Man has experience of a lifetime
By Ava Tabb
Classic Bassmaster Winner Dalton Bobo spent Tuesday with David Cravey at his home in Red Level. It has been one of Cravey's dreams to meet one of his favorite fishermen.
In addition, several crew members of the Southern Outdoorsmen television show, which broadcasts on ESPN, traveled from Georgia also to meet Cravey and record Cravey's day with some of his favorite people.
This was all a surprise for Cravey.
Once the special guests arrived near Cravey's house, on a nearby dirt road, Bobo phoned Cravey's wife Ginger to alert her that they were near the house. Ginger asked Bobo and the guests to meet Cravey at the back of their house.
She walked with Cravey around to the back of their home, only to find one of Cravey's favorite fishermen and the crew from Southern Outdoorsmen standing in his backyard, ready to meet him.
When Cravey first noticed Bobo and the crew outside, his excitement left him speechless, Ginger said.
"Mama, lookey here," said Cravey.
Bobo and the crew toured Cravey's backyard, where he and Ginger have seven acres of land and a fishing pond. Cravey and Bobo fished in his pond, while the crew of Southern Outdoorsmen recorded them together.
Cravey also showed them his favorite parts of the woods.
Afterwards, he and Bobo talked while relaxing on Cravey's back porch. "They talked and laughed for hours," Ginger said.
"You would think that Bobo was a long time friend of David," she said. "It was awesome."
Bobo autographed Cravey an 8x10 photograph of himself. The crew of Southern Outdoorsmen gave Cravey more than 100 Southern Outdoorsmen items including baseball caps, t-shirts and photographs.
Cravey couldn't stop smiling as he opened the gift boxes, Ginger said. "It was just like Christmas for him."
Since, Southern Outdoorsmen is Cravey's favorite ESPN show to watch, the crew also left him with hundreds of videos of every episode that has ever been recorded.
While the guests were at the Craveys' home, Ginger stepped back, since Cravey was hanging out with the guys.
"It was like he was among the fellows," Ginger said. "He was one of the guys again."
After four hours of Cravey living out one of his long-time dreams to meet Bobo and the crew of Southern Outdoorsmen, he has been overwhelmed and is enjoying everyday that he can.
"We're taking everyday one day at a time," Ginger said.
"Bobo made David (Cravey) feel like just another one of his friends," she said. "It was just another one of our blessings."
Bobo brought a large-size fishing boat with him, specially for Cravey's enjoyment. "That is the biggest boat that I've ever seen," Cravey said after getting a glimpse of Bobo's Triton Bass fishing boat.
Cravey's dream came true through Ginger's committed efforts to "make his life as happy as possible," she said.
Living with an illness
On July 6, Cravey's Andalusia doctor notified him that he had been living with cancer, but the doctor was unable to identify specifically what type of cancer Cravey had. Encouraged by the doctor to travel to Birmingham, Cravey and Ginger went to the University of Alabama at Birmingham Hospital, for further testing. He was diagnosed with Glioblastoma multiforme, a multi form cancer.
"It's a very mean and aggressive cancer," Ginger said.
This particular cancer is distinct from other forms of the disease. Glioblastoma multiforme is made up of various cancer, she explained.
"Once the doctors identified what type of cancer David (Cravey) had, they said that they would have to begin work immediately," she recalled.

By July 20, Cravey had begun both cancer treatments of chemotherapy and radiation, Ginger said. With Cravey having daily treatments and their home nearly 200 miles away, the Craveys had no choice but to stay in Birmingham. They stayed at the Hope Lodge, free of charge, which was funded by the American Cancer Society.

After almost two months of undergoing both treatments, "the doctors sent us from Birmingham with a grim prognosis," Ginger said.

When the Craveys returned to Red Level, Ginger was on a mission to make her husband's life as happy and enjoyable as possible.

"I give him whatever he wants," Ginger said. "We eat turnips, neckbones and rice all of the time." Those are Cravey's favorite foods.

Shortly after returning home, Ginger searched the internet looking for ideas to make some of Cravey's dreams come true.

She found the website for Bio-Tec Research, Inc. It is the United Special Sportsmen Alliance, where she e-mailed president and founder Brigid O'Donoghue on the morning of Nov. 10. "She called me within an hour or so," Ginger said.

Ginger then told O'Donoghue her story about Cravey. "I never imagined that she would actually call me back," she said.

Thereafter, Ginger was contacted by Bobo. He would call her frequently to get updates on Cravey's health. From first talking with Bobo, "I could tell that he was excited and really wanted to meet David (Cravey)," she said. "He didn't act anything like a celebrity."

According to Ginger, O'Donoghue told her that Bobo would be at her house on Nov. 23.

To keep Bobo's visit a surprise for Cravey, Ginger kept it a secret from him and family and friends. "I knew it would be something that he would never imagine to happen, so I wanted to make sure that it was a surprise."

Initially, Bobo wanted to go fishing on his boat with Cravey, but Cravey's health would not allow him to do many things.

An appreciation of life's experiences
"The cancer is a blessing," Ginger said. "It has drawn us closer to God than we've ever been before."

"He's not afraid of dying," she added.

Cravey and Ginger had planned a life as many parents do. They had to spend their afternoons swinging on the porch with their grandchildren. But recently, the Craveys have experienced the unexpected of life's lessons. Cravey spends more time with his family and has been blessed with unconditional support from friends and family, Ginger said.

Ginger recently contacted Gov. Bob Riley and Alabama Representative Seth Hammett and they both sent Cravey letters of encouragement. Also, Cravey's former manager at West Point Stevens recently recognized him for his outstanding work performance with a letter of appreciation.

"It's just been awesome. God has blessed us more than I could ever imagine," Ginger said. "You can't fathom what god can do. He's so awesome."

Ginger said that the Craveys have learned to appreciate life to the fullest and take one day at a time, but Ginger says that she remains on her mission to make Cravey as happy as possible.