

Valley Angler

There Are No Secrets

By Bill Thompson

I have been writing this column for a little over three years now and contrary to popular belief there are people, other than my mother, who actually do read it. I know this for sure because occasionally someone will slip up and admit that they might have read it once or twice. One thing that always surprises me is how many people from out of state read it. Since they can't pick up the Daily Sun while getting their morning coffee at the local convenience store I have to assume that they read it on line. For the most part those folks who have read it from time to time have been kind to me and have been positive in their feedback. However there have been a few who have taken issue with me.

One thing that will always get a rise out of people is when I mention one of their favorite fishing spots. Truth be known this is an issue that does greatly concern me and I always have a debate with myself before giving up a spot in print. One of my favorite fishing writers, John Gierach, says that all fishing writers are prostitutes. His theory is that good fishing spots are too hard to come by and no one, for the sake of a fishing article, should be giving away someone else's hard won secret. On the other hand there are those that argue that the whole purpose of a fishing column is to provide information on how and where to fish.

I guess that my own take on this has been somewhat wishy washy. It would be very hard to write a column about fishing in the Mount Washington Valley without mentioning the Saco River. However, I see no reason to tell readers what rock to look under. Another reason that I am sometimes evasive about the exact location of a spot is that a great many good fishing spots are located on private property. The fact that I am allowed to fish these places is because someone has offered me the opportunity and for me to announce the location in the local newspaper might be construed as being rude. Not to mention that it may cause not only myself, but others who have gained access to this spot to lose the privilege of continuing to fish there.

Of course New Hampshire is a pretty small state and although we are blessed with many beautiful rivers and lakes to fish in there are very few secret spots left that have not been discovered or for that matter written about; if not by myself then some other outdoor writer. So I will apologize for any past indiscretions and if I have inadvertently mentioned your favorite spot then the apology goes twice.

Apparently a week or so ago I did just that. I did indeed give up someone's favorite spot

in this column. The reason I know this is because a friend came into the shop and mentioned that he heard that I had been out fishing. When I asked how he knew that he answered that he had read about it in the paper. He also said that he had talked to someone that had seen me. I said that it was a good bet that I had been in his spot. He laughed and said that I was right and that I had been in the guys spot and than doubled the insult by mentioning it in the newspaper.

Well, what can I say; maybe John Giarach is right after all. So again I apologize, but if it is any consolation I went back to the same spot last Sunday and there didn't seem to be any ill effect. The place was empty and I had it all to myself, however as I was pulling out of the road, to head home, my friend was pulling in. So in deference to my old friend and his buddy I am not going to mention the place this time around.

See you on the river.