



THE FISHIN' INSIDER

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So there we were, sippin' brews at Wanna Wanna's on Halloween when bartender Dave rolls out a cart loaded with electronics. My favorite evil aunt from Lamar, Jonette Childs and her better half Alvin were down for a lil R&R before she puts the final issue of 2005 Saltwater Texas together. While he's hangin' the screen, some other touristas ask him what's up. He says we're gonna show a movie and then we'll put on the game. What a hoot! While Mars rises in the eastern sky we all watch the original Frankenstein.

While we're chucklin' at the movie Alvin and I are talkin' about the oil patch, since he's the pipeline superintendent for Blue Dolphin Energy out of Freeport he knows what he's talkin' about. He'd read a piece in a local rag about some folks up in arms about a production platform that can be seen on the horizon. Now Alvin and I have been talkin' about this for around ten years, me bemoaning the fact that we need more structure for fish habitat and when the gas fields off our

coast would be developed. He always said be patient, ain't nothin' gonna happen around these parts until gas futures get above five bucks an mcf and there is some assurance that they'll stay there for a long time.

There ain't nothin' new about gas wells on or around the Sandspit. Way back when about the cushiest job you could have around here was to be in charge of maintaining the board roads to some gas wells on north beach. The pay was excellent and all you had to do was roll a few doobies, ice down some beer, load the surf rods in the back of the company truck, fire her up and cruise on up the beach to check on'um. Back in the nineties we were treated to a few bursts of delineation drillin' offshore of the canyon about fifty miles out on the western rim of the Alaminos Canyon. The tuna fishin' was outrageous and mixed in were some huge blue marlin. We're talkin' fish in the grander range that were attracted to the rig cuz of the noise it emitted. See big pelagic fish are attracted to sound or harmonics as

are the rest of the food chain and when they find the shade of a platform they'll stay there similar to what mats of sargassum have to offer cept the rig stays in one place. It's a huge FAD or fish attraction devise.

All Alvin could do was marvel that the outfit had managed to get their hands on 44 miles of flex pipe to run the pipeline which they started laying last July cuz it's another commodity that Red China's been scarfin' up on the world market, price be damned. To you folks that're worried about industrial smells, don't worry unless they start talkin' refinery again over at the Port of Brownsville cuz that's about the only place left on the Gulf Coast that'll meet the clean air requirements for a permit.

As I was sidlin' off of' Alvin said ya'll ain't seen nothin' yet. The plan is for several more production platforms to handle a whole bunch of sub-sea completions. Now all they need is about 250 miles of flex pipe and this lil area will become a Mecca for offshore fishin' and the slip rents'll go through the roof.