



University of North Florida  
**UNF Digital Commons**

---

Voices from the Stream: An Environmental History  
of the St. Johns River

Oral Histories

---

10-30-2010

## Frankie Pacetti, E.J. Pacetti and Sandie Stratton

Frankie Pacetti

E.J. Pacetti

Sandie Stratton

Jennifer Warren

Melissa Williams

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.unf.edu/voices\\_stream](https://digitalcommons.unf.edu/voices_stream)

 Part of the [Environmental Studies Commons](#), and the [Oral History Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Pacetti, Frankie; Pacetti, E.J.; Stratton, Sandie; Warren, Jennifer; and Williams, Melissa, "Frankie Pacetti, E.J. Pacetti and Sandie Stratton" (2010). *Voices from the Stream: An Environmental History of the St. Johns River*. 12.  
[https://digitalcommons.unf.edu/voices\\_stream/12](https://digitalcommons.unf.edu/voices_stream/12)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Oral Histories at UNF Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Voices from the Stream: An Environmental History of the St. Johns River by an authorized administrator of UNF Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [Digital Projects](#).

© 10-30-2010 All Rights Reserved



Interviewees: Frankie Pacetti, E.J. Pacetti and Sandie Stratton

Interviewers: Jennifer Warren and Melissa Williams

Date: October 30, 2010

Location: 724 Hansen Road, St. Augustine, FL

Warren: So, just to kind of start things off even though we did that very well, just a couple of minutes ago. We have a little information I gathered from Sandie in a pre-interview, when we were talking about talking to you and Mr. Pacetti, and just one of the first things that we started off with that you guys are Menorcan and you're part of the Menorcan cultural society here in St. Augustine, correct?

Frankie Pacetti: Yes we are, were very proud of it.

Warren: Very cool. Would you mind telling us a little bit more about your involvement with the Menorcan Society and I also understand that you are part of the state park conservationist here?

Frankie: Right. The Favor Dyke State Park, we've done a lot of work for them down there and the Menorcan Society every year in March we have a festival and it's just really a lot of fun. We do a lot of cooking, (laughs) and we have a lot of people and it's it's just great. You know a lot of people show up and they bring memorabilia from years back and what have you and we just really have a good time. It's great.

Warren: In some of my research that I've done on your website that you guys have online you mentioned food one of the things you guys make is real Menorcan clam chowder?

Frankie: Yes we do.

Warren: Is that very good?

Frankie: Yes it is, I've had to make a lot of it,

Warren: Well that's very interesting how does that differ; differ from like say from New England clam chowder?

Frankie: Datil peppers.

Warren: Datil peppers

Frankie: That's the key

- Warren: Wow! That's interesting I've never heard that before.
- Frankie: Yup, yup, we use datil peppers which is a hot pepper that was brought over from Menorca and most all Menorcans grow their own datil peppers. And you will see some down on the dock but their fading out now, but we don't cook without 'em. I mean there's hardly anything that I cook that I don't put a datil pepper in.
- Warren: Wow, that's interesting, I don't think I've ever had one before.
- Frankie: Their hot.
- Warren: Oh their very hot (laughs)
- Frankie: Yeah, their very hot. And it depends on how much you use as to how hot you want something to be, but you know our chowder is just our way of doing it. You know and that's the way it is.
- Warren: That's very interesting and I also found out the society was founded in 1980's and that it is one of the only cultural societies for the Menorcans in the country?
- Frankie: Yup, pretty much so. Sandie? She can shed a lot more cause she done been doing a lot of work with Carol Bradshaw who heads up the Menorcan Society she was asking, go ahead
- Warren: Thank you. Well I was just asking that, that it is one of the only Menorcan cultural societies here in the country? With a worldwide
- Sandie: Currently it is the only Menorcan Cultural Society in the United States that I am aware of. It has a nationwide and a worldwide membership. But and although you can find Menorcans all over the country whether they be long immigrants like mom and dad's or more recent, you can certainly find them all over the world, but the largest still to this day, the largest immigrant population of Menorcans is here in St. Johns County. Probably we've run the numbers a couple of times, I think it's safe to estimate probably about 25,000 to 30,000 people who are descendants of the original Menorcan colonists who came over in the 1700's are here in Florida today, are here in St. Johns County today. They still make up, now St. Johns County's population it was a 186,000 in 2000 and now we're waiting to get numbers from the 2010 census, what do you think?

Frankie: Yeah

Sandie: I think it's going to go

Frankie: I have no idea, we're being invaded, I don't know

Sandie: I think its 250,000 easy, easy I think. So at one time the Menorcans were a majority presence here but that is no longer the case, because of the massive influx of

Frankie: other people

Sandie: other people we've had here since really since 1980.

Frankie: Yeah, Florida was a lot better way back when. She actually wanted to know why the Menorcan chowder was different than other chowders, and I said datil peppers.

Sandie: We don't, what is other chowder? Not aware of other chowder.

Frankie: Other chowders

Sandie: I am not familiar with other chowder.

Warren: That is really interesting. I also found out that some of the arts and crafts that go on during this festival you guys make mullet nets?

Frankie: Oh yeah. To catch fish

Warren: To catch fish?

Frankie: Have you never seen a mullet net?

Warren: I've seen a mullet net.

Frankie: Child where have you been?

Warren: I've been in the west a lot.

Frankie: Oh well yeah there's not much water out there. I'll show you one. But their hand knitted, their little squares that all attach and they have a lead liner around the bottom and they have what they call a horn up here with all these little strings that run through and attach and you pick it up and throw it and it covers, opens up and covers, the fish like mullet, you know coming by. And then

you just tuck it and you pull it in to your boat, on to the beach, wherever you happen to be.

Warren: You guys catch a lot of mullet that way?

Frankie: We have, oh yeah, yeah. Plenty of them and because you don't catch mullet on a hook and line. So yeah.

Warren: Yes I was in my research for some of the stuff that we were going over for this interview I was trying to get a little bit more knowledge about the laws on fishing and the nets and everything and I read somewhere about how, hold on just a second while I find my notes,

Frankie: Can you see it?

Sandie: No, but is it really that important?

Williams: what do you make the nets out of?

Frankie: Nylon. Years back they, it was made out of cotton. Nylon and now monofilament. That's mostly what you see today is monofilament.

Warren: One of my questions was how is the fishing laws directly affected how you guys fish? Because I know that certain nets have been banned like the ones for mullet, some for mullets.

Sandie: The gill net banning?

Frankie: Yeah, which we never used gill nets. Really, but E.J. can you come here a minute? She's talking about nets.

E.J.: about what?

Frankie: Nets. Mullet nets. Let's see if I can get him in on this.

E.J.: What kind of nets?

Frankie: Mullet nets. She was asking about mullet nets, and you know how they were made and I told her years back they were made from cotton and nylon and now pretty much monofilament. And then what was the question?

Warren: And now some of them are banned apparently?

- Frankie: Like gill nets, some of them are banned she said.
- E.J.: All gill nets are banned now.
- Frankie: Okay. All gill nets.
- E.J.: Except, well there's a restriction you can pull a small, I forget what size, seine on the beaches certain times of year for whiting.
- Frankie: And that's a net that they go out for whiting and they stretch it out, but it is just certain times of the year you can do that. But see all of that over the years and over what I call over population of our area, over the state of Florida even, which a lot of people don't believe that but that's all been taken away. And that used to be what people did you went to the beach and you caught mullet and you caught whiting and that's how you made a living, that's what you fed your family with. But all that's slowly going by the way, you used to could go on the beach and build a fire and camp on the beach. You used to could drive all of the beaches, can't do that anymore either, and it's just all going by the wayside, and you know we've learned to adapt, I guess you would say.
- Williams: How did you guys get into fishing initially?
- Frankie: Family, it's a family tradition.
- Warren: You mentioned earlier before the interview that when how it's been affected, how you can't do certain fishing anymore and how some people don't understand you know these limitations and how do these limitations affect you and Mr. Pacetti directly?
- Frankie: Go ahead..
- E.J.: I don't
- Frankie: well what basically what she's asking is, in other words, why people are not fishing as much as what we used to fish and it all boils down to the fact that they've stopped allowing certain fish to be caught, you can only have so many of certain fish, and the cost factor is what keeps a lot of people from going fishing. I mean who can afford to spend two or three hundred dollars, three or four hundred dollars, on getting their boat ready and go on off shore to go fishing when you're only allowed one fish of this and one, what's the point? You know you take that money and you go buy fish, you know and that's gone by the wayside. You can't take a family, kids and all out today in a boat, recreational fishing and

have a good time without it spending you two or three hundred dollars. That's just the way it is, gas the price of boats and motors, and it's not good.

- Williams: What do you think pollution and like fish kills and stuff like that, has that had a huge effect on fishing right now?
- Frankie: Of course pollution does, run off, and it's run off from a lot of things. Up in North River, what is that big huge condo, what they call that when they have those big sewer treatment plants. You have condos, there's one that I know of up North River, and they have a sewer treatment plant, well certain times they're allowed to dump that into the river. Now see to me that's wrong.
- E.J.: They have one of them a couple years back, they were dumping and it was so such strong, whatever they were dumping it was peeling the hide off the fish, but the marine patrol looked into it and nothing they could do about it, they had a federal permit to dump so many gallons of that treatment that they used into this creek and it was just like you were burning the hide off yourself, it was burning the hide off these fish
- Frankie: Whatever the chemicals are that they use
- Williams: Do you think that affects the fishing community more or do you think the restrictions they've placed on it make it more difficult?
- Frankie: All of it. It all plays a role in it.
- E.J.: That's just like three years ago we had a red tide all the beaches here I don't know if yall were around seen all the red tide I've seen red tide on the west coast but never not much on the east.
- Frankie: No
- E.J.: its red , it's red. This thing that we have had out here was a brownish color and you go over to the beach and it would take your breath away, it burned your throat, it burned you. And I said no that's not red tide that's not red tide. Well what is it, we don't know, we don't know. I said well I have an idea, at that time they thought a hurricane was coming, was gonna hit the coast right between St. Augustine and Jacksonville, you got nine sewer treatment plants in Jacksonville, that was gonna water was gonna come up in the St. Johns and all these sewer treatment plants are right on the edge of the St. Johns, it was gonna back that stuff up into the city of Jacksonville, so they dumped it. Nobody knew

about it, I just guessed at it, and the only reason I knew it was finally truth I was at the filing station one morning gassing up to go fishing, crabbing and here's a fella with a uniform one and a name tag, and we got to talking and I said you work at one of those sewer treatment plants, he said yeah, I said if I ask you a question, you may not be able to answer it, he said I know what you gonna ask me, I said, he said, I said what's that, he said you gonna ask me about that red tide, I said yeah. He said there wasn't no red tide; he said we dumped all nine of them plants, whatever chemical they were using into the river it went on out come down the coastline. You can't prove it

Frankie: No you can't, but that's' the type of stuff that's allowed

E.J.: I can't say that he told me that and he'd lose his job, but there you go. He said we've done that often, when they think it's gonna, if they didn't do that it'd push all that up into the city of Jacksonville, it would back up and come up in all the streets. So there you go. It's actually like the pulp plant on Palatka, I don't want to see anything closed down, people lose their jobs, I don't know if yall ever heard of Rice Creek, you don't catch any fish or crabs in Rice Creek, cause they the plant dumps into Rice Creek. Now they want to put that pipeline out into the middle of the St. Johns and how many gallons they gonna do? They haven't let them do it yet, but it's gonna happen, it's gonna happen.

Warren: Where do you guys currently fish, right now?

E.J.: Where do we crab?

Warren: Yeah do you crab?

E.J.: I'd say from Lake George north.

Warren: Okay Lake George north?

E.J.: Yeah, you get below Lake George and you catch fish but you don't find any crabs.

Warren: Right. How long have you guts been crabbing there?

E.J.: In this area right here I've been crabbing probably 25, 30 years.

Warren: 25, 30 years. And surely in that amount of time you must have seen like production go down?



- E.J.: The last four years you couldn't hardly catch a crab and all of a sudden this year they just showed back up and nobody knows why. I mean they really showed back up.
- Warren: And you don't, nobody knows why?
- E.J.: Nobody knows why.
- Frankie: Can't explain it, there's no rhyme or reason to it.
- E.J.: Just like your fish kills they're talking about this year all on the St. Johns River, you know. Well I've got friends that got pits right here in town where they dig their own gravel up, you know sand up; the fish were dying in their pits. There wasn't nothing dumping into their pits, but you got so much dumping into the St. Johns River, you got so many what you want to call it, (unintelligible) subdivisions, that you know
- Frankie: Oh, run off
- E.J.: You got a along the run offs, that yard run off, pool runoffs.
- Warren: We have been reading a lot about that in our class and how it's affected the PH
- E.J.: The water management people they know a lot more than what they're telling people, they study that river everyday. But they not going to let the public know a lot of things.
- Frankie: You're being recorded by the way.
- E.J.: I can't help that. It's true.
- Frankie: I know it is.
- Sandie: Do you care Dad?
- Frankie: No
- E.J.: I care (Too many people talking over each other) cause the water management are not elected officials. They're appointed. And if I get in there then I got my son in there, I got my uncle in there, I got my wife in there, it's all appointed. So, they're powerful.

- Williams: How do you feel about the environmental organizations, do you feel like you like to work with them, do you feel like they work against you guys sometimes?
- E.J.: Not necessarily I think they spend a lot of unnecessary money when they could take come ride with a lot of us and we could show 'em stuff where it's coming from. They spend a lot of dollars studying this stuff and they still don't know.
- Warren: What are some of the things that you think they'd learn, would be most influential in them learning?
- E.J.: They just like farm run off you got certain creeks where the farmers they use a lot of fertilizer. You get a lot of rain that's a lot of run off into that river, but people can't stop farming.
- Warren: Mrs. Pacetti was telling us earlier about red snappers and how that their red fish that there's a regulation on fishing them and how
- E.J.: There was in the paper two days ago they gonna completely stop red snapper fishing on the coast of Florida. 90 miles, I mean from 90 foot deep to 200 foot. Now they telling us there is not enough grown fish to keep reproducing, we've got more snapper now than we ever had, but if there's not enough of them how come we got all these small snapper? They got to have mom and daddy's to have the small ones.
- Frankie: Exactly
- E.J.: So you know it don't make sense the things, the reason they're doing that is import. Import the farmed fish, that's all it is, its politics. They can say what they want to say.
- Warren: It's really interesting that you tell us that because we've been learning in class the last few weeks is how endangered red snappers are, but you guys would know
- Frankie: No
- Warren: better than anyone because you're out on the water everyday you see them.
- Frankie: Well you know and that's
- E.J.: They're catching more now they go out and catch more fish now than they ever caught. There's no shortage.

- Frankie: On the west coast of Florida over Steinhatchee and all oh my god the fishing over there is fantastic. I mean the grouper fishing, the snapper fishing
- E.J.: They put everybody over there on a quota. In other words let's say they go back so many years say I was over there fishing and they check what I caught, well you have to keep a record and the ones that have the right amount of quota they can get back. A lot of them aren't even fishing anymore, but they still get their quota and they sell their quota to somebody else. To make money that way which is nothing wrong with that.
- Sandie: What do you mean they sell the quota Dad, like a lease?
- E.J.: Like a lease. In other words you get so many; you're allowed so many pounds. So I sell my poundage
- Sandie: So like the king crabbers in Alaska sell their leases (unintelligible)
- Williams: How have the waterways changed like the landscape, have certain fishing spots dried up?
- Frankie: Because of the Corp of Engineers. They are what created the problem for our beaches and our waterways. When the Corp of Engineers came in we originally, the original inlet, St. Augustine Inlet, you know more about that than me because I wasn't
- E.J.: Well it was south of where it is now. Originally it was south.
- Frankie: And that was created by Mother Nature, God. Well some how or another someone decided that that needed to be closed up and a new inlet dredged. We never had a beach erosion problem before, okay. You would have to walk to get to the water, say we're standing at the, up on the dune, to get to the water at high tide you would have to walk from here to that blue house up there. Okay? And now it's right here, and when they opened up that, and dredged that out, and then they came in years later and decided to put the huge boulders, you know the jetties, all that changed the flow of everything, which has also changed what's happening with beaches. And it's just common sense and there again common sense is not politically correct anymore. They don't want you to apply common sense, but their in lies the problem the Corp of Engineers did that to us, and it is what it is, you know, so deal with it. People living on the, you couldn't give me property on the beach and I've been here my whole life. Most Menorcans would not live on the beach, they know better. But those people

eventually, won't be in my lifetime, eventually I say there will be no A1A. It will be washed over, and everything gone. And that's sad. It is really sad, but we see it coming. You know, but you try to talk to people who are supposed to be educated and know all of this kind of stuff and go by the rules and all that, they don't get it. They just don't get it.

E.J.: I don't know if y'all have ever seen a map of Vilano Beach, y'all know where Vilano Beach is, yeah. When I was a child, there was a pavilion there, big Olympic swimming pool,

Frankie: Right on the beach.

E.J.: Right on the beach. Right now if you had to go find a part of it, it would be out in the water, probably two or three hundred yards from where the beach is now.

Frankie: That's how much beach we used to have.

E.J.: Yeah, that's how much beach we used to have.

Warren: Now we have been talking a lot in our class about how certain swamps and waterways have been dredged and ruined and then fish have been dying because they're not in their natural surrounding and then it's making harder for fishermen and fisher women to get the fish that they need and some of them are going down, some of them are going up. But I have a certain question to step back a little bit; Sandie was telling me in a pre-interview that you have a restricted fishing, species license. I was just wondering what kind of fish do you catch with that license? She said that you don't use it very often.

Frankie: Your restricted species. That just a commercial.

Sandie: Was it a designation on your commercial license? I don't understand at all. I mean I know you can take at certain times of the year or used to, now this may not even be the case anymore, you could take like stone crab, stone crab claws.

E.J.: Yeah, when the seasons open.

Sandie: Right

Frankie: You have to have an RS for that.

Sandie: But don't you, not every crabber can do that can they?

- E.J.: Yeah, you can on the east coast you can buy what they call an incidental take. You don't have to buy a complete stone crab, because we don't have enough, it's not like the west coast, the west coast is all lime rock and they just keep coming in all the time. What we catch over here is local stone crab. So you buy that little incidental take which costs you \$50.00 or \$25.00, and you might get a five gallon bucket of claws per day.
- Sandie: Now is that only attached to your commercial license?
- E.J.: Yeah.
- Sandie: Oh Okay.
- E.J.: You have to have a crab license. An individual can't go apply for that.
- Sandie: So it's like an add on stamp.
- E.J.: Yeah. And that restricted species allows you to take certain fish that and sell them, where you're only allowed to catch the recreational limit. Where I can have more than the recreation.
- Warren: So that gives you a little leeway I guess?
- E.J.: Yeah
- Warren: Does, do a lot of people in St. Augustine have those restricted species license? Is that what they do pretty common?
- E.J.: Yeah
- Warren: Very Interesting.
- Williams: Are the fishing tournaments still going strong? I know you said you're not really doing them anymore.
- Frankie: Yeah they still have the annual
- E.J.: Yeah they still have the annual, they just cost so much to enter. The cost factor,
- Frankie: It's reaching the point now where it's going to be a big boat tournament. The Who Hahs

- E.J.: Before it started the expense wasn't that great and everybody got in it, but then it kept getting bigger and bigger, and now it costs, the cost factor keeps a lot of people out of it. In fact, a lot of these people with these 20 and 30 foot boats, with all these new laws they're passing, they gonna be stuck with boats, nobody's gonna want their boats. Son-in-laws got one parked up down beneath the shed, he don't use it three times a year now. You can't go out and catch enough to justify the cost factor.
- Williams: Not just the community you know that affects the economics and the boating industry.
- Frankie: That's the whole thing right there. You can't go out and take a boat that size and take your family and go off shore fishing and catch enough fish for your family or to put fish in your freezer. You can't do it. The cost factor is just unbelievable; it's not worth it anymore. And
- E.J.: You can only catch so fish per person and then half the time some of that will be closed and you have to turn them fish loose and they're gonna die before they get back down to where they need to go. So,
- Williams: Where do most of the restaurants get their fish then? Is it mostly local?
- E.J.: Most of us now are getting to be foreign. I mean they can still, these commercial boys, can still bring fish in right now. But it's getting cut back, cut back every time. Yeap.
- Warren: So without these restrictions, I mean it would be just fine to get as much fish as you want, but now that they have so may of these restrictions on it, making it hard for you guys to survive.
- E.J.: With your population growth and all you're gonna have to have some restrictions. Just common sense. In other words I can't go out and instead of catching a thousand pounds I could have fifty thousand pounds. Pretty soon you're not gonna have enough. You gotta have some, but they're just getting ridiculous with their restrictions.
- Frankie: Yeah, they're gonna, like I said
- E.J.: It's all politics
- Frankie: It is

- E.J.: I don't care what they say, what they want, it's all politics.
- Frankie: And they're gonna close down the fishing industry and the state of Florida at the rate they're going. And that's gonna put a lot of people out of work and a lot of people are going to go hungry, and that's wrong.
- E.J.: And they know it was coming cause they been talking about it for months now.
- Williams: You say there are plenty of red fish out there, I mean (unintelligible)
- Frankie: Oh my god. In this creek you could walk across the red fish.
- E.J.: And then like another thing you take so many fish feed on other fish and other things in the water. What they call them, we call them Jew fish. They closed that season about 8 or 10 or 12 years ago. You couldn't catch, you still can't catch, and it's still closed.
- Frankie: It's still closed. That's stupid.
- E.J.: Well those things eat so many fish, they get huge.
- Sandie: Are those the ones that get up to like two hundred pounds?
- E.J.: No five, six, seven eight hundred. They get as big as Volkswagens.
- Sandie: Are those the diver eaters and they can't get away...
- E.J.: Yes.
- Frankie: Yes.
- E.J.: In fact there's so many on the west coast they usually just one or two will be on a reef. Now they running in schools, they're schools of them.
- Frankie: Well that's scary.
- E.J.: And the amount fish that they eat a day. (unintelligible)
- Frankie: The amount of fish they eat in a day. It's unbelievable. But you can't tell the people that make these rules you can't make them

understand that. They don't, because they're not fisherman, they can't be.

- E.J.: That's just like the ole red fish, red bass; we only allowed to catch one per person, per day. The red fish is no telling how many small crabs that they eat in a day's time.
- Sandie: Do you think the restriction; because that restriction went on red fish, I remember, vaguely remember that. That was what twenty, twenty-five years ago, and do you think that has affected your catch numbers, because I know they eat crab?
- E.J.: Yep.
- Sandie: Because that huge bloom of red fish that have, that explosion of population that's come, so you think that's affecting the crab fishermen?
- E.J.: Yeah and red fish, it's like they're not in other words born right her in the state right here, they travel, they go all up and down the whole coast from here to Georgia, to Carolina, in other words, here we can only catch one, Georgia they can have five, Texas they can have five.
- Sandie: What's the size restriction in Georgia?
- E.J.: Same size.
- Sandie: Oh, okay.
- Frankie: Not over twenty-seven and not under seventeen, I think.
- E.J.: Yeah. I don't know why you can have one state you can have five per person; per day and Florida you can have one.
- Frankie: Yeah. Where is the rationale there?
- Williams: Is it because there are more fishing in Florida?
- Frankie: No. Doesn't have anything to do with that. It's still...
- E.J.: I used to think that to then I went up to Georgia and went along the coastline just to see, they got more tributaries and marsh than we ever thought about having. They really do.



- Frankie: I mean sometimes if the tide is right out there and the suns hitting right on the other over there you can see the red fish h swimming  
by  
And it's like oh that's a nice one.
- Sandie: Are they schooling now?
- E.J.: Yeap.
- Frankie: Yeap.
- Sandie: Because they were always, I mean when I was fishing a lot with you, they were always kind of a solitary fish. Is that just how much they all exploded?
- Frankie: Well, it's the small ones that are coming in schools, that's like I caught one off the dock the other day, and he was just silver, he didn't have any other red on him and he was just coming in the creek. They're just everywhere.
- E.J.: I mean you need to have these laws, like you have everything, but....
- Frankie: But they need to be reasonable.
- E.J.: They, they just don't cover it, it just don't seem
- Frankie: And I really believe that they have people doing these jobs that really don't know the job. They don't really know, you know, what really what they're doing basically.
- Williams: What organizations would you be referring to, any specifically?
- Frankie: I have, I really don't know. It's just cause I had no idea who in Tallahassee does what, when, where and how. You know? So I don't know.
- E.J.: That's just like the soft shell industry. I don't know if yall had any knowledge on it at all, but the peeler crabs, you know and they shed and that's the only time the crab grows when it sheds. But this peeler situation, they use different type trap, just like our regular crab trap, but just smaller wire, and it just, they have a fall run and a spring run on those things. And you have tanks set up and you put them in the tanks and then they shed out. But most of the people now, they set those traps out and you catch the peeler crabs and there are a lot of other small crabs that go in there and

they should separate them right then but they'll take everything home, and separate them when they get home, the little crabs that aren't peeler crabs they die. They get throwed away. Marine Patrol don't have, half of them don't have any idea what a peeler crab is, they need to check these people better than what they check them. But they need to be schooled to know what a peeler crab and when they think it's gonna shed. In other words, you got what you call red liner, when you see a red liner it's gonna shed in the next two or three days. A pink one is a little bit further, a white one you shouldn't bring it home, white liner, You should wait until they are either pink or red, then bring it home. But they bring all of them home and loose so many of them and then if they bring let's say like a white one and they put it in the tank and by thee time they do turn red they don't feed in that tank. You can put feed in it they will not feed, they'll shed half out the shell and they'll die. So they haven't accomplished nothing. They loose everything. I was in that business for years and I could see the handwriting on the wall. If you keep doing that, keep doing that, you wipe your crab population out. That's what happened up in the Chesapeake Bay. Years ago, they over done peeler fishing, because I had a feller move down here, several of them moved down here from Chesapeake cause there wasn't anymore crabs up there and they started trapping here and seen everyone peeler fishing they knew who to do it before we did, they got back into it. But several of them told me same thing is gonna happen here as happen to us up there the way they're fishing these things.

Sandie: So they're not doing any sorting on the deck, like I used to do with you? They're just dumping everything in the box; no matter what's in the trap, big, small they don't care everything goes in the box?

Frankie: Right.

E.J.: Basically they dump it, then they get home, then they want to separate it.

Frankie: Yeah, they don't wanna do that while they're out there. Which is, which is stupid. They're hurting themselves.

E.J.: In other words, they're their own worst enemy.

Frankie: They're hurting themselves. Yeah, they are.

Warren: How many crabs do they usually trap in these tanks?

- Frankie: No. no. It's a regular crab trap.
- Warren: It's a regular crab trap?
- E.J.: It just depends on how the run is. Years ago when I was in it the first time I found a hole on the west coast, you're not going to believe this, the first day I come back St. Augustine I got 80 peeler, what they call peeler box crabs, took them over there and set them out in Swanee, run 'em the next day I had five thousand. In one overnight, I had five thousand. But now they were all red liners, they weren't, they were ready to go.
- Frankie: They were ready to shed out and
- E.J.: And I didn't have a system set up, I had a fella that I was tied up with out of Beauford, South Carolina. He had a big system and he was coming down here and he was buying from seven of us, that's how big his system was. But he really knew how to do it.
- Frankie: Have you ever eaten a soft shell crab?
- Warren: I have actually.
- Frankie: Well, and so then you know that they call them peelers and they put them in these little tanks, they have these huge tanks, but they're only about that deep in the water, and can it's fascinating to watch them she out. Because when they, you got a crab let's say this size, and all of a sudden he starts backing out the back side of the shell, well by the time he gets out of it, he is now this size. And you look at that and you go how can that be? But a that point you take him out of the water, cause he's soft, and that's what makes the soft shell.
- E.J.: Or you leave him in there until you get what they call, feel like leather. And once you take him out, he won't get hard. He'll stay that way, dormant like that, and they keep 'em at a certain temperature, cold storage, and they'll stay, they'll last like that for almost two weeks. That's why they can ship 'em and sell 'em alive, out of the water. Once you take 'em out of the water they get dormant, they won't harden up.
- Williams: How long does it take to grow a whole new shell if you leave it in the water?
- E.J.: Pardon?

- Williams: How long does it take to grow another shell like that if they do that?
- Frankie: That's what they are that hardens up. So that becomes their hard shell again.
- E.J.: That's the only time they grow is when they shed.
- Sandie: So how long does it take if you just threw him back in the water when he he's all leathery, how long would it take?
- E.J.: If he's stuck in about three or four hours.
- Frankie: Yeah.
- Sandie: Oh wow.
- Frankie: Because they're moldable at that point, no protection.
- E.J.: There are these boys that have they system set up like that; they check them about every three hours.
- Frankie: And that's around the clock. So it's a hard business to be in. Somebody's got to be there checking 'em.
- Sandie: It's like babysitting crabs.
- Frankie: Yeah.
- Williams: Would you encourage people to take up the sport or commercial fishing as a profession now as things are today?
- E.J.: Not commercial fishing,
- Frankie: Not in this state,
- E.J.: crabbing is going to be alright for a few more years. But commercial fishing no.
- Frankie: you can't catch enough fish as a commercial fisherman just to pay for your gas. That's bad.
- E.J.: Like I said on the west coast their going by quota now and if you haven't been in it you can't get, unless you buy your quota from somebody else. That's just like the stone crabs, you can get a

stone crab permit from the state, blue crabs are frozen, I know. I don't think stone crabs are, but then you have to buy you a tag from other stone crabbers. And tags are going, I forget what they're going for now, two or three dollars a tag. But then you have to turn twenty percent back to the government cause they're trying to cut back on that, that's their way of cutting back. If you buy a crab license on the east coast I can sell you a crab license, but if you go buy a crab license on the west coast you have to buy two and give one back to the government.

Frankie: Now does that make sense?

Warren: That makes no sense at all.

Frankie: None at all.

E.J.: That way they're getting rid of it. They're trying to cut it back without putting everybody out of business.

Warren: That's so interesting that they make it so hard for you to go out there and get fish when there is such a high demand for fish in restaurants and in homes and everything it's just they need to provide for that certain market, but they're making so impossible for you guys to fulfill it.

Frankie: Absolutely. Absolutely. Yes there are. Yup.

Williams: Why would we want to import, it's our economy, our fishing the area.

E.J.: They want you to do that. Keep fishing for all the markets (unintelligible)

Frankie: well, and the thing about it is, think about it, and that's what it's coming down to. So when they import fish and gods knows what it will be labeled think about if it's coming from Japan or where it's coming from. From the day it's caught and flash frozen, how long is it on that ship until it gets here, and how long does it sit in port until it gets delivered, okay, and you can't call it fresh fish, you know

Williams: And you're still paying top dollar

Frankie: Yeah, and you're paying an arm and a leg

E.J.: By law they got to

Frankie: You don't know how they

E.J.: (unintelligible) cause we're real strict here, they're not strict

Frankie: You don't know how they handled that stuff, you know

E.J.: All of a sudden you read the paper, you can't eat this, you can't eat that on account of it wasn't processed right

Frankie: Exactly

E.J.: That's what happened in farming, that's why I'm against farming stuff.

Williams: Have you ever feared eating the fish around here?

E.J.: No

Frankie: No, never.

E.J.: Never

Frankie: No

E.J.: Even with the fish kill in the St. Johns River, I still eat catfish out of there.

Frankie: But that's just like this latest in the last couple of few years, tilapia. Oh you got to try the tilapia. For gods sakes that is a nasty, fresh water fish that goes along the bottom and eats all the crap.

Warren: Right. Why do they say that? It's a bottom feeder fish.

Frankie: Yeah, it's a nasty fish. What I don't like fresh water fish per say anyway, I'm strictly salt water. And, but you know, and I, we were in a restaurant, I can't remember where it was not too long ago, and the girl says, oh we have some fresh tilapia, and I said well good turn it loose some where. And she goes you don't like, I said maam I don't eat anything that eats what that eats, and no I don't eat tilapia. No that's a nasty fish. And she's like really?

Warren: There's no meat on it either. I've had it a couple of times and its like paper thin and it just

Frankie: No

E.J.: It's the way they cut it

Warren: yeah, it's just not

Frankie: If you want to eat good, fresh fish then you want to eat flounder, you want to eat grouper, of course stuff we eat at home you won't generally find in restaurant but you can't beat sheep head or pompy drum, or red fish any of those. But

E.J.: Some states you can't

Frankie: Well that's true.

E.J.: They can sell red fish in Georgia.

Frankie: Yeah I know, that's amazing.

E.J.: We can't.

Frankie: We can't, it's a sport fish. You can't sell it, but go to Georgia it's sold there.

E.J.: It's sold in the restaurants, it's on the menu.

Sandie: Now those tilapia are they mostly farm raised, is that what they farm raise in China and Vietnam and places like that? The big fish farms.

E.J.: Yeah they farm them over there,

Frankie: And they're just so proud off it.

E.J.: And no telling what they feed 'em.

Frankie: Yeah, no tellin'

Sandie: Not that I have a problem putting, you know toxic waste into kids toys, then you know you wonder

E.J.: You wonder what they're feeding them

Sandie: maybe their feeding the kids to them that they get from toxic waste. I don't know.

Frankie: Who knows?

Sandie: God bless 'em

Frankie: I know

Sandie: Nothing personal against them. But you begin to wonder about stuff that comes out of there.

Frankie: Yeah, that is, if I can't get home grown, I just don't want it, you know.

Warren: I completely agree.

E.J.: That's just like them talking about the St. Johns River, they've had one of the best shrimping years they've had in twenty years.

Frankie: Oh yeah.

E.J.: This year

Frankie: Unbelievable

E.J.: Where did they come from? All of a sudden I mean there's still shrimp out there.

Frankie: And for this time of the year there shouldn't be.

E.J.: Usually there gone by now.

Frankie: August is usually the big month for shrimping in the St. Johns; you know it's just carried right on.

E.J.: They showed up off shore here like they do for there and all these tributaries too little shrimp. And they were catching I mean boats were just catching baskets of them, and all of a sudden this last little northeaster, last full moon we had, right after that they disappeared. Nobody knows where (unintelligible)

Frankie: The shrimpers out there trawling and there's nothing.

E.J.: Nothing

Frankie: And I'm like we haven't got our shrimp yet this year. Cause I buy, we buy shrimp from off the docks. You know, and I don't eat brown shrimp, I don't like 'em, I like east coast white shrimp. That's the best.



Sandie: Well I remember way back, in town you turn on Kings Street, go over the little bridge there, was it that Marina's Sanchez, that little run of water there, by the FEC

Frankie: San Sebastian

Sandie: San Sebastian. And I mean there used to be shrimp boats tied up there all the way down the creek, and are any shrimp boats out of St. Augustine anymore?

E.J.: Oh Yeah.

Frankie: Yeah there's a few.

E.J.: Go over look around there, their all tied up.

Frankie: Their all tied up right now, cause there's no shrimp.

E.J.: There's no shrimp

Sandie: I mean compared to what there was back then?

E.J.: Oh no.

Frankie: No, no.

E.J.: It used to be you could walk across there.

Sandie: Yeah, you never had to, you could walk across the boat decks until you got to the intracoastal. You never set a foot down in that creek could you.

Frankie: No.

Williams: It seems like it would be hard to keep that as a profession if you hit one year and not catching anything the next year.

Frankie: Yeah. It's a tough life it really is. But it's in people's blood; you know they gotta do it. Been handed down through generations, that's what they do.

Williams: You think that's going to be lost on future generations?

Frankie: Eventually, you know, with the population boom in Florida, I don't, there's a lot of people that aren't going to be happy until Florida doesn't look any different than New York or you know

places like that. And everything that used to be will have gone by the wayside it will all be, you know, neon lights, nothings real and you know, but what are you gonna do?

Warren: We've already started seeing that in like the commercial developers

Frankie: Oh yeah

Warren: putting up the houses and they all look like miniature cut houses

Frankie: Don't even go there. Cookie cutters.

Warren: Yes, cookie cutters.

Frankie: that's it

Warren: that's what I call them.

Frankie: That's exactly what it is and right now there are so many houses in, just in St. Johns County area that are being foreclosed and there are so many vacant homes that were built in subdivisions that are just sitting there rotting because of poor planning and that all goes back to County Commissioners who allowed all this because the developers, the Who Haas with the money, came in and said we're gonna do this, this, this and this, and they just fell over their feet, you know. Oh yeah go ahead, you know, because and the county's way of looking at it, it meant money. You know, and it's sad when I'm just an average, everyday person then if I can look out there and see you're wrong. You know, this gonna go by the wayside. What is wrong, it's all about the money. Everything in this day and age boils down to profit. And when you start putting profit before people you got a problem. But nobody cares anymore, they just don't care.

Williams: Some of our readings have said you're going to lose out a lot if you let these developers just keep on doing this to the land, you know because tourism and all that stuff's gonna drag you know, the economy down anyway.

Frankie: Absolutely.

E.J.: Well that's just like St. Augustine wasn't the oldest city in the United States and they keep the old part,

Frankie: Encroaching

- E.J.: squeezing pretty soon you're not gonna have any old St. Augustine.
- Frankie: Yeah, there will be nothing.
- E.J.: Yeah, but they're finally realizing that now, so that they get stricter on it.
- Frankie: They're twenty years too late.
- E.J.: Yeah, they've covered up a lot of stuff that should have been left old, but...
- Frankie: Yeah
- Warren: I was surprised to see, you know, just in my own personal knowledge just how many people live in St. Augustine because once you go over the Lion Bridge, you go to that part right there by the water I have a few friends that live over there. I mean it's such a small, like it seems like such a small area, but it's so compact and at the same time like there's, there's I mean you could literally like just go across it in a couple of minutes and then it's done.
- Frankie: Yeah
- Warren: Like, I mean they just crammed so much into that little area that there's just no room for anything.
- Frankie: And they've, the downtown area, which used to be beautiful, it really was, and I mean you could go sit in the park and just watch people if that's what you liked to do, or read a book or whatever, well you can't do that anymore because then you've got the homeless people, god love 'em, you know, and the people who don't really want to work, that want to stand there and panhandle, and aggravate you, and all that's been allowed and that's wrong. You know, I mean excuse me and you paid your taxes when? I own a home here and I paid my taxes, why are you bothering me? And I have no patience with that kind of stuff, so I haven't been downtown in I can't tell you when. I don't go downtown. That's my home, you know, but I don't go there. It's just not good anymore.
- Williams: What do you think about the plans to pump all the water out of the St. Johns and send it down to where the Seminoles live?
- Frankie: Oh no! NO, no, no, no!

- E.J.: That will kill it. That will kill it.
- Frankie: That will be the ruination. And let me tell you something about that water
- E.J.: Yeah, we gonna (unintelligible) that would really speed it up.
- Frankie: Right now we heard a rumor that the county is fixing to hire some, what I call the water Gestapo people, to go around and you have a drip out there on your faucet in the yard or something where you're gonna get warned the first time, then you're gonna get fined because you're using too much water. Well here's my answer to that, when the state of Florida says to the Dasani Company, to the Zephyrs, they left, you know, they couldn't take it anymore, Zephyrhills and all those who are taking our water to make that bottle right there, for profit. Now how many millions of gallons a day do you think they're using? And their gonna tell me a native Floridian, who pays taxes, who's lived the right life, that I can only water this much, and I can only use this much water? Well when they stop bottling that and sending it out of state and selling it for profit then maybe I'll consider it, but until then no I'm gonna water when I want to and the hell with 'em, is the way I feel about it. No, we don't need to send to Miami, to Orlando, the mouse, that's the ruination of the state of Florida. And how many, how many, amusement things do they have over there that they need tens of thousands gallons of water a day to operate, again for profit, but they're gonna tell us how to use our water. I just, you know, help me understand that.
- Williams: The ownerships seem to cause all these problems.
- Frankie: Yeah, and they say well they have permits, well great give me a permit then. You know, no I can't stand the mouse, you know I wish he would up and leave and go back to California or wherever the hell he came from, you know, and well do you realize how many jobs, let them go too. They came here because of it, let them go with it. You know, I'm critical when it comes to this kind of stuff, I am and that's not very nice, I'm sure. But
- Warren: no, no, we talk about this
- Frankie: don't tell me about water when you're wanting to do stuff like that, you know, and yet you're saying right now we're eighteen inches below what we should be on our rain table. We're in trouble, but you know.

- Warren: It's interesting what you say, I mean everything you guys say is directly dead on about what we've been talking about, and all these issues come up in our class.
- Frankie: Well, it's like I said I'm just an average person, you know, we've worked hard, paid taxes, you know the whole nine yards, but I've got common sense. I can look out there and see what's going on. Why can't these people that are making tons of money, sitting in their overstuffed leather chairs, passing resolutions, laws and what have you, why can't they see it? It's all about the money. That's the whole thing right there. All about the money.
- Williams: You're right the developers, you know, they make the rules.
- Frankie: Oh yeah. They are in charge. They absolutely are in charge and they laugh at us. You know, because they can afford to do whatever they want to do and get passed what they want passed, and the whole nine yards. But, you can't do a thing about it. Would yall like to take a break and walk down on the dock or?
- Warren: Well if you don't mind we would like to take the recorder with us. Well it's just
- Frankie: You want me to tell some crazy stories?
- Warren: I don't want to lose any of this precious information that we've been getting.
- Frankie: Oh for heavens sake!
- Warren: I would really love to go down to the dock, that's great.
- Frankie: Okay, then we'll just take our little break and walk and wander or whatever. But this, the houses along the creek here, there's only like twelve, because see where that tree line is over there, you can't build any further there and this last house over here you can't build any further over there. So all the homes along here belong to people I've known my whole life. And they were all little camps, like this little house here and this little house over here, and people would come down on the weekends and bring their families and what have you, you know, and blah, blah, blah. And about sixteen years ago after my mom passed away first and then my dad, we tore down the old cabin and built this here, and I said you know this is where I want to be.
- Warren: So this property has been in your family your whole life?

- Frankie: For years, pretty much.
- Warren: Wow, that's awesome. And you just rebuilt house, it's nice, when did you do the renovations?
- Sandie: No, no
- Frankie: From the ground up, in it's been sixteen years. I mean '94 I believe, I think.
- Williams: How much does fluctuate over here?
- Frankie: Rise and fall? Probably on just an average we got about a three or four foot rise and fall. On average
- Sandie: On average depending on the time of the month I'd say, depending on the wind and the moon phase.
- Frankie: Although a few years back
- Sandie: It's been over this dock well over, how far up the yard mom past the shed?
- Frankie: Yeah, right up to there.
- Sandie: And it's been down so low that there was not dry land but wet muck in front of the dock.
- Frankie: Exactly
- Warren: Do you guys get much wildlife coming around here, like gators and snakes?
- Frankie: While don't yall pull a chair up or sit in the shade or something. Yes we have, as a matter of fact, now we've got about a four foot little gator but I don't see him out there now. And we've had some monsters. Yeah he's just hiding, he hears us. And we've got everything; we've got the coons, and armadillos, coyotes, unfortunately yeah. And deer, or yeah, but like I said they're going back now.
- Sandie: oh look, I need some (datil peppers)

Warren: See I grew up in a house where we had flavor in our food, but we just didn't have spice, spice like heat spice in it. So I never really had too much of it being hot in my food.

Frankie: Okay, touch your finger to that.

Warren: Is it gonna hurt?

Frankie: No.

Williams: I eat pretty spicy foods. It's spicy.

Frankie: It has the best flavor. It will burn your little tongue.

Warren: I'm kind of sensitive.

Frankie: Then don't.

Williams: Naw, that's perfect for me.

Frankie: But now the green, they're green first then they go to this color. They're not as strong at this color. As they are when they're green. No

Sandie: Here miss I can take it.

Frankie: No, lord no, don't let her do that.

Williams: The greens ones are hotter you said?

Frankie: Yes! But they're great. I use them, the only thing I haven't put them in that I can remember is ice cream.

Williams: Do you guys ever cast out right off of here or?

Warren: Yeah you said you caught a red fish out here one day too.

Sandie: This is where she learned to fish, this is where I learned to fish.

Warren: Really. Historic dock right here.

Frankie: There you go.

Sandie: Well out on the water. Mom says fishing off the dock is for people who don't have boats.

- Williams: The biggest one I ever remembering catching was about nineteen inches a red fish but I was probably ten years old.
- Frankie: That was probably fun.
- Warren: How big, one of the questions I was gonna ask you is, me and Sandie were talking about how you used to be the queen of tarpon?
- Frankie: Oh lord. That's my favorite fish to catch. It just a sport fish, you don't eat 'em, they're just a lot of fun and they are, ooh 158 pounds.
- Warren: Yeah, she said some of them you were pulling out were well over two hundred, you little thing there.
- Williams: How long did it take you to catch one of those?
- Frankie: It depends on the tackle you use and where you're at, you know, and sometimes it can be thirty minutes and sometimes it can be an hour and a half. You know, it just varies.
- Sandie: Sometimes it can be all night long just sitting there stressing.
- Warren: And hundreds, you caught through, would you say hundreds of those?
- Frankie: Oh yeah. Over all the years, yeah. But that's always been my favorite fish to catch. Just be cause it's a challenge.
- Williams: What did you use to do when you caught them, did you bring them home?
- Frankie: Release them. Yeah you release them. A lot of times we would bring them in because if we were in a tournament or something like that and then they would go the gator farm and we'd feed them to the gators.
- Warren: That's really interesting.
- Williams: what do you see as the biggest problem for the future of fishing?
- Frankie: Well, it's not going to be the lack of fish. It's going to be the rules that people make to me foolishly. You know, and who's going to want to go and spend you know, thirty, forty, fifty thousand dollars on a boat motor and trailer to be able to go catch one fish? Like I said it's gonna destroy the industry, and that's the trickle down



effect. You know, from a rod and reel, to a boat, to the motors, to the industry that has anything to do with fishing. To the bait suppliers, anything you can think of. It's going to effect. And it's not going to be good. And I don't know why the powers that be can't see that. Put limits on things but don't be so ridiculous that you know, you try to people out of business, and that's what it boils down to.

- Williams: Well I think it made a lot of sense what you said too about their lack of understanding of the ecology even,
- Frankie: Well that's it.
- Williams: if you don't let us fish the red fish it's going to ruin some other fish.
- Frankie: Well that's the whole thing. We were talking about, what are they called Jew fish now, some gargantuan thing, I don't know, it's politically incorrect probably to call it a Jew fish now.
- Sandie: Well, I would not think the Jews would be insulted by that, it's a mighty, mighty fish. It's wonderful to eat.
- Frankie: Goliath, it's called a Goliath.
- Sandie: You could feed a village with a Jew fish.
- Frankie: Um, yeah. They eat so many fish in day's time it would blow your mind. And they're just sitting there, they don't even have to work at it, when the fish swims by they just suck it in. You know, and so that's destroying the population right there. And there's so many things in that they need to study more to understand more.
- E.J.: Have yall ever seen a crab trap with crabs in it?
- Warren: I haven't. No, that would be awesome.
- Williams: How long did you say it's been since you were in sports fishing?
- Frankie: Well I still fish here and all. We fish over on the west coast some, but it's been, we haven't fished in probably fifteen years, twenty years.
- E.J.: Not like we used to.

Frankie: And god, we used to fish every weekend, but we'd also fish during the week. And then of we, he had a commercial boat, snapper boat. That was back when it was good and you were allowed go out and make a living. All of that's changed.

E.J.: Like to pull this thing up and there be nothing in it.

Sandie: You googled, you googled my parents didn't you?

Williams: Yes.

Sandie: And so why didn't you find anything?

Williams: I did find a couple

Sandie: Of what she just told ya.

Williams: I'm sorry what did you just say?

Sandie: Oh she said it's been at least fifteen or twenty years, so why didn't you find anything on Google?

Williams: I guess because of the time?

Frankie: Because fifteen, twenty years ago there wasn't anything.

Sandie: Yeah, it was before the internet. A lot of that old stuff, you know, just didn't get added.

Williams: The Florida Times Union internet is all the real recent, you know, which you can find.

Sandie: But she won The Florida Times Union Publishers Tournament, I don't know how many years in a row.

Frankie: Yeah.

Warren: What kind are those, those are the blue crab?

Frankie: That's a blue crab right there.

E.J.: That's a blue crabs.

Warren: Yeah I can see the hue

E.J.: Now the traps I'm pulling out of the St. Johns, there'll be twenty-five or thirty like that in a trap.

Warren: Wow, really?

Sandie: Is that a little conch in there Dad?

E.J.: Uh huh.

Sandie: Look at him.

Warren: Yeah.

Sandie: Nice crabs you got in there Dad.

E.J.: Huh?

Sandie: That's some crabs you got in there Dad!

Warren: (talking over Williams can't understand)

Sandie: I think you should let me take those home.

E.J.: You can take 'em home if want too.

Williams: Is that a brim you think.

E.J.: What is that?

Williams: There's a little fish down there.

Frankie: He'll bite you.

Warren: So what do you use as bait?

E.J.: That's a little sheep head.

Frankie: That's a baby.

Sandie: Bring the baby, bring the baby Dad.

Frankie: Baby.

Sandie: Don't let 'em cut ya, don't let 'em cut ya. Look at 'em he's a baby. Yeah baby you go back and grow up and come back and we'll eat ya. Tell your granddaddy to come and see us.

Williams: How big do those fish get?

E.J.: That one there I can't get to come, it's got a crab in it. That's a dead conch and the hermit crab takes over its shell. See him in there?

Warren: There he is. Wow very cool.

E.J.: There's a hermit crab down in there.

Williams: We used to catch those when I was a kid, but you had to go real early in the morning.

Warren: You guys eat a lot of crab?

Frankie: Yeah we do.

Williams: I love cracked crab.

Frankie: Crab cakes.

Williams: I bet you guys have some good recipes.

Frankie: Oh yeah. Well I'm not saying oh yes it's a fantastic recipe, I do like the crab dip. Actually,

Warren: What is that coming out of him?

Sandie: Water out of bladder. He's displeased with father.

Frankie: He'll bite you.

Sandie: That's a pretty crab, ain't nothing wrong with that crab.

Warren: Very nice, wow.

E.J.: Sandie used to go with me, crabbing. She loved the seagulls.

Sandie: Now you're gonna tell stories on me. I wanted to make seagulls a restricted species after about week seven on the bait box. Oh I hated them. They'll eat you alive.

Warren: That's really cool, thank you for doing that.

Frankie: He brought some stone crabs in last year and the holidays we always have a big get together here at Thanksgiving and at

Christmas. And so I had some stone crab meat that I froze and I thought well you know maybe I'll make a dip, cause I always make a bunch of different bunch of dips and stuff, you know to go with everything else. So I made this dip And I didn't think anything of it, you know, I thought and I put some bread crumbs on the top and a little cheese and stick it in the oven, you know. So I put it on the table and everybody was showing up and everybody was like what is this and I said I don't know it's just a crab dip I made. And so they started eating it and they were like, god that was really good and I'm like oh well good, and my daughter-in-law Robin she comes over and goes Mom, um how did you make this, and I said baby I don't know I just you know threw a little of this, she said no, no, no, and then Sandie comes over and says Mom did you write this down? And I said no, I didn't and she goes well you need to right now. And I'm like I'm a little busy here, there's thirty people in the house and I'm. She goes but you gotta remember, you gotta and I said okay I'll remember. So now they got, they're walking around going okay now what was it you put in there? You know, and I'm like let me think, let me get in the right mode here. So finally I pretty much figures it out you know what it was and I said that's it. Well give it, how did you put it together? I said you just put it all together, you know it's real simple. And you put some bread crumbs on top and some cheese; stick it in the oven and it's good. So now it's are you gonna make that crab dip? Yes, I'll make the crab dip. Why don't one of yall make the crab dip? Well no, you make the crab dip.

- Warren: Mom knows how to make it best.
- Frankie: That's what they say, but I'm like yeah, right.
- Williams: How long does it take you to get out to the ocean from here?
- Frankie: Well actually, in my boat you can't get out, because you can't get across the flats.
- Williams: It's too big?
- Frankie: So you have to trailer it. Put in at the St. Augustine boat ramp over there, run out the inlet and keep right on going.
- Warren: So you have two boats?
- Frankie: Crab boat that he fishes out of and then I've got a twenty-two foot Carolina, what the hecks it called, I can't think of it. It's a Sea Chaser. Dang gum I had to think of it. And I haven't been in it

since August when we were in Steinhatchee. We go over there for scallops' season.

- Warren: She was telling us you guys go, and every vacation you guys take involves water in some way.
- Frankie: Absolutely. We went to the Keys for years and years lobstering. And that got to the point where they were just, it just was commercialized so bad down there and yeah it was awful. So then we start going over to Steinhatchee and what a net little nothing place that is. You know, but it's a lot of fun. Anybody can scallop. I don't care if you're this big or if you're a hundred years old, you know, because you're in fairly shallow water, and it's just fun. It's just a lot of fun.
- Williams: Have you ever been before?
- Warren: I've never, you know what you guys are probably going to throw me over the dock right now, I've never been fishing.
- Frankie: Oh boo hoo!
- Warren: It's not that I don't want to go in fact I love boats. I used to sailing all the time, but I've just never went fishing. I mean wee didn't have
- Frankie: It's a lot of fun.
- Warren: Yeah, I mean I would love to go. I mean I definitely want to own a boat especially yesterday when we were on our field trip. I was like dangit I need a boat! So I mean I'm sure like one day when I achieve this great dream of having a boat, I'm gonna want to go fishing, so I know that's gotta be like mind boggling for you guys. I didn't live in a lot of areas sometimes I lives near water, sometimes I didn't. And so
- Frankie: See, my whole life has been surrounded by water and fishing. You know, fishin', huntin', the whole nine yards. And that's why my name is Frankie, because my Daddy wanted a boy. I have an older sister and then when I was born my mother could have no more. So my dad decided well this is gonna be my boy and he named me Frankie. And I learned to hunt and fish and actually I grew up in the best of both worlds because being around guys and learnin the way guys huntin and all that kind of stuff and then of course my mom was constantly trying to make me this prissy, little which I'm

never been prissy, will never be prissy and so I grew up in the best of both worlds.

Warren: Same here I never really grew up a like a overly prissy kind of atmosphere, just you know

Frankie: I just don't have time for that.

Warren: I would go climbing trees in skirts. My Sunday skirts and rip 'em all up to heck and back and my mom would be like what's the matter with you? Oh well.

Williams: I had the same situation where there were four girls in our family and my dad wanted a boy so he made me the boy.

Frankie: There you go.

Williams: Pretty much.

Frankie: And I, you know I have no regrets. You know, it was great. Everybody used to say whenever Will, which was my dad, stopped I bumped into him. You know, I was always right there. You know, but, and my dad worked at the fort for forty years, he retired from there. So that was my, we had a house in town on the bay front. And the fort grounds that was my playgrounds. I was in the trees and fishing off the wall and you know all that kind of good stuff when I was a little tiny thing. And so it was just I grew up in a great time.

Williams: Do you remember your parents ever having any trouble with fishing here?

Frankie: No! Lord no there were no rules or restrictions and you know if you caught more fish than what you needed you gave them to the neighbors. Well you can't do that now, cause you can't catch enough for yourself. You know, so it's like you know, and speaking of neighbors, my neighbor who lives in the cracker house up there she I don't know it's been a couple of years ago now, I had caught some fish, been out here fishing and had caught some pompy drum and sheep head, and I told 'em yall want to come over and eat some fish, and have some fish and grits, she said yeah, yeah, okay. So she came over, of course she was born and raised here too, and she said what kind of fish we having? Well we got some sheep head and some drum, she said oh I don't eat those drum. And I said what? And she said I don't eat them drum, their nasty. I said where the hell have you been eatin, drum fish is

nasty? And she said well their not good are they. And I said Margo, here try this and tell me what you think. So she took a bite of it and she finished, and she says that is delicious. I said its white meat. I don't eat dark meat fish.

Warren: I don't think I've ever had dark meat fish.

Frankie: I don't eat like salmon and that kind of stuff.

Warren: Oh well I guess I didn't think about salmon. I do eat salmon, never mind.

Frankie: That's okay.

Warren: I'm thinking dark meat, I'm thinking like a brown dark meat.

Frankie: No, but there is like blue fish, nasty, no, don't eat that. You know, there's quite a few like that. But anyway the other day when I was down here fishing she called me and she said what are doing? I said I'm sitting on the dock getting food for the family, and she says are we part of the family? I said of course, she said have you caught any drum? I said yes. So I'm catching my few little fish every time I get to come down here and putting in the freezer, then we'll have a fish fry. That's it.

Williams: Were E.J.'s parents fishermen too like yours?

Frankie: His daddy was a, had shrimp boats and was in the shrimping business and he shrimped from here all the way around to Texas and Louisiana. They lived in Louisiana for a number of years, cause they had shrimp boats over there.

Williams: I wouldn't want to be there now.

Frankie: Oh no.

Warren: So I have a real quick question since you're

Frankie: I have an answer

Warren: I noticed you're so helpful with this interview process, you know it could either go one way or the other; like where you are trying to pry someone to talk or it's uncomfortable, but this is been very relaxing all afternoon.

Frankie: Well good. I don't generally meet strangers, you know.



- Warren: Yeah, well I mean I'm getting used to the meeting strangers thing. You know like since I've gotten into college, I've gotten a little better at it but me and her already are talking about how sometimes it can be a little awkward.
- Frankie: I'm sure, I'm sure.
- Warren: Yeah so, but you know, your dad named you a boys name and you know you were like me always in trees and fishing and everything; what was it like being a woman in a male dominate, you know?
- Frankie: Oh no, you don't want to go there. Well let me tell you a little story and I'm trying to think when it was; I was divorced, had a baby girl, love of my life,
- Warren: Was that Sandie?
- Frankie: No that Sandie is our adopted daughter. But the daughter before, and I needed a job. So I went down and applied at the newspaper, St. Augustine Record.
- Warren: Right, she was telling me about that. I was going to ask you about that.
- Frankie: and so I went to work as sort of like bookkeeping, secretarial like thing which I loathed, boring. And I kept noticing the guys downstairs in the advertising department, they were always outside selling ads, gone. I'm thinking god I could do that, you know that would be great. And you gotta remember this was in like 78, 79, 80 somewhere around there, when men still thought they ruled the world. They still do. They can't help it, it's a gene, and they cannot help it. But anyway, so I went to my, the Who Ha boss, which was Mr. Tiebolt, and I said I'd like to get into outside sales, and he says for what? I said because I think I could make money for the newspaper, I could sell advertising. He said no that's a mans job. I said you know everytime I hear that it just makes me want to just try harder. You know, and I said and the reason for that would be what? He said it's always been that way. I said its time for a change, I can sell advertising. So, I bugged him and bugged him, and finally he decided okay I'm going to give you a trial, put you on a trial basis. Well he gave me these accounts of people who never advertised, people who very, very seldom just didn't need to advertise, and I guess he figured she'll fail at this and she'll go back and be the bookkeeper. You know, so I thought gotta put plan B into operation here. So I went out some of these

people and I thought I'm just going to be honest, I'm just gonna tell 'em the way it is. So I walked in, first gentleman I told him my name is so and so, I'm in the sales department of St. Augustine Record, in advertising and I understand you don't advertise. He said no we don't need to. Well I said that's my problem, and he said what's your problem? I said I want to get into advertising and my boss says it's only for men and I said so he has given me these accounts of people who never advertise. So he feels I will fail and then I'll be happy going back being the quiet, little secretary. You know, and I won't want to do advertising, and I have to prove him wrong. Because even though it's a mans world according to yall, I'm trying to get involved in it. So I said so, will you let me make you up an ad, I'll bring it to you, you look at it, if you like it you buy it, if you don't I'm outta here. He said okay, that's fair, so I went made up an ad, came back I was just so excited with myself, he liked it! Okay, and I said man this is great, so I sold him the ad. I said I'm not going to run your ad right now, I've got several other people I gotta get, you know involved. So I did the same thing with everybody, told 'em the boss knows I'm gonna fail at this, he doesn't want you know, blah, blah, blah. They all bought it. So I went back, made up all these ads, took 'em up to my boss, and said what do you think? He said I don't think they're gonna buy it; I said they already have, what do you think of the ad? And he's like you sold him ads, yeah I could sell ice cubes to Eskimos. I am that good. Well that's how I got into advertising. And I loved it, I absolutely loved it. But they constantly reminded me it was a mans world. And I would break every rule I could break, just because of their attitude. I never take a back seat because it was a man who said you must do this. Why? You know, why? What makes you any different?

- Williams: What is the same feeling in sports fishing I guess from what you thought in advertising?
- Frankie: Yeah, oh yeah. Men were better fishermen. Ha, ha-ha! There's not one of them out there back then I wouldn't challenge. You know, I say well come on big boy! Let's go, we'll see at the end of the day who's got what.
- Warren: Yeah. So when did you start sports fishing?
- Frankie: Oh my god, probably in my twenties. You know I was doing little fishing, you know stuff, I grew up fishing; but as far as going off shore and stuff like that I would do that with some friends and then when E.J. and I, which would we got married in 69, yeah, yeap, 69. And of course he and I just love fishing so it was always a

challenge with he and I. You know, we would be out there fishing and I'd have a fish on, he'd come over there and hit my rod and I'd say E.J. I'll beat you to death with this rod if you don't leave me alone. So it was a constant battle but we fish for years and had the beat time. Now we go out here and play and have a good time. You know, so its fun. It's what life's all about, it's supposed to be fun it's not supposed to be all serious.

- Warren: That's really awesome. I mean I can definitely can say that I feel the same way, you know and always wanting to challenge the mans world and I'm sure you feel the same way.
- Frankie: Oh absolutely and you have to. I mean you really do you just can't sit back and go oh no I can't do that. What?
- Williams: Were there other women in the tournaments when you were fishing?
- Frankie: Yeah, um, there wasn't a lot of women that fished then, um but there were some. You know, so you know we always, it was always fun. That's what it was all about. Just fun, having a good time, and we did. There was a little drinking in there every once in a while, at the end of the day, had to celebrate.
- Warren: Of course. Beer goes best with (unintelligible)
- Frankie: There you go, not bad at all.
- Warren: One of my favorite meals is fish and chips.
- Frankie: There you go.
- Warren: I can just sit there with a nice beer.
- Frankie: Nothing wrong with that. Just plain and simple. Nothing wrong with that. Don't have to be fancy. Well the heats about to get to us what do you think? Time to go back into the air?
- Warren: Yeah sure, if you're ready/
- Frankie: We can. We can have us a little snack. If yall are in the mood for a little snack?
- Warren: Definitely.

- Frankie: I wish I'd have known about the crab dip, I'd have made yall some.
- Warren: We'll just blame Sandie for that. Well it's definitely beautiful out here.
- Frankie: Well like I said it's just our little piece of what we call heaven.
- Williams: How do you, what would be your advice for things to be resolved to help fishing and crabbing for the future?
- E.J.: I'm trying to think on that. Hum?
- Frankie: Better rules and regulations.
- Williams: She said better rules and regulations.
- E.J.: She said better rules and regulations, yeah.
- Warren: Looser restrictions on fishing and just letting you guys go out there and do some of your things, but at the same time being reasonable?
- E.J.: They need to get in touch with the people who are doing the fishing and find out the things that they think would help. Instead of just sitting up and thinking of things themselves. You know, they're not coming up with the right answers. I mean there's too much difference in what their opinion is and the fisherman's opinion.
- Frankie: Well it's easier for them too shut things down than to get involved. You know?
- Warren: Right
- Williams: It seems like they leave you guys out sometimes too, you know, when they benefit so much from having their opinions, you know?
- E.J.: I told all of them at the County Commissioners anytime you want to go see the blue (unintelligible) I take you right out for nothing. Yeah and show it to you. You don't have to spend thousands of dollars if you don't do nothing.
- Sandie: Did anybody ever take you up on that offer dad?
- E.J.: No, never.

- Warren: Well I know I would like to go. I mean I know I'm not someone who could probably do much other than what you guys can do is vote and try to stop some of these bad laws from coming, but I mean definitely interested in seeing how all this impacts our land, how it impacts how we live, trying..
- E.J.: That's just like on the bay front everybody has a right to live where they want to and you got all the sailboats out there. They're supposed to have a holding tanks that the city yacht fare never use, and now the city has found a way to make money which is good. They put the mooring buoys out there they have to pay to tie up there, but they're still polluting the water.
- Frankie: Well and that's the thing, my complaint with the city about that was you keep allowing these boats to come in here and anchor up and live. Okay? And I know for a fact someone who worked at the pier there, I mean at the marina there where the pump out station supposedly was for twenty-five years never a boat came up there and used it. Okay, so they're pumping their crap, so to speak, into the bay and it is so polluted in that area but do you know what one of the officials for St. Augustine told me? Well you have to understand that it makes for a beautiful view and a beautiful picture to see those boats anchored out there at sunset. I'm like oh well isn't that nice?
- Warren: What about the water?
- Frankie: Yeah, so lot only that they pay no taxes, some of them have sent their children to school, the school bus was picking them up, there's something wrong with this picture. You know, I'm sorry I just... There's just too many things that shouldn't be here.
- E.J.: I won't even crab there anymore.
- Frankie: It's so nasty.
- Warren: When I was living in Palm Bay with my friend, her father had a sailboat which is how I started sailing and why I like boats so much, and they had a actually a law there you couldn't dump any sewage or anything like that until you went at least three miles out into the ocean. And so like everybody, no one ever used for their boats for that kind like usage.
- Frankie: Well and the thing about it is if you're gonna build a boat that people are gonna live on then build it with the provision on that

boat to handle. Why should you be allowed to dump it in our ocean? You know, I mean, I'm sorry.

E.J.: Or in the bay.

Frankie: Or in the bay, in any water.

Williams: It would be our tax dollars to clean it up.

Frankie: Exactly. Exactly. It's exactly right. And you know, they don't, and there again they don't care.

E.J.: When I got to where this was years ago too, I pulled trap up right there at the bay front. It smelled like you took the top off a septic tank. I'm not kidding. I quit crabbing there.

Warren: That area in front of the bay front is that hotel there and the marina?

E.J.: From the fort to where the little hospital used to be. That area right there.

Warren: oh, okay, sorry. I actually know people who live right behind that area, and they live in this really nice two hundred year old house. I mean way too expensive, of course. And then that was one of the things I was talking about earlier how like that whole area is so condensed and they have a beautiful house but right down the road it looks like homeless people are right there on the corner. It's like how can you appreciate your land

Frankie: Now do they live on the island or do they live on this side?

Warren: They live on the island. It's like right there near it, I was like that's kind of insane.

Frankie: See I wouldn't live on the island. No way.

E.J.: Takes too long to get across the bridge.

Frankie: For sure. But that's a joke in itself, god.

Williams: The river keeper was talking about his, you know difficulties with trying to push different things across for the companies that are dumping you know and he definitely talked about the yachts and they're dumping in the St. Johns River.

- Warren: We went right by a marina.
- Frankie: Oh yeah. And now there's a lot of counties in Florida that if you come in a boat or a sailboat, you can't anchor out and live there. There's a 24 or 48 hours then you've got to move on and that's the way it should be. You know, I'm sorry, you know you shouldn't be allowed to dump your garbage overboard and flush your toilets overboard, you just shouldn't be allowed to do that, and that's what they do.
- Williams: It seems like they miss things like that that hurt you guys and the things they try to do to help the ecology for you guys and I feel like the fishermen really get the raw end of the deal.
- Frankie: Without a doubt, without a doubt.
- Warren: One of my last questions, we got you down to the wire here our last few questions; when I was talking to Sandie over there she was telling me that I believe it was your father that used to do environmental histories and that has actually been documented? Was it your father, her father?
- Sandie: Not environmental history, just history.
- Warren: Just history, oh okay.
- Sandie: Florida, especially Spanish and British Colonial period. He was a historian for the National Park Service.
- Frankie: And history was not my favorite subject. Isn't that weird?
- Sandie: It skipped a generation.
- Frankie: Yes it did, yes it did.
- Warren: It's like with my family my mom was a writer and she wrote poems and stuff all the time and then my dad really loved history and I kind of got both of those influences so that's why I double majored. The histories that he has are they documented, right?
- Frankie: Yeah.
- Warren: Does he have them archived?
- Frankie: Some of them are archived at The Smithsonian.

- Warren: The Smithsonian that's pretty impressive. That's awesome.
- Sandie: Any of those old history recordings at the historical society, St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library.
- Warren: That is really awesome.
- Frankie: He was a pretty awesome guy.
- Sandie: He did a lot of work also with Albert Manucy, they were cousins.
- Warren: His name's Will Manucy?
- Frankie: William H. Manucy.
- Sandie: Albert was an architectural historian, before the Spanish period.
- Williams: Do all the other fisherman and crabbers feel the same way as you guys do?
- E.J.: I say basically yes.
- Williams: Are you watching them just die off in numbers also, especially recently, I guess?
- E.J.: Um hm. They had the crab license moratorium on for about twelve years now. You can't get one unless you buy one from somebody. Cut back on the numbers when they closed the seining on both coasts years ago all the people that used to seine and gill net they issued all them a crab license. Well most of them, I'd say about a quarter of them, went in the crab business, the rest of them were just holding on to them. Two years ago they lost all of them if they weren't using them they had to give them back which was a good thing.
- Frankie: That's Seth, that might be something yall should come back for and get a copy of it.
- Warren: And what is that?
- E.J.: Is that it baby?
- Frankie: Yeah, see your picture up there in the top left?
- E.J.: This fella he came here one day and asked if he could go crabbing with me he wanted to do a story and it's just here in the creek



section. And he done a pretty nice thing, they have it down in the Guana. They have it down there where people can see it, yall might want to look at that or get a copy of it.

- Warren: That's awesome, thank you very much. So this is not your first time being interviewed?
- E.J.: Nope.
- Warren: That's very cool. How many other times have you been interviewed?
- E.J.: Just that.
- Warren: Just this
- E.J.: With that fella there. He was real nice; he knew what he was doing he goes around and does different things like that.
- Sandie: You had some biology students from UNF out with you before on the boat had to be a while back.
- E.J.: Yep. They don't never follow up though.
- Sandie: Write their paper some extra ends.
- Williams: Then it's back to another semester of writing papers.
- Warren: Gosh this looks really cool.
- E.J.: It would be a little interest. Give you a good idea of what happens.
- Warren: And its nineteen minutes is most of it out on the boat with you?
- E.J.: Yeah.
- Warren: Very cool, thank you very much for this. Sandie do you want to make a copy?
- E.J.: Like I tell people and they laugh I know you've watched that show on TV "The Deadliest Catch". It's the same situation but ours is on a smaller scale.
- Warren: It's amazing when you watch shows like that and the danger.

- Sandie: His work is dangerous. That's another thing I don't think people take into consideration, they don't take in livelihoods of fisherman, they don't take in into consideration just what it takes day after day, year after year to get up at three-thirty in the morning, year after year, go out there regardless of the weather, and get that food to the dock and to the market and I don't think people even think about that when they're sitting down in a restaurant. That's why it costs so much, it should.
- Williams: How are the little bait shops doing and stuff like that?
- E.J.: All this is hurting them too, all these closures.
- Frankie: Like I said it's a dwindle down.
- E.J.: Especially the way they shut the beaches down so many people on the weekends used to go to the beaches, they would picnic and fish, now you can't do that anymore. They closed the down at Matanzas on account of the birds' nests. Well the birds never nest down close to the water, so it just was an excuse to close it down. Yeah, I mean we've been there all our lives and the birds been there and nobody's bothered anything.
- Frankie: Like I said there again it goes back to who is making these rules? It's people who don't know what they're talking about.
- E.J.: It just like over there at St. Augustine Beach, the national park is over there, and they closed that section all the way to the jetties about five miles there, they shut it down. There was one accident. I mean it was terrible they had an accident, the person didn't get killed but they got crippled, they were buried in the sand
- Frankie: No, one got crippled and one little girl got killed.
- E.J.: in other words, they were buried in the sand, just their heads sticking up. Somebody wasn't paying attention, while they were riding they run over them. They closed the beach to everybody.
- Frankie: Well and the thing about it was, the thing about it was they were in the drive path. But my question again goes back to where were the parents? When these children, you're on a highway, a beach with traffic, why do you think just because you're at the beach that it's safe to turn your kids loose? And it's beyond me. So because one person unfortunately, and I feel for all of them, got killed and it was accident, they shut the beach down to everybody? That doesn't make sense to me.

- E.J.: Then there was an article in the paper not long ago this lady wrote in and said well they don't have that problem in Flagler Beach, they don't ride on the beach. She don't know what she's talking about, you can't ride on Flagler Beach even if it's open. Unless you got a special built car for to ride on.
- Frankie: She don't know, never have. You just don't go down there and ride on Flagler Beach.
- E.J.: It was you call bed gravel, it's not white sand and you'll sink down in it. So she's making a statement not knowing what she's making a statement about. They wouldn't be riding on there if it were open.
- Frankie: No the couldn't. they'd be stuck.
- E.J.: But now all the little old people that moved along the beach their, they bought the little golf carts and four wheelers put big tires where they can go down and go fishing, now they can't go fishing anymore. They can't walk down there because they're not able, so there you go they done limited the development.
- Frankie: We believe that it all started when people started buying the condo and houses and all on the beach, they wanted a private beach. They didn't want to see people on the beach. Well, and I haven't been on the beach in probably fifteen years because I am not paying to drive on my beach. I'm not gonna do it, nope. So I just don't go.
- Williams: Do feel like when the fish populations are down that they turn to fisherman first and try the place the blame on you guys when they really should be looking at other issues?
- Frankie: They need to look at the whole picture. Yeah, just don't blame the commercial fisherman. And that's like many years ago when he was commercial, this, that, and the other, we were at one of those sport fishing meetings and they were discussing stuff about you know, about catching fish, you know blah, blah, blah, blah, blah and it got into a bit of an argument, pro and con type thing you know about the recreational fisherman going out there, well at that time if you were just a recreational fisherman you could go out there and if you knew people who have restaurants or who had the fish docks or you knew them you could bring your fish in and sell them to make enough money to pay for your trip, you see what I'm saying? Well that basically was wrong, because I have to go but a

license to be able to do that. So my argument to them was, you know I was like, excuse me, excuse me and of course the mouth of the south here I stand up you know and I said you know what the difference between a recreational fisherman and sport fisherman is, I mean recreational fisherman and a commercial fisherman is? And they're all like huh? And I said I gotta buy a license, I gotta be licensed and checked you know to go out there and catch my fish and bring 'em in and sell 'em, I said but yall don't. So basically what it, what you're saying is you are a commercial fisherman because you bring your catch in and you sell it, but yet you're not buying the license. So there in lies the difference. You know, and they were like no, no, I said no, no that's the truth, that is the truth. You're commercial fisherman because you're bringing your fish in and selling them but yet you're not licensed by the state or anything else.

- Warren: Are there any repercussions for not having a license and then trying to sell commercially?
- Frankie: Yeah if you were to get caught. You would be in trouble the people who bought the fish would be in trouble. You have to have a wholesale license, you have to have you know, your permit to fish and catch fish, you know so there are all sorts of rules and regulations we have to abide by.
- Warren: So why isn't anything done about it?
- Frankie: It's like anything else you don't get caught. You know, so that's basically what it is. And there's people who still do it.
- Warren: Do you think that some of the people who are out there you know, fishing supposedly supposed to be recreational and yet they're doing what you're doing as a commercial licensed fisherman/ Do you think they're part of the reason why some of these restrictions been so unreasonably enforced?
- Frankie: Um, well, probably, yeah. Yeah I'm sure it has a lot to do with it. You know and you've got way, way, way more recreational fisherman now that what you had say twenty years ago. So they've put a dent in things, but it still goes back to the same thing. If the fish are depleting, why have so may people bought boats and go fishing and come back with fish? Their figures are off. You know something's not right somewhere. And you know there's fish out there to be caught but if you're gonna restrict people, restrict the recreational person, they're doing it for fun. The

commercial fisherman is doing it to feed their families. You know, where is the rationale there? I don't know it's crazy.

Williams: Are there any other people you guys recommend for us to talk to?

E.J.: I tried to get several of them but they didn't want to participate. And some of them you wouldn't want to talk to.

Frankie: Some of them are rough.

Warren: It's a busy lifestyle.

E.J.: They're good people but their rough.

Warren: Did you guys catch the fish, I mean not the fish, the shrimp?

E.J.: No, I bought them. I usually buy about fifty pounds. They had a real good year like I say out in the St. Johns this year I just didn't have time to go.

Warren: Do you guys have any final issues or questions you'd like to bring up? Look like we're down to the wire.

E.J.: I wish I could help you more but I can't think of anything, when you leave I'll think of everything.

Warren: You can always tell Sandie we'll keep in touch.

Frankie: no off the top of my head, you know if they would just get some sensible people who know what they're talking about. People you know that haven't just been appointed a job and they're learning as they go because they're listening to people they don't even know. You know, they need to get out and talk to people who are in the businesses before they make rules. You know, and that's the bottom line. It's like with any business I mean you know you wouldn't go storming into a bank and assume you know everything about running a bank, unless you were taught by a person who knows the business. Same way with fishing it's no different, it's a business. You know and that's what needs to happen. I would find it very interesting to meet the people who make these rules, and be able to ask them when was the last time you were on a boat and went fishing. You know, oh well I don't do that. Okay, you know it would amaze me to know how many of them really do know what they're talking about. And if they do why are they making these kind of judgments.

- Williams: And who has the time to go and really find guess these people when they're out on the water fishing?
- Frankie: Exactly.
- E.J.: oh we'll go to a meeting every now and then they have 'em but it's jus like they come out the last two years with these tags that we have to buy, put on the traps, we got a number on our buoys already, so why have a tag under water. You know, and then we have closed season, ten day closed season that's mainly to get all the traps out of the water anything left in they send a crew out to pick 'em up cause they shouldn't be to start with, but we brought up at the meeting if we gonna have to put these tags on why not whenever our section where we're crabbing is closed why can't we put our tags on then? We're shut down anyway instead of having to pull our stuff out and have to take time put 'em on while we're really working. We can't make because, why have the meeting then? Take the rules in consideration. So we put 'em on when we can get 'em on now. That's just one thing for instance.
- Frankie: Everything they have done as far as the commercial crabber goes every rule they've passed in the last five, six years has done to help the crabber.
- E.J.: its costs us money.
- Frankie: its costs the crabber more money. Everything has been more of an expense.
- E.J.: The only thing that they've done that they've come out with and a lot of us were already doing it anyway what they call a cull ring. It's a round ring that goes it's bigger than the actual wire lets the small crabs crawl out and if you live crabbing like myself selling to markets you already had them in there anyway. Because you don't want to be fighting with the small stuff and having to grade it. But they finally passed that law where you had to have three in each trap, three of those outlets. Which was a good thing. But we have workshops every once in a while they try to get input on what we might think. But hardly any of it amounts to anything. But it does help but like I say some of these like FWC, you know the marine patrol and all, they need to be a little bit better schooled on some of the laws, they're fine for what they do, but they got so many laws that they got a stack of book in each one of them cars you got to be a lawyer to figure out what they have to register for. But like I say hardly any of them know what to look for in a peeler crab, and they could check some of these guys that are doing that fishing and

say now look you gotta start turning this, this, this, this, this loose you can't take that home with you, cause it's gonna die and then we've lost that. Years ago when I caught when I was telling you about the ones I caught on the west coast I've been over there for about three months crabbing that particular day of all days the Marine Patrol stopped me. And he says I've been watching you, I need to check you, I said that's fine, check everything, he says what you got in those boxes, I said peeler crabs. And he kind of looked at me and I said hmm he don't what I'm talking about and he pulled the sack back well naturally all of them were smaller than a legal size crab we can keep has to be five inches from point to point, well these here are all four inches and three and a half inch crab, he's says are all these like this? I said yes sir, he says I'm going to have to write you tickets and I don't have enough tickets. He says I guess I'm just gonna have to take you to jail. I said could you make a phone call for me, call you dispatcher and call Tallahassee and ask for Miss Gail Williams and see if I'm not legal? He did, he was nice enough to do that.

Sandie: What did he think you were illegal for?

E.J.: Small crabs, crabs weren't legal size the peelers weren't. And so he did and she asked who it was and he told her my name and she said well I guarantee that he's got what he needs to have what he have you come back to his house tonight and let the man go sell his product and he'll sit down and explain the peeler fishing to ya. He did, he was real nice. Yep, but a lot of them don't have no idea, they don't have a school for 'em, the crabs that part of it, they have a book that tells 'em but you know how much you get out of a book to actual doing something. And that's one of the complaints that I've got you know.

Warren: What was the name of the woman in Tallahassee?

E.J.: Her name was Gail Williams, who she is no longer there, she retired.

Warren: How did you meet her?

E.J.: Uh, going over there to buy license and stuff. I met her and every time I wanted to know something I'd call her and ask for her. Cause she was pretty high up on the totem pole there.

Warren: So she was your in?

E.J.: Yep.

- Warren: Well that's good.
- E.J.: In fact, I seen him one time after that and he come by the house over there every once in a while I seen him out on the water one day, I say you wanna check me? No you still know that lady and she's still in office. Burt she was up on all the laws, she was really up on that stuff.
- Warren: It seems like you guys really try to follow all the rules, you don't want to go out there and do anything against the law.
- E.J.: I mean it's just like the other day one of them stopped a friend of mine and we have our buoy up on our bow, a circle and whatever color we got we got it painted, so when the airplanes flies over he can see that. If you're not gonna have that then you're not supposed to be out there. Well say this fellas color was white and red, or you got part of it red and part of it white, and this particular Marine Patrol said well you've got to have a line through there to distinguish it. He said why we never have had to before. There's nothing in the books for it yet. He gave him a ticket. He had to go to court, take a day off work, the judge didn't even know what they were talking about, he says you want to plead guilty or not guilty? I'm gonna plead not guilty. He say well you're gonna have to come back and I'm gonna have to find out. Well now he looses another day's work. We don't know what the outcome is and another Marine Patrol stopped at the landing of the morning he knew and we was just talking and I asked him about that line he says I've never heard of such a thing. So there you go. Nobody's up on what they, you know they should be up on. But they'll get it straightened out. Hopefully.
- Williams: Are there any fish populations that have just disappeared pretty much since the (unintelligible) started pushing to even things up?
- E.J.: You mean actual fish itself?
- Warren: Yeah, not like the red snapper that is currently abundant but not we've got these strict laws about not to fish them anymore. Have you seen like it there are definitely fish that are not there when you started fishing?
- E.J.: Nope, not the good edible fish, no. There have been some smaller type fish that have disappeared, they don't care about looking into that. Well it's just like when you talk about things like that, years ago, a friend of mine another crabber he lives in Deland and when he was growing up all the St. Johns River, south of Deland, he



never left from there, he crabbed all his life until he was eighteen and all of a sudden the crabs disappeared. You can't find a crab south of Deland. You can set all the traps you want down there, there's plenty of fish down there but there's no crabs. They never have studied to find out why, something had to happen to cause the crabs not to go there. And the same way with Lake George, when I first started crabbing Lake George had the biggest crabs you'll ever want to see, they were huge and there was plenty of them, not anymore something depleted them, something caused them not to be there anymore. There's a few crabs there, but not like it was ten, fifteen, twenty years ago. But that's the thing they need to look into, but they don't. If they are we don't know nothing about it. But we do know run off, pollution that hurts everything.

- Warren: Well I guess we're all out of questions to ask you guys and if you guys are done
- E.J.: But anytime you want to come by and sit down and talk
- Warren: Definitely, you guys are awesome
- Williams: Yeah, as long as you guys don't mind us calling you if we think of anything after we leave, as you were saying you think of it after you're gone.
- E.J.: Anything we can help you with we'd be glad to try to.
- Warren: Thank you very much. I guess I'll stop the recorder, this ends our interview.