

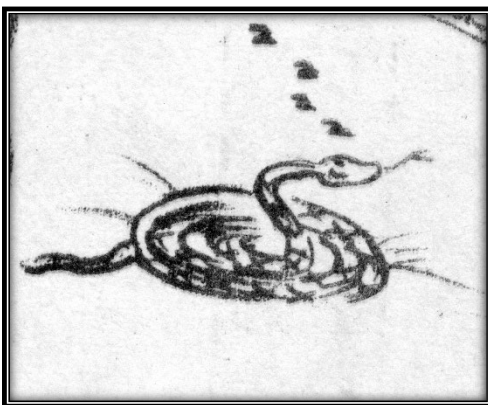
Humorous Memories about BRAAF from Arnold MacSpadden, 1966

With every job there is the lighter side – my memory serves up these:

The Layout Man was a young engineer from La Belle Florida, he had a liking for young fellows born in Florida. They weren't boys noted for their scholastic records but barefooted and well schooled in the ways of the native animals, particularly the alligator and the rattler. After the bulk of the layout work was well along, the Layout Man approached me and said that then was a good time to gather gator eggs for hatching and maybe the office help would like to see them hatch. To finish the story let me say there were exactly 100 eggs gathered, laid in moss in a large crate. After the required incubating time 96 eggs broke open and the hissing, scrappy little gators emerged. They were all claimed by the help. Needless to say the mails from Boca were burdened for a week with gators going to the four corners of the universe.

The second story concerns another alligator – the commanding officer of the post suggested one day that he would like to have an eight foot gator hide placed on a board for the back bar of the officers club with a plaque carrying an appropriate notice of good will from the engineers to the officers of the Using Service. Suiting action to the idea, - it was only a matter of minutes before one of our trucks sideswiped an eight foot gator. He was brought in, loaded into gunny sacks loaded aboard a bus for Miami, accompanied by a note to Pfleuger, the taxidermist, to do a good job. Some time later we received a package from Miami – a really beautiful gunmetal colored gator hide with head and claws intact. We mounted the high on plywood with a suitable plaque attached. It assumed a position of importance at the back bar of the Cabana Club for several years...

I might add that the territory around here was crawling with gators and rattlesnakes when we were doing business in 1942. I still have a wallet made from an old diamond back rattler from this post – and I would add that many belts and useful articles were made from snake hides. Yes, you had to look pretty sharp for snakes then and, - I still look.



*Sleepy rattler from
BRAAF soldier's cartoon*