If you happen to own one of these that is not mentioned here, please let me know so that I can log that information.

As far as I know, J.C. Griner never made any more Florida Surprise Minnows. So if you are lucky enough to own one of these little gems, you have a rare limited edition Florida lure. I hope you have enjoyed this little trip back in time.



Ken Bay - Honorary Member Citation

Ken Bay was born in Bristol, Connecticut, in September 1920. His fishing began as a teenager when he started bait fishing for brown trout and plug casting for largemouth bass in the streams and lakes in the nearby areas. He attended high school in Simsbury and graduated from Morse College in Hartford with a degree in accounting and business administration in 1940.

In 1941 he married Jeanne from West Virginia whom he met at a hospital in Hartford where she was a nurse. They have three children. He joined the Air Force and flew twenty-six heavy bomber combat missions over Europe in World War II and fifty-three attack bomber combat missions over Korea during the Korean Conflict.

Following his military service, he got back into fishing and became intrigued with the idea of tying a fly and then using it to catch a fish. Ken was living on Long Island, New York, surrounded by salt water. He quickly took advantage of the type of fishing it offered. As time passed, Ken looked for books on salt water fly fishing and flies only to discover that there was just one book on the subject which had been published in 1950. However, the sport had greatly advanced by the 1960's, particularly as to the many types of flies devised by fishermen.

It was apparent that despite the many books on fly fishing that appeared during the 60's, salt water fly fishing had been completely ignored. This led to Ken's first book in 1972, *Salt Water Flies*, which was also the first book ever devoted to salt water flies. The book received favorable acclaim and comment for every quarter. Today it is a classic and a collector's item.

His approach to the book was to ask five of the most prominent salt water fly fishermen of the day Joe Brooks, Lefty Kreh, Mark Sosin, Stu Apte and Cap Colvin for their comments on their favorite salt water fly. Ken then tied each of these favorites in a step-by-step sequence which were photographed for his book.

In 1974 he produced his second book, *How to Tie Fresh Water Flies*, which was an instructional book of tying fresh water trout flies. This book was also

published in Germany and Japan. Also in 1974 Ken received the coveted Buz Buszek award as Fly Tyer of the Year from the Federation of Fly Fishermen.

In 1979, Ken revived his salt water book format. He used that same format when he wrote *American Fly Tyers Handbook*, which was on fresh water flies tied by experts who submitted their own creations.

In 1969 he was elected a director of the National Federation of Fly Fishermen. From 1973-1979 he served as Treasurer of the Striped Bass Fund, a non-profit organization devoted to striped bass propagation in the Hudson River. Ken was elected President of the New York City Theodore Gordon Flyfishers for 1976-77.

In 1988 Ken retired from Acme Dannerman Co., Inc., of New York City, a tool and die manufacturing and distribution business, where he had been the Controller for nineteen years and President for eleven years.

Ken and Jeanne came to Daytona Beach shortly after his retirement. He joined the Florida Antique Tackle Collectors and has been an exhibitor at our annual Daytona Beach Show for many years. Jeanne died in 2006 after 65 years of marriage to Ken.

Over the past twenty years, Ken has written for, or been written about, in several of the magazines that support salt water fly fishing. Just to mention a few of his flies that have been featured are "Ken's River Shrimp," "Ken's Bay Muddler," and "Ken's Bay Mullet." These articles have appeared in the Florida Sportsman Magazine, Saltwater Fly Fishing and others.

Ken is now 90 years old and has moved back to Long Island to live with his daughter, Leslie. He is still mobile and is starting to tie some flies that will suit that part of the country.

In grateful appreciation the Board of Directors elects Ken Bay, this 10th Day of June 2011, as an Honorary Member of the Florida Antique Tackle Collectors.

On the next page is a letter from Ken Bay to the FATC.

Dear FATC,

I am overwhelmed by the Honorary Membership Certificate that has been awarded to me by the FATC.

I have been a member of some fishing related organization without interruption ever since the late 1950s and have never enjoyed the kind fraternity I have seen in FATC. I am greatly flattered.

When the occasion has arisen since 1990 or so, when you accepted a fly tyer – no collector – to belong to your organization so I could tie flies at any of your shows, it was a relationship as a member that I had never experienced. FATC members are wholly involved

in the groups' activities and aims.

This is contrary to memberships of any and all other fishing-related clubs and it shows that your organization has lasted and grown over the years. I never heard a cross or impatient comment by anyone and on the contrary you could always find a helping hand with little effort.

I will treasure this Certificate as one of a kind with great appreciation and am sorry that I am no longer able to participate in your activities.

*Kindest regards,
Ken Bay*



Honorary Membership Certificate
of the
Florida Antique Tackle Collectors
Ken Bay

Is hereby elected to Honorary Membership this 10th day of June 2011

Larry Lucas – President

Florida Antique Tackle Collectors

Bill Stuart – Chairman

Honorary Memberships



MUST HAVE LICENSE

by Jesse Furman

I started obsessing over vintage fishing lures in the summer of 2007. I had no idea what to buy or what to pay, but the thrill of the hunt and the obsession to collect was quickly injected into my bloodstream after I held a floating Heddon River Runt Spook in my hand at an antique shop in Fairfield, Maine. I paid \$20 for it and the rest, as they say, is history. It took me a while to find out what I truly wanted to collect. I found a Jenson Frog Legs here and a Clyde Hoage Water Gremlin there, but I couldn't quite find my collecting niche. And that is when I stumbled upon Mr. Fin Dingo. The little plastic beauty, made first by Ropher of Los Angeles and later purchased by South Bend in the early 50's, first tickled my fancy when I stumbled upon him in the winter of 2008 while perusing Dudley and Deanie Murphy's Fishing Lure Collectibles (Modern Era) book. There is just something about its unique shape and little fins that truly appeals to me. Well 19 lures, 4 quonset hut tubes, one blue Ropher box and hundreds of dollars later, I needed my next fix. It is a funny thing being a collector. You never know what lure or collectible is going to give you the bug...a little like falling in love, you never know when it is going to hit you. You are just minding your own business and then BAM!! My next 'BAM' happened to me this summer at the Roller Rink Antique Mall in Pittsfield, Maine.

My family and I spend a few weeks in Maine each summer on vacation. The fishing on Lake Winnecook can't be beat and the antiquing in central Maine is extraordinary. Living year round in South Florida, our idea of an antique is a coffee table from the 80's. Anything that actually is an antique is so overpriced in our area it is laughable. In Maine, residents clean out the garage, barn, attic or basement and find a smorgasbord of relics to make us collectors drool. Stop by a local garage sale or weekend auction and you would swear they had access to a functional time machine. A plethora of dusty goodies on display to give any collector the sweats!! But I regress....back to the Roller Rink Antique Mall. It is a roller rink from the 50's that has been converted into an impressive antique mall. Last year I found a mint Pflueger sinker display and this year I found my next obsession.

I found a fishing license. Not just any fishing license, but one owned by Edward L. Vail. Who is Edward L. Vail, you ask? Well, I will tell you. Edward L. Vail lived in Hamilton, Maine. He was born in 1864; stood 6 feet 3 inches tall, weighed 200 pounds and had a medium complexion. How do I know this? Simple—by reading the front of his 1931-issued Maine Resident Combination License. Edward paid \$1.15, and his license expired on New Years Eve 1931. Why a fishing license would need to state a complexion type is beyond me. Well, this was the coolest thing I have ever seen, I had to have it! The price was a mere ten bucks—just 10 smackers!! What a bargain. I left that day with Mr. Vail's license from 80 years ago and felt like I had a little bit of history in my pocket. So now the sickness has struck. ...MUST FIND MORE LICENSES...

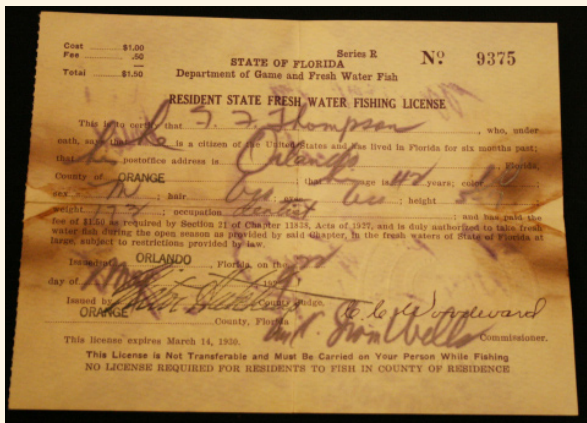
So later that week while perusing a Maine Antique Newspaper, I stumbled upon an ad for Allen Brook Farm Tackle in Appleton, Maine. So I called and spoke to a very nice gentleman on the phone. We talked shop for a while and he explained to me that he meets customers by appointment, so we scheduled an appointment for the following Thursday. Only three more days 'til Allen Brook Farm.

So the big day arrives and I hop in the car to make the 45 minute trip. Heading southeast, I drive merrily past rolling hills and orchards...beautiful two lane scenery zipping by as dreams of Creek Chub, Shakespeare, Heddon and Rush dance in my head. Finally I arrive cross the threshold of vintage fishing heaven. Not only was there Creek Chub, Shakespeare, Heddon, and Rush, there was also Jamison, Moonlight, Pflueger, South Bend, Paw Paw, Hurd, F.E. Thomas, Orvis, Von Hofe, Koph, Winchester, Meisselbach, Kosmic, Dame Stoddard and so much more!!! I found the single most extraordinary collection of vintage tackle I have ever seen outside of one of our beloved F.A.T.C shows.

This was impressive. I didn't know where to start. Do I look at the lures first, the reels, the minnow cages, the old magazines—AAHHHHH—my brain was on fishing collectible overload. But remember, my latest addiction dates back a week earlier to Mr. Vail. So I asked the caretaker of this piscatorial museum, Joel Gushee, if he had



any vintage fishing licenses. Lo and behold he did. He pulled out one belonging to an F.F. Thompson. A Florida Resident Fresh Water Fishing License dated 1928. Well, this I just had to have. And not only did he have 1928, but right below it was 1929! Back-to-back licenses from the same guy! How cool was this-and the kicker was, they were from my home state of Florida. Who would have thought that I would find a Florida fishing license so far from home? So my first question is, how much? The kind gentleman told me \$50 bucks...each. Okay, no problem. "Do you take credit cards", I asked? "Sorry, cash only" was Joel's response.



Oops. So I reached into my wallet and find.....\$65 bucks.....are you kidding me?!?! Here I have stumbled across the holy mecca of fishing collectibles and I have 65 bucks. Talk about showing up to a gun fight with a slingshot. So now I panic. MUST HAVE LICENSES... We settle on a cash payment on the 1928 license and I make him promise that he cant sell the 1929 until I get home and mail him a check. He agrees and I am off, as high as a kite. What a fix. I found two Florida licenses, in Maine of all places. I remembered that the Florida license is extremely rare, so on my way home I text my friend Ed Bauries. Most of you probably know Ed from his fine work with the F.A.T.C. over the years and he has become my go to guru on all things vintage tackle related. He proceeds to respond to my text that the license is valued somewhere in the \$35 dollar range. (cue sound of record needle screeching) Wha-Wha-What?? So not only is this a letdown, but I overpaid. Total bumner. But his ensuing text says that if I found a Florida badge, he has heard those being worth \$4,000!!* Thanks Ed, so not only did I overpay for the paper ones, but now I struck out in finding the badge version and they are super hard to find. Well, chalk one up in the loss column. The hunt goes on.

The following week, I drive home to the wickedly cruel heat of South Florida in August. I am a little depressed and suffering from vacation hangover when an odd number with a 207 area code appears on my cell phone. Upon answering, I hear the friendly Maine accent from my old friend, Joel at Allen Brook Tackle Farm. It seems once he heard I was interested in collecting licenses he did some digging and found a Florida badge. "Excuse me, what did you say?" He said he found a 1927-28 Florida badge (the only year Florida produced a badge style fishing license). Holy cow!! Are you kidding me, what are the odds? Stay calm,

relax, breathe. MUST HAVE LICENSE....I asked him to describe it to me and it sounded like the real deal. Everything that he described matched what I had found online. MUST HAVE LICENSE....So the big question arises, how much is it?.....he says if I take the 1929 paper license and the 1927 badge, I can have them both for \$100 bucks. Hm-mmm, let me think about that..... HECK YEA!! So here is the kicker, I have to mail him a check (remember, no credit cards), and now I have to wait for the check to arrive in Maine and then wait for the license to arrive in Florida. They are 1600 miles apart, do you know how long that is in postal service years? Plenty of

time to do some research. Multiple calls are made – Ed Bauries, Doug Brace, Ed Pritchard, Dennis McNulty, Jeff Drexel, an expert on fishing licenses from North Carolina, and many a night spent on the internet looking for clues and research on Florida badges.

The big day finally comes. The package is sitting on a chair on my front porch. In the return address in big bold sharpie it says Allen Brook Tackle Farm. The suspense is killing me. I eat dinner. I chat with the wife. I delay it as long as possible until finally the time comes. I open. I look. And based on my research it looks real to me. Hallelujah!! I did it, a truly rare piece of Florida history has fallen into my hands and I couldn't be more proud. It seems that my friend in Maine stumbled across three consecutive years of Florida freshwater licenses, 1927 through 1929, for Mr. F. F. Thompson. I am now the proud owner of all three. It seems F. F. was a dentist and lived in Orange County. He stood 5 feet 7 inches tall and weighed 173 pounds. F. F. loved to fish. He loved it so much he spent a dollar fifty of his hard earned money each year to get a license to do it legally. He probably dreamed of landing a ten pound bass as he was pulling some poor saps tooth. Now I need to figure out how his licenses made it to Maine, over 1600 miles away. And I need to figure out a way to collect 48 more states. ...MUST HAVE LICENSES...

* After writing this article, I had the badge appraised by an expert and he valued it at \$400. Ed Bauries has only ever heard of a handful existing and remembers someone asking \$4000 many years ago. Obviously the economy has affected antique values over the past few years. But the hunt and the story are priceless to me. If anyone wants to offer me \$4000 to own the collective fishing histories of F.F. Thompson and Edward L. Vail, I would be happy to sell.

GONE FISHING...



Warren "Doc" Gamble 1931-2011

Former FATC board member from the SW Region, Doc Gamble passed away recently.

Doc led an amazing life. As a young boy, he worked for ranchers in the San Joaquin Valley, California. He had a natural way with animals and soon moved on from mending fences to taming wild horses. He was good with a lariat, and made a living for a while as a working cowboy before moving to San Francisco to attend college.

Doc owned a Newfoundland dog and decided to train it as a show dog. The dog became the top winning Newfoundland in the United States. Doc later became a judge for the American Kennel Club.

He always loved fishing, and that led him to an interest in creating and restoring bamboo rods. He will long be remembered among serious collectors for his expertise in this field.

His fellow FATC members will likewise remember Doc with much fondness.

Ron Mirabelle, "The Lure Doctor"

Submitted by Dick Braun:

Another of our club members has left to go where the fishing's always great. Ron Mirabelle was a long time member of the Wood Carvers Club in Charlotte County, the FATC, and the NFLCC. He was a United States Air Force veteran. Ron always had a love for antique tackle. For seven years in Connecticut (where he and his wife, Jean lived before moving to Florida), Ron had his own television outdoors show on one of the local stations.

Ron also carved and built his own brand of lures for approximately 17 years. The earliest ones say "Weir Lures", and in later years he called his baits "Lure DR" lures. Ron would always go out of his way to help anyone in any way he could, and will be missed by many.

ZEBCO FLY REELS?

by Dick Braun



Time machine set for 1984— Zebco Fly Reels?

You've got to be kidding me! Zebco had fly reels? You bet...and in 1984 they introduced three different models, the Z 56, Z 78, and Z 89. All three reels offered a sturdy one piece die cast aluminum

frame, pop off spools for quick line change, built-in clicker, a reversible line guard, and could be converted to right or left side retrieve. The recommended line weight for each reel was designated by the model number of the reel, Z 56 was designed for a 5 or 6 wt. line, Z 78 was for 7 and 8 lines, and the Z 89 was the heavier 8 or 9-weight model. To go along with them, Zebco also had matching fly rods.

For those of you who love to fly fish, here a little tidbit of info that should knock your socks off...this is a quote directly out of the 1984 sales catalog: "Hi-Tech Spinning and Fly Rods, 96% Graphite sensitivity! Like the casting rods, Hi-Tech spinning rods and Fly Rods deliver the strength and sensitivity that only 96% Graphite – (watch for it, here it comes) – LOOMIS blank construction offers". Yes, that is correct—in 1984 Zebco Hi-Tech rods used Loomis blanks. The 9675 was 2/2pc. 7'6" 4-5wt rod, 9680 was a 2/2pc. 8' 6-7wt, and the 9690 was a 2/2pc. 9' rod for 8 and 9-weight lines.

Before Zebco had their own fly reels and rods in 1984, they carried the Z 156 & Z 178. Seems they were made by some company named ABU, out of Sweden, and were called the Zebco 156 Cardinal Fly Reel and the Zebco 178 Cardinal Fly Reel. ABU Cardinal Fly Reels sold by Zebco. Come on, does it ever end? Zebco also



had their own Mooching reels in the Z 200 & Z 300. The Z 200 carried 450yds/15lb, 420/17lb, 360/20lb test line, the Z 300 carried 950/15lb, 800/17lb, 700/20lb, and 550yards of 25 pound test monofilament.

The hardest of these to find are the ABU/Zebco fly reels, and also very hard to find is a side line of the Zebco Fly reel and Mooching reel that was sold in Canada. These were mostly used on the west coast and, as you can see in the pictures, were a metallic copper color. They were known as the 'Ted Peck Signature Series by ZEBCO'.

Thought you Fly Fisher persons might like to broaden your search for something besides the norm! Until next time, That-Zebco-Guy – Dick Braun

P.S. I'll have these reels at the Tampa Show Oct. 7-9.



Roughing it *Smoothly*

by Ed Slane

Where does one go when the oppressive everyday heat of South Florida, constantly in the 90's becomes too much to bear? Well I guess America's refrigerator might be the answer. The only real problem would be that said refrigerator is six thousand miles distant. Research on the subject tells us that with intermediate stops and plane changes the feat could be accomplished in about fourteen hours.

Oh did I forget to mention that July is the month the great King Salmon run in the Kenai River, along the Kenai Peninsula in picturesque Alaska. And please let me mention at this time that amiable and gregarious club member Joe Connors runs a first class outfitting and fishing camp in Sterling, Alaska which just happens to be on the aforementioned river. His personal invitation has been on my calendar for nearly two years. Now might be the time! But one wouldn't attempt a trip of this magnitude solo unless his name was Lindbergh, and mine ain't. So a call to my good friend and former travelling companion who just happens to be our President Larry Lucas produced a great partner for the trip. Here now we have two club members going to visit a third.

Following an overnight in Anchorage, since arrival there was at about 2 AM local time, we would meet-up with Joe Connors at 8 AM the next morning. After doing the breakfast dance, Joe would taxi us to his unbelievable collection. Joe is a collector of high end reels. I've known that for years, but what we got to see was so far beyond high-end reel collecting. Some of the most exotic creels were on display and in great numbers. His modesty took over and for that and reasons of security, filming was forbidden and great detail of the unique collection will have to be omitted. I understand; hope you do too. Joe's obvious good feeling for me showed itself when he allowed me to take my pick of numerous creels and one EVH reel in magnificent condition to call my own.

Immediately following the great time at Joe's we began the three hour, 140 mile drive to the Kenai River and the quaint little town of Sterling, Alaska. The Chugash Mountain range followed us for nearly the whole trip. They were, to the last one, snow capped and beautiful in July. Out of nowhere, a left a right and another left, a dirt road, a steeply descending driveway and we were



One of the camp cabins with a fire smouldering in the pit. The Kenai is 25 ft. behind the photographer.

at Big Sky Fishing Camp (A dozen or more cabins and a lovely lodge all situated along the Kenai River). Before we even exited our vehicle, here comes Joe's beautiful and charming wife, Mary to welcome us to camp. Larry and I would spend six full days here, "roughing it smoothly". Joe and his expert staff literally catered to our every need. Larry and I mosey'd (mosey is a word Joe uses and I like it) around the camp and checked out our cabin. It would prove to be the last leisure we'd have for several days.

Four AM came very early the next day for a couple of "city slickers" but we bailed out of our comfortable heated cabin only to be braced by what we came for. Forty-nine degrees Fahrenheit, and we were goin' fishing? The staff had to have been up for an hour or more since everything was in readiness. One thing easily noted about Alaska is that the government makes lots of rules about fishing. The usual catch and size limits apply which is certainly OK, but man do they take it to extremes. For instance, you can't fish with bait 'til they say "OK". If you're a fishing guide, you can't take your clients out on Sunday. You can't have a motor on your boat on a Monday. After you boat one King Salmon, you must hand your license to your guide so that he can note your catch. That is the end of your fishing for the day. You dare not be seen holding a rod. You're out of the game! This came rather hard to me, since I hooked up five seconds into the day and was relegated to watching. No fun!! Larry hooked up later but with a "jack", an underage fish which according to the rules

did not disqualify him from fishing. Joe was kind enough to take me ashore on a pretext. We put Larry on another of Joe's boats to finish the day. I returned to the camp with a stop at the photo lab for some film and a supply of chocolate. My fish weighed in at around 40 pounds and the rest of the afternoon was utilized for a great hot shower and an afternoon nap. Dinner would customarily be taken on your own but in this case we dined at the main lodge with Joe and his entire extended "family". Larry and I were welcomed there each night. This was a real treat for a guy with no family who usually dines alone. Amanda is the cook who feeds about twelve each meal and who told me at the onset that I had to learn not to give a pregnant red head any trouble. I did not!



Day two was cold and rainy and old candy butt, your writer opted not to attempt to terrorize the salmon in the cold rain. Heartier than I, Larry ventured forth and caught his limit for the day, a virtual carbon copy of mine. So as Joe says, "The pressure came off".

Day three was Sunday. No fishing, remember? So the gang went clamming an hour drive to the spot 2 1/2 hours clamming and forever cleaning and mincing with 6 people working. They're called razors around here. Once again, government regulated to 60 clams per person. We had six diggers who each got their limit. You do the math. We had 360 large clams.

While Larry and Company were busily cleaning and mincing Joe brought out a magnificent Abercrombie and Fitch wooden tackle box filled to the roof with boxed salmon plugs. I ruined some of the beautiful varnished woodwork by drooling all over it. There must have been

fifty or sixty antique boxed plugs aboard. Joe indicated that I might be able to own the assortment, but didn't give me a number so it didn't happen. I really don't think his heart was in the sale.

On our final day, Joe suggested that we take the boat upriver to the "wilderness area". You could've fooled me. I thought we were already there. On the way up he pointed out a log cabin on the river bank and stated, "That's the last house". It was – the last anything.

In Alaska, they call grizzly bears "brown bears", as opposed to black bears which are considerably smaller in size and somewhat less threatening. The key word

here is "somewhat". On our way into the wilderness area we spotted a mature grizzly. Unfortunately, he spotted us at about the same moment. He made it clear that we were in his private salmon hole, so I took his picture and we very quickly departed.

A mated pair of eagles was spotted high in the tops of trees. They were not at all camera shy and were very liberally photographed. The gin clear water at this place in the river revealed great numbers of King Salmon making their way upstream to spawn. This "wilderness" venture surely proved something that we had to do. On reflection, we're both thankful that Joe suggested it.

As was once written in lipstick on the wall of the girl's room in high school, "For a good time, see Joe". Well, Joe Connors and his entire crew will show you a time like you've never had. Whether your passion is tackle collecting or only fishing, you'll have it all at Big Sky Fishing Camp in Sterling, Alaska. You'll truly be "roughing it smoothly".





PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO 587
GAINESVILLE FL

The FATC News

1631 NE 55th Blvd.
Gainesville, FL 32641

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



FATC Fall Show

October 7-9, 2011 - Tampa
Tampa Crowne Plaza East
813-623-6363
10221 Princess Palm Ave. • Tampa, FL 33610



3rd Annual CATC Myrtle Beach Antique Fishing Tackle Show

November 18-20, 2011 - Myrtle Beach, South Carolina
Springmaid Resort & Conference Center
3200 S. Ocean Blvd
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577
www.springmaidbeach.com
(866) 764-8501
Room rates are \$49 + tax

The Florida International Tackle Show

March 2-4, 2012
Daytona Beach, Florida
Plaza Resort and Spa
(800) 874-7420
Room rates are \$108 + tax



2011 FATC Patch