



ACFA

Club Officers For 2002
 Pres. David Hare 343-5875
 Vice Pres. Charlie Dowdle 661-7770
 Stats. Jennifer Mitternight 634-9716
 Secretary Angie Howle 479-2911
 Treasurer Earl Hopper 665-7057
 New Membership Becki Ludlam 649-8757
 Board Adviser Mike Thompson

June Newsletter

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, June 6, 2002 at 7pm, at the American Legion Post 88, 2663 Halls Mill Road. Won't you consider bringing a fishing buddy or someone who you think might benefit from the information passed on at our meeting?

Our June speaker will be Capt. Tim String, well known Eastern Shore guide and proprietor of Southern Outdoor Adventures Guide Service. Look forward to a very informative session with one of the more successful saltwater guides in our area.

Souther-N-Bama Bait & Tackle will display some of the latest in fisherman's supplies and some the lures and items unique to the store down on D.I.P.

Message from the President

Well, it's been a fun year so far and the "real" fishing season is just getting started. Summer is just around the corner and we are looking forward to some great meetings, and activities for the coming months.

Thanks to Charlie Dowdle for handling the weigh in for the Speckled Trout Challenge. I had to go out of town suddenly, but you guy's didn't need me anyway! With my luck in speck tournaments, I have been told to plan on being absent for the next few years if we do this well when I'm not around. Is that any way to treat your President? I probably could have caught a trout;,,,well maybe I could have;,,, I mean it could happen!

Congratulations to the people who placed, and to the people who fished. I'm working on a couple of new challenges for next year. Now that we have proved we are the czars of trout fishing, maybe we should branch out a bit. The new idea is a Triathlon of sorts, starting with 9 holes of golf at the Isle Dauphin, then straight to the boats for a speck challenge, ending up with a steel cage death-match drinking contest. I just have to figure out who we can challenge. I'm thinking about the ladies auxiliary garden club, but they are such a surly bunch. They could take us in golf, we could take them in fishing, but the cage would be a complete toss-up. Oh well, I will keep you informed on my progress.

- My job is to see the big picture, lead the club into the 21st century, and pretty much keep out of Charlie and Bill's way. I wouldn't have it any other way!

See you at the meeting!

Dave

ACFA June Tournament And Fishfry

Our "Summer Starter" tourney will be held on Saturday June 8. The fish designated for this tourney are: Speckled Trout, Flounder, White Trout, and Ground Mullet. Weigh-in will be from 3pm-5pm at the American Legion Post 250 on D.I.P. (on west of highway next to the Dollar Store) approx. 1 block south of Bayley's Restaurant and Green's Food Tiger. (ACFA members should park, weigh-in, and eat in rear of building.)

Folks, this is a first for our club! We've never had a summer fish fry, but due to a groundswell of popular demand we're gonna do it. Everyone in the club is invited, so plan to drop by even if you don't fish in the tourney. We'll be looking for you, your wife, and the kids. We intend to have fried fish ready about 4pm and, if you can, we would ask that you purchase some of your cold beverages from Post 250 since those folks have welcomed us with open arms and great hospitality. Save your fish caught before the tournament, thawed out, and bring them to the weigh-in as we anticipate a huge attendance. If you know prior that you are unable to make the weigh-in or bring your fish thawed please call Charlie Dowdle at 661-7770. More details at the meeting.

Clean Sweep!

Do you remember Ripley's "Believe It or Not". Those articles were supposed to authenticate the almost unbelievable but, in truth, sometimes even these were somewhat questionable. Well, these facts are authentic and there's no question that ACFA is truly the winner (and still champ) of the 2002 Speckled Trout Challenge. ACFA garnered all of the top ten places and defeated the Saltwater Sportsman's Association by 55 points to 0. You should have seen the grin on Mike Thompson's face and enjoyed the sheer delight among the participants and other ACFA members as the final results were announced. Hearty congratulations to our winning team members and heartfelt thanks to all ACFA members who participated in this event. The ACFA winning team is as follows:

1. Bill Patterson,	5.25lb	6. Cindy Yeend,	3.85lb
2. Rick Yeend,	5.20lb	7. Pat Hughes,	3.75lb
3. Bruce Howle, Jr.	4.50lb	8. Bobby McElroy,	3.65lb
4. Butch Pierce,	4.25lb	9. Brittney Howle,	3.60lb
5. Frank Mitternacht,	4.00lb	10. Kyle Mitternacht	3.60lb

Congratulations ACFA

In case you didn't count, the club roster distributed at our May meeting contains 98 members names, and at that meeting we signed up 10 additional members making ACFA 108 fishermen strong. Thanks to all of you we've reached (and surpassed) our club goal of at least 100 member strength. You now belong to one of the largest local, saltwater clubs on the entire Gulf Coast. We hope that each member gains something from their affiliation with ACFA. Our primary objective has always been to provide a family oriented fishing club where inshore saltwater fishermen could meet new fishing friends, share common interests, and learn to be even fore successful while pursuing their hobby on the water. Yes, we have tournaments and the big fish contest by only about 35-40% of our members really thrive on competition. The majority of our membership just wants to mingle with other fishing enthusiasts, find out where the fish are biting, and expand their fishing know-how. All of these things are what ACFA is all about and we sincerely hope that each of you finds just what you are looking for. We're very proud to call you an ACFA member and each of you makes us what we are!

Club Business

1. Please sign-in at the door--our attendance contest continues. And, by the way, for your information attendance has been running over 70 per meeting.
2. Keep selling or renewing those subscriptions to Gulf Coast Outdoors Magazine. Remember our club will receive a minimum of \$3 for each one that you write, and one of our members may win a significant jackpot prize. Get all the details and subscription forms at the meeting. This fund-raiser runs thru July. Bring checks and completes forms to the meeting.
3. This June meeting will be the last chance (for a while) to order/purchase an ACFA fishing cap. So if you've been thinking about sporting our headgear, NOW's the time to act. This year we have 4 different caps and each is available with either a full ACFA logo or just the club name. It's your choice. We've sold several dozen so far this year. Remember an ACFA cap could be a wonderful gift later on the year for the special fisherman. See the cap man at the meeting.
4. Back by popular demand--maybe. Several club members have already questioned the possibility of purchasing our ACFA tee shirts one more time during the 2002 club year. We can make them available once more. If the number of member requests make this second endeavor monetarily feasible for the club. The membership will be polled at this June meeting. In order to help members decide to purchase, these shirts will be exactly like those already delivered and at the same prepaid prices, but this time another color tee--navy blue with white lettering and highlights--will also be offered. We hope that many members (who may already have gray shirts) will want to add the navy blue shirt to their collection, therefore helping us reach that workable order quantity. More at the meeting.

Get Ready--Another First for ACFA

It seems as though when you are a fisherman/boater you always seem to have an accumulation of "stuff" that has either already done its job and is now used or was upgraded; or, sometimes, it's still brand new (or almost) but just doesn't fit into your new plan or scheme-of-things. Well get ready to move those items off the shelf, out of the closet, from the garage, or out of the utility room because ACFA, operating under the old axiom that "somebody's trash will be someone else's treasure", is having our first "July Junk Sale". Items for this extravaganza can be anything (even remotely) related to fishing, boating, and trailering. We hope each member will bring several items at least and a great many if possible to help make this a sale to remember. ACFA will get 10% of each sale so members should price their items accordingly--I.E. You have an icechest that you don't need/use any longer. It's just "taking up space" at your house. You'd like to get about \$5 for it. So--you price it at \$5.50 and when it sells you take (10% of \$5.50) \$0.55 to the club treasurer (this is on the honor system) and you pocket \$4.95. Proceeds from this event will fund future club projects. Sale tags will be provided.

KID'S DAYS!

ACFA Prides it self on being a family oriented club where all our wives and kids (under 16 yr..) are automatically eligible to participate in ACFA activities and fishing contests. We feel that getting the kids interested in fishing can create one of the many avenues to family adventures and togetherness. Not to mention wholesome outdoor fun, that could pay dividends during the formative years in our children's lives.

One of the goals of any fishing trip with the kids is to catch fish. Sure, there should be plenty to eat and drink on board and the trip should not be of overly long duration, but overall the main objective should always be to catch something and nurture an interest in one of our favorite pastimes. If you agree, better get the boat gassed and the tackle ready because the best time of the year to accomplish this is at hand.

Anytime from about mid May through July you can expect to find the fish under the birds somewhere in the Bay. The prime area for this seasonal occurrence is the Dog River flats stretching from the city ramp next to the Buccaneer Yacht Club to the North side of Gaillard Island.

In this area of the Bay (as is the case in any area) schools of specks and white trout gorge themselves on schools of shrimp (usually small to medium size) that are moving down the Bay on their trek to the gulf. When the between-a-rock-and-a-hard-place with nowhere to go. If they try for the surface or jump to avoid a spec's grasp a seagull scoops them up, and if they stay in the water any of the hundreds of the schooled up trout eat them.

Here's where the fishermen enters the drama. Take binoculars on these trips to help in your search for the groups of darting, diving, feeding gulls. On a good morning about 1/2 mile outside Dog River bridge you should be able to pick up 2 to 8 "bird-schools". Some schools will have slightly larger specs, while other schools will contain predominately white trout as the predators. Usually it's a mix with the specs in the top portions of the water column after live shrimp and whites down closer to the bottom working on the wounded or slower shrimp and cleaning up any leftovers along the bottom.

Once you choose a particular school, approach cautiously from the up-wind side so that your drift will carry you into the action. Do not leave the motor running as it will drive all to the bottom and when the birds can't see the prey you surely aren't going to be able to find them! A trolling motor can be a plus here, but it's not a "must have" item. Preferred baits are artificials such as spec rigs or single or double 1/4 oz. grubs. Colors don't seem to mean anything under the birds. What does count is a good tough lure that can stand up to 6 to 8 strikes on a single cast! Throw to the nearest strikes and the fun should be on.

Please remember many of these "bird-fish" are small and trying to get larger faster. Specs must be 14" or better while white trout may be kept if they'll cover a slice of light bread. Handle the specs with your bare hands or a wet towel, if most must be thrown back, so as not to remove their protective slime. Remember--these are tomorrow's warriors. On the other hand, as long as white trout are present you should always be able to get enough for a mess to clean and eat. A special note here: Many times when the birds/school seem to have dissipated you are likely to

continue to find white trout on the bottom in the last known location of the school. There have been times that we have continued to catch whites off the bottom for up to 30 min. after all surface activity had ceased. Just let your lure reach bottom before working it slowly. And remember--these are fish you can keep for the pictures and the pan.

Anything from a Zebco 202 up will work for schooling fish and much of the time casting distance means little as the schooling fish surge all around the boat and shrimp bump against the hull trying to escape. This is the place and now is the time to get the kids really into fishing as it just doesn't get much better than "under the birds". Make yourself a promise to let them experience this action during the summer of 2002

fish chase these shrimp (who are usually bottom dwellers) they usually herd the shrimp up off the bottom to intermediate depths and (with no place else to go) even to the surface. It is at this time the seagulls now join in on this eating act and what we have is a real feeding frenzy. The shrimp find themselves

**ACFA
TOURNAMENT STANDINGS**

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PLACE	MEMBER	POINTS
1	Bobby McElroy	21
2	Barry Keith	20
3	Del Delchamps	16
4	Kyle Mitternight	15
5	Wayne Ladnier	12
6	David Hare	10
7	Donald Garretson	9
7	Eugene Pierce	9
7	Keith Vaughn	9
7	Ricky Yeend	9
8	Frank Mitternight	8
9	Jeff Dute	6
9	Keith Smith	6
10	Mike Thompson	5
11	Jep Hill	4
11	Bruce Howle, Jr.	4
12	Brittany Howle	3
12	Pat Hughes	3
12	Bill Patterson	3
12	Butch Pierce	3
12	Cindy Yeend	3
13	John Fassbender	2
13	Gerald Markow	2
14	Bud Barr	1
14	Mark Bryant	1
14	Earl Hopper	1
14	Donnie Howell	1
14	Bruce Howle, Sr.	1
14	Scott Lewis	1
14	Lee Minto	1
14	Dustin Moore	1
14	Howard Perry	1
14	Matt Perry	1
14	Cliff Straughn	1
14	Alvin Bell	1

Big Fish Contest Standings 2002

5/17/02

	Blackfish	WT	Flounder	WT	Ground Mullet	WT	Redfish	WT
1	Bruce Howle, Jr.	4.25	Donald Garretson	2.25	Del Delchamps	1.80	Alvin Bell	4.69
2			Rick Yeend	1.88	Eugene Pierce	1.27	Frank Mitternight	3.15
3			Jep Hill	1.63	Barry Keith	1.19	Bill Midgette	2.25
4			Donnie Howell	1.63	Bobby McElroy	1.10		
5			Bobby McElroy	1.56	Gerald Markow	0.95		
	Sheepshead	WT	Speckled Trout	WT	Spanish Mackerel	WT	White Trout	WT
1	Barry Keith	10.45	Bill Patterson	8.12			Eugene Pierce	2.25
2	Keith Smith	10.25	Bruce Howle, Jr.	7.15			Del Delchamps	2.00
3	Bruce Howle, Sr.	10.12	Bruce Howle, Sr.	6.83			Bill Midgette	1.77
4	Bobby McElroy	9.75	Bill Patterson	6.75			Jeff Dute	1.35
5	Mike Thompson	8.85	Rick Yeend	6.57			Kyle Mitternight	1.20