

WHAT SPOONPLUGGING HAS MEANT TO ME

By Chase Klinesteker, CSI



Chase, Jim Withey, Buck Perry, and Don Stephens at Chattanooga Jamboree 1989

In 1972 I first learned of Spoonplugging from friend and dental patient, Don Stephens. I had been a frustrated fisherman for a number of years, but after reading about Buck Perry in Fishing Facts Magazine, his concepts seemed to really make sense. The joy, comradery, and satisfaction that I have gained through Spoonplugging over the years have been immense. One story that stands out to me was when Jim Withey, a Grand Rapids Spoonplugger, went to a class given by Mr. Perry on Lake Pepin. Jim asked Buck about the phenomenal catch of bass he had made on Hess Lake 25 years before. Without hesitation, Buck took a napkin and drew the structure situations and linesights he had used to catch those fish---and he had not seen the lake in 25 years!

Mr Perry and his Spoonplugging also opened up new avenues of skills and enjoyment for me. As a one-finger typist and serious non-writer of letters, he created in me the motivation to type, write letters and articles, and take videos of my experiences on the water. That eventually led to my creating a website (chasesfishes.com) about Spoonplugging in hopes to share what I have learned. One word I would use to describe Mr. Perry would be "respect". I respected his genius and the knowledge he developed about fishing, as well as his friendliness and helpfulness toward all Spoonpluggers. I first met him at the Chattanooga Jamboree in 1989 and afterward wrote him asking for help with my fishing. He answered every inquiry and continued to correspond with letters, often many pages long. His handwriting required a little time to decipher, but that may have been a sign of his genius! He was a father figure that I looked up to. I attended all the Chattanooga Spoonplugging Jamborees from 1989 through the 1990's, mainly to be around and listen to lectures by Mr. Perry and other Spoonpluggers. There was always a crowd gathered around Mr. Perry asking him questions whenever he was out in the campground. We all owe much to Frank Hamill for being the sparkplug at those Jamborees.



Frank and Teresa Hamill, Josie and Scott Jenkins at a Jamboree

When Mr. Perry died in 2005, I attended his funeral in Hickory, North Carolina along with several other Spoonpluggers from the Midwest. It was an impressive ceremony and included a military gun salute. After his passing, several fishing magazines (Bassmasters, Fishing Facts, In Fisherman, etc.) published articles acknowledging the huge impact this man had on the fishing industry. Jeri Perry is still writing and publishing the "National Spoonplugger" newsletter and I support subscribing and sending in articles to keep it going.



Mr Perry giving a lecture at Chattanooga