



## FOGGY FROG GIN' FRACAS

FOG-CUTTER"- (should have been named fog-maker) Recipe: 3 shots each of rum, gin, and brandy. 3 oz of lemon lime, (or 1 ½ ea. of lemon and lime juice, fresh is best), 3 oz of white Caro corn syrup, and about ½ of a large can of Dole pineapple juice. (Spend the \$) A standard blender should be filled almost completely full. Mix and pour over a ton of ice. Toss in a piece of pineapple if you're feeling exotic, or some fresh mint leaves, and don't plan on leaving the house....

A long, long, time ago, on a hot and humid summer night far, far away..... A guy named Larry went frog gigging for the first time in his life.....

Y'see, Joe Larue, and Larry and I had been all set to go after Mugwump one evening, but the rains came, and high winds and thunder and lightning with it, so we just didn't figure it was the best thing to do. So we went in the house, and I mixed up a blender full of Fog-Cutters, and we sat around talking about how fortunate muggy was that we weren't able to go after him, while watching some old star trek re-runs. The Captain Kirk and Mr. Spock ones. After about 2 hours, the rain and wind stopped, and it became warm and humid and steamy. The stars came out, the crickets and tree frogs started singing, and it was a perfect Ozark night. About that time, Joe said: "Hey! We oughta go froggin'!" "Great idea," I said. Larry said he'd never been frogging, but it sounded like fun to him..... So we got ready to go. We put my beat up old 17 ft Coleman canoe on the back of Joe's truck, and tossed in paddles, two 12 volt flashlights, and a couple of 8 ft frog gigs and a 5 gallon plastic bucket for Larry to sit on. Then we poured each of us a big ol' plastic water glass full of fog cutter, and headed down to the Finley River, which is only 4 or 5 minutes from my house. We put the canoe in, and headed up the river with Joe in the front, me in the back, and Larry in the middle, sitting on the 5-gallon bucket. We were very happy, (and somewhat foggy) froggers! It was about 9:30, so we figured to paddle up about a mile or so, and then come back downstream slowly as the bullfrog activity picked up. We got to a place where there was a big spooky old backwater where the trees hung low over the water, and I figured we'd paddle back in and see if we could pick up a frog or two. The backwater was shallow and clear and full of sunken logs but there weren't many frogs around it. You couldn't see the stars for the trees, and we were leaning over, watching the bluegills and crawdads with our flashlights, when Larry set his fog-cutter down, and took my gig and held all 8 feet of it straight up and down, and was getting ready to spear a giant crawdad, when the end of his gig bumped up against a big dead branch that was overhanging the river, about 4 ft over our heads. Now that wouldn't have been a problem at all, except that there was a pair of screech owls on that branch, and you probably can't imagine what 2 screech owls sound like when they're close to you, and they've just been scared half out of what few wits they have, by getting almost smacked with a stick in the middle of the night! They started screeching, and flapping, and you'd have thought aliens were attacking Larry! He threw the spear out in the river, screamed like a dying rabbit, and dove to the bottom of the canoe! Joe and I were startled, but only for a second or two, then we started laughing so hard we almost capsized! Larry got up from the bottom of the canoe; all wet and dirty, wondering what had attacked him.... We shined the light up over his head and showed him the owls, and encouraged him to enjoy the beauty of nature in the middle of the night, but he just couldn't seem to grasp the humor of the situation.....

We paddled out of the backwater, and headed downstream, listening for bullfrogs and shining our lights on the banks. The frogs were very edgy, and the slightest noise made em' jump in the water. But we were having a good time trying to locate them in the weeds along the bank. We'd shine the light in their eyes and glide slow and quiet up to the bank and gig em' when we could. It must have been about 11:30, and Larry was really getting into it. But the fog-cutter was kicking in pretty good, and he couldn't have speared a frog anymore than I could catch mugwump! So he was content to just sit on his bucket and supervise while letting me paddle and steer the canoe while Joe gigged the frogs, when we could get close enough to them, that is.

We came to a part of the river where it widened out with a flat, muddy bottom, and got pretty shallow. There seemed to be frogs every few feet, but we had a hard time seeing them because the weeds were so dense. The moon was full, and almost straight overhead, and the sky was just full of stars. It couldn't have been any more beautiful.... The canoe made no noise as it slid along, except for a few drops of water falling from my paddle back into the river. As we were gliding along slowly, we

came to a little stretch of the bank where it sounded like a whole herd of frogs was having a convention! We were pretty much in the middle of the stream, so I pointed the canoe over toward it with Joe shining his light up on the bank, trying to spot some eyes in the weeds. We were being super quiet, but the closer we got, the more the frogs became alarmed and jumped into the water. Finally, we got right up to the bank, and we were all trying to pick out frog eyes in amongst the weeds. Then Joe said, "I see one!" He was right up in the point of the canoe, and all of a sudden he stabbed the gig right into the weeds, and said, "I got him! But the gig is stuck! I'm afraid if I pull it out, the frog will get off!" "Probably giggered a mudball" Larry said rather sarcastically..... Well, Joe gave one big old jerk, and Larry just rolled backwards right off his bucket and went head first right into the river like a scuba diver. He went so fast, he never knew what happened! So here's Larry, with the back of his head in the mud, (under 2 ft of water), with his legs sticking straight up in the air, with one arm holding his fog-cutter out of the water, staring straight up at the moon. Thru 2 ft of water. I looked over the side of the canoe and shined my light down on him, and I think that made him realize that breathing was becoming rather necessary, and his legs started flailing, and he came up just gasping and gagging and choking, flinging water all over everything. Joe and I were laughing so hard that we almost fell out of the boat, and Larry was pretty darned irritated, to say the least! He tried to get back into the canoe while we were in 2 ft of water, but I finally made him walk to the bank and get in from there. You talk about mad! He was flat ticked off! Joe was laughing so hard he could hardly breathe, and I was laughing so hard I couldn't even talk! And we just couldn't quit! But Larry didn't spill his fog-cutter, and we got the stupid bullfrog, and it wasn't but a few minutes till Larry realized he'd had a once in a lifetime experience. ....And we all knew he'd never forget it, because we'd never let him! You can just imagine the hard time we still give him about getting so excited about a frog that he couldn't ride in a canoe, and since he couldn't gig one, he figured he'd just jump right in the water and try to grab some, and how just one little fog-cutter affected him so much he couldn't sit on a bucket, and on and on and on.

He did make the remark that the moon looked really beautiful when he was under the water looking up at it, and he wondered how he got down there so fast.....



