

# ***THE BACKCAST***



**THE BACKCOUNTRY FLY FISHING ASSOCIATION OF BREVARD**  
*An Active Member Club of the Federation of Fly Fishers™*



[www.bffa-brevard.org](http://www.bffa-brevard.org)

**Volume XXII Number IV**

**December 2010**

## **Next meeting**

**Wednesday, December 1st, 6:30 PM**  
**Memaw's Bar B-Q**  
**Eau Gallie Boulevard**  
**Indian Harbor Beach**



***IT'S TIME FOR THE  
HOLIDAY PARTY!***

Every year for the holidays the club has a party where we all take the time to enjoy the season and exchange gifts. Members and guests may participate in the gift exchange if they bring a wrapped gift valued at around \$20.(The gift swap is optional.)

The fun begins when we draw numbers and the winner selects a gift from the table, or from those already selected and unwrapped. The object of the game is to have the last number picked, as then you get your choice of all the gifts. The Honorable Bruce Jacobus will act as master of ceremonies, assuring a good time with judicial decorum.

To avoid license problems, the restaurant requests that no alcoholic gifts be opened.

The club contributes to the cost of the meal as a gift to ourselves for having a successful club. Dinners for members are \$7.00, with family members entitled to two meals for \$7.00 each. Guests can purchase a meal for the regular price of \$14.00

Come and have a great time!

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Melbourne, FL 32902-0524

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Our distinguished President is unavailable this month--probably hunting somewhere.

## **FISHING REPORTS**

Ron Winn recently made a trip to the Thousand Islands area on the West Coast, to visit Steve Morgan, a club member who many of you know and remember. Steve has now moved from his Montana digs to a new winter home on the Isle of Capri. (He will summer in western North Carolina.) Ron reports that the fishing was good--a mixed bag of Jack, Ladyfish and Snook.

Frank Perkins had a nice morning on the St Johns River, trying out the minnow flies from the recent club tying. The catch was mostly bream, but included one nice Bass and a Spec.

Paul and Sherry Parker fished near Sebastian Inlet and had a good day of Trout and Ladyfish on a small Orange and Yellow Clouser.

## **REDFISH SURVEY**

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is conducting a survey about fishing for Redfish in the waters of Florida. Please help by visiting the following link:

<http://www.surveymachine.com/surveymachine/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=88MK695>

## **Dues are now due**

Each year our club's dues are due from September through November.

Student \$10, Individual \$20, Family \$30

Please bring a check to the next meeting, or mail it to

BFFA of Brevard

PO Box 524

Melbourne, FL 32902

Please include your snail mail and email addresses and phone number (s).

# MONTHLY FLY TYING MONDAY, DECEMBER 20TH 6:15 PM MELBOURNE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Our tier this month will be John Boyer (“JB”).

John has lived in Brevard County since 1972, first in Cocoa Beach, and then in Rockledge. He is an ardent surfer. His first fishing memories are of Smallmouth and Walleye in the Susquehanna River in Northern Pennsylvania. He has been fly fishing for about 10 years. He was in the Air Force at Patrick AFB, and later worked there as a contractor. His “retirement job” is at Harry Goode’s.

John will be tying the “Stealth Bomber”, pictured below.

The material list is as follows:

\* Hook: #6 Gamakatsu B10S

\* Thread: Mono

\* Body: 1.5/2 mm chartreuse foam, cut to shape.

\* Tail: Chartreuse bucktail, sparkle fiber (Lite Brite, etc), white bucktail.

\* Legs: rubber legs of your choice.

\* Dubbing and underwing: Sparkle fiber and Pearl Flash

We will have a stamp or patterns to shape the body foam.

The monthly fly tying sessions are enjoyable as well as educational. Fly tying lends itself to conversation and we usually have a nice crowd. The library room is large and well equipped, so come join us soon!



Mike Horne and Paul Parker at last month’s session.

## MISCELLANEOUS

It is definitely the year of the acorns. You need to wear a hard hat to stand under an oak tree. Acorns rain down on my house and sound like bowling balls as they roll off the roof.

Here is one morning’s collection from the pool.



## OUTINGS

The December outing will be at Lake Washington, on December 18th. Launch as early as you like, and report your results at lunch!

## NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to our new members:

James Fletcher  
Melbourne

Jim Fletcher  
Merritt Island  
(a father-son team)

Gus Koerner  
Titusville

## E-MAIL DELIVERY

Get your BackCast delivered by e-mail. This will provide you a full color copy and save your club postage. Contact Bill Gunn at [Wtgunnjr@AOL.com](mailto:Wtgunnjr@AOL.com) to get on the list.

On December 8th and 11th, the Four H Club is putting on a Youth Fly Fishing Clinic, as described below. Gus Koerner visited our recent Kid's Day program, and requests volunteers from the club to instruct and coach the youths at his program. Please support this endeavor. You can obtain details by calling Gus at the phone number listed below.



# Youth Fly Fishing Clinic

Presented by Brevard County 4-H, in  
partnership with:

Brevard County Parks and Recreation  
Backcountry Fly Fishing Association  
Coastal Angler Magazine  
The Fly Fisherman

Dates: Dec. 8 & 11, 2010

Times: Dec. 8, 6:00-8:30PM, Dec. 11, 8-11AM

Location: Travis Park Community Center  
2003 Michigan Ave., Cocoa, FL 32926

Cost: \$15.00 for youth 12-18. must be accompanied by an adult

To sign up, please call: 321-633-1702, Gus @ Ext. 229



Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution

# CampHolly

By Bill Sargent

Practically every Backcountry club member at one time or another has fished out of Camp Holly west of Melbourne or maybe taken an airboat ride or stopped for lunch. Surely everyone has passed it many times on U.S. 192.

What many may not realize is the interesting history of this camp. It's one of the oldest on the St. Johns River.

In 1923 Bob Wall, the son of a Georgia market hunter, moved to Melbourne and dredged out the St. Johns river bottom along side the old Kissimmee Highway, now known as U.S. 192, and built several cottages for the first fishing camp on the Upper St. Johns. Three of those buildings remain today. One serves as the camp store, with its original wooden flooring warped by floods in the years before flood control and two former cottages are used for a gift shop and a storage facility.

In the 1920's and '30's the St. Johns was advertised as the Bass Fishing Capital of the World. Anyone who remembers some of the ads in old issues of Outdoor Life and Field and Stream remember how the St. Johns was labeled as the best for bass. And, it was true.

In those days, before drainage and dredging ruined the river and its marsh the St. Johns ran clean and pure even though it had that tea-colored appearance from the tannin, a natural occurrence from the water filtered from the swamps and sloughs. I remember as a kid growing up in Melbourne in the late 40's and even early 50's that we never hesitated in dipping cups of water to drink during fishing trips. You wouldn't dare do that today.

People came from all over the country to fish for the St. Johns River bass, one of which was John Alden Knight, a wealthy New York business man. Knight had heard that Bob Wall was one of the best guides on the river and his camp was comfortable, so he hired Wall as a guide for a day on Lake Hell'n Blazes, already infamous for bass.

You can read the rest of the story as they say in Knight's book Moon Up, Moon Down, if you can find it in a library or on E-bay. It explains his Solunar Theory. Briefly this is how the opening chapter goes.

During the trip Wall told Knight about an old market hunter's theory that fish and game are more active when the moon is straight overhead and straight down under. In fact, Wall told Knight they could take a nap because the bass weren't going to bite for another couple hours.

The moon up, moon down theory interested Knight to the point that he moved from New York to Orlando so he could spend more time fishing with Wall. Six years later, after extensive research and refinement, Knight published the first John Alden Knight's Original Solunar Tables. The tables, which use the moon up, moon down theory as a basis, calculate the best fishing times and they're still used throughout the world today.

In 1955 the St. Johns got national attention when the Saturday Evening Post ran a feature story about Lake Hell'n Blazes, calling it The World's Daffiest Lake because of the small floating islands in the lake.

The late Harry Goode, Sr. along with Harry, Jr. the current mayor of Melbourne and his brother Dick Goode were featured in some of the pictures. So was Cotton Leaf who owned a camp on Lake Washington at the end of Lake Washington Road, now the site of a county park where our club holds its brats cookouts following outings.

In those years all the stores in downtown Melbourne closed on Wednesday afternoons and many of the merchants and customers headed for Bob Wall's Camp. To be honest, there wasn't much else to do in Melbourne, a town of about 5,000 in those years.

I remember the many trips out of the camp with my uncle, Benny Rotgers who build the first airboat on the upper St. Johns in the early 1940's. Everyone had to have a Pflueger Supreme bait caster, a Shakespeare rod, and most of the time we used Dalton Specials, a wooden top-water bait. You had to be a darn good caster to thread that Dalton back into the holes and cuts between all the lily pads. There was no hydrilla at that time, and the hyacinth hadn't gotten its grip on the St. Johns as yet.

Later everyone started using the so-called "eel bait." Plastic worms hadn't been invented yet, so we took an 8- or even 10-inch black Uncle Josh eel bait and hooked it on a black Johnson Silver Minnow spoon. You had to work the bait ever so slow along the bottom and when you felt a pick up your patience was tested because you had to give the bass time to suck the spoon into its mouth. Then you set the hook. I hated using it, but it worked.

Bob Wall sold the camp in the early 1940's and since that time there have been several owners including Henry Hollingsworth who changed the name to Camp Holly. Others were Bob Mitchell and Darrell Hite and over the years the camp evolved into a popular airboating tour stop for tourists.

Curt McKinney and Carl Godwin are the current owners, and Carl's son, Jay Godwin, is the camp manager. All are longtime residents of the Melbourne area.

They have done wonders with the old camp, cleaning it up, bringing in live entertainment and fish fries on weekends, offering good food daily including a half-pound Holly Burger, putting in a small alligator exhibit, boosting their airboat tours headed up by Capt. Danny Hite, and in general making it a clean, family-oriented facility.

Sections of the old Kissimmee Highway are still visible, along with pilings from the wooden bridge that crossed the river.

This time of the year during hunting season Camp Holly is a debarkation point for hunters using the Upper St. Johns River Marsh Wildlife Management Area and you never know when a lucky hunter brings in a trophy buck.

So, head out to Camp Holly maybe for lunch or a fishing trip or the best airboat ride on the river. Look around a little and rekindle some of the history in this ole place.

For more information call the camp at (321) 723-2179 or go to [www.campholly.net](http://www.campholly.net).

# BFFA December 2010 Events

## Monthly Dinner Meeting

Wednesday, December 1st, 6:30 PM  
Memaw's Bar B-Q  
Eau Gallie Blvd.  
Indian Harbour Beach

## Board Meeting

Wednesday, December 15th, 6:30 PM  
(Special day this month only, to avoid conflict  
with the Youth Fishing Clinic)  
(Meet at 5:00 PM for dinner)  
Ron Winn's office  
2103 Grant Place  
Melbourne

## Fly Tying

Monday, December 20th, 6:15 PM  
Melbourne Public Library  
Fee Ave  
Melbourne

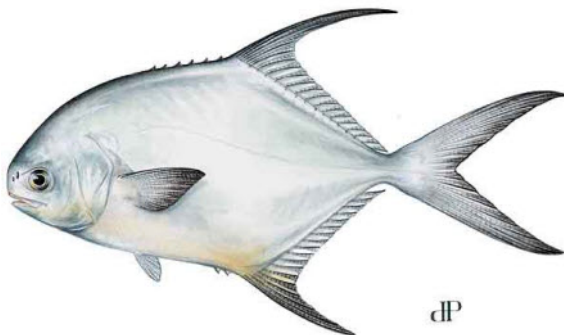
## Outing

December 18th  
Lake Washington



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**Limit your kill, don't kill your limit !**

**Please practice Catch and Release.**