

November 23, 2013

**PEOPLES: A great day for a great cause, angling to assist GCS**

The Union-Recorder

MILLEDGEVILLE — Ninety two-man teams of anglers turned out at Little River Park at Lake Sinclair on Saturday, Nov. 16 for the Junior Collis Memorial Tournament that was held in memory of Junior Collis and to raise funds for the Georgia Cancer Support organization. Collis, or Junior as we all affectionately called him, was a longtime professional angler who succumbed to cancer earlier this year after a long and courageous battle.

“Junior would have been proud today,” Junior’s wife Alta Collis told the crowd of anglers and spectators who gathered for the weigh in. She went on to thank everyone who worked to make her dream of having the tournament come true. The anglers were doing what Junior loved doing for so many years. Junior loved to fish and he loved to talk about fishing.

Junior Collis was an inspiration to all those that he came into contact with and that certainly includes me. I remember many of the conversations that I had with Junior, all the fish stories he told me, the helpful information he shared about fishing techniques and his truly genuine goodness. I am glad for having known Junior and glad that I was able to call him a friend.

Recently on a fishing trip on Lake Sinclair, I was not having much success and I thought about a box of crankbaits that Junior gave me at one of his yard sales. I pulled out one of the crankbaits and lifted out one particular crankbait. Junior told me that he had caught a bunch of fish on that one crankbait.

I tied it on if for no other reason just for the memory of that conversation I had that day with Junior. About the third cast I caught a nice fish and I immediately looked upward just to thank Junior if he might be looking down. Junior was a friend to many and many of those friends have stories and memories just like I do.

If Junior were sitting here with me as I write this article, I imagine Junior would be telling me to just get on with the story about the tournament. Well, OK Junior. Fishing during the tournament was not great for many of the anglers as it was preceded with the first serious cold front of the fall. But as in every tournament, some anglers figure out just what the fish want to bite.

Roger White has been on a hot streak lately on the tournament trail and the hot streak continued as he caught a five fish limit weighing 16.68 pounds to take first place and a cash prize of \$3,000. White also caught the big fish in the tournament, a lunker weighing over seven pounds to take home an additional \$870.

There was a tie for second place between the teams of Gary Henry and his son Matt Henry and the team of Alan Batson and Michael Mincey. Both teams caught 15 pounds of largemouth bass and each team earned \$1250 in prize money.

More than 600 pounds of largemouth bass were caught during the tournament and that was a good catch considering the weather that preceded the tournament. Even though it was a good catch, I would

have liked to hear Junior's take on how the anglers performed. I am sure he would have had at least one tip on how more fish could have been caught.

Funds that were raised from tournament entries, raffles and sponsors totaled \$7,400 after expenses. Those funds will be used by the Georgia Cancer Support organization whose mission it is to serve Georgia cancer patients and their families by providing support and resources in all areas of their lives.

Georgia Cancer Support is headed up by Robbie White who is a cancer survivor herself and much credit for the memorial tournament goes to Robbie and her team who worked for weeks to organize the tournament and then ran it beautifully. Junior would certainly have been proud of everything that took place at this tournament that was held in his memory.