Maine is not a young state. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2015 the median age in the state is 44.2 years, which means half the state’s population of 1.3 million is older than that figure and half is younger. No other state in the union has such a high median age (the median age of the country as a whole is 37.7 years).

Maine’s oldest counties, by median age, are Piscataquis (50.2), Lincoln (50.1) and Hancock (47.9). The youngest counties are Androscoggin (40.9), Penobscot (41.5) and Cumberland (42.3).

Maine’s lobstermen reflect this fact. The average age of Maine lobstermen is 50 years old. But more telling is the number of lobstermen age 50 or older. A quick survey of the Department of Marine Resources 2014 list of licensed lobstermen in the state reveals that of the 6,012 lobstermen (including student and apprentice license holders), 2,682 are over the age of 50, nearly one half. One hundred and fifty-two of those lobstermen are 80 years old or more.

By Melissa Waterman

Each year since he became head of the Department of Marine Resources (DMR) in 2012, Commissioner Patrick Keliher has held a coast-wide series of meetings with Maine lobstermen to have what he terms “conversations” about the state of the industry. The meetings, often held in the winter months when lobstermen have hauled their traps ashore, have required many hours of agency staff time and hundreds of miles of travel in order to reach the many harbors along Maine’s 3,000 mile coast.

And, according to Keliher, it’s been worth it. Keliher and his staff just completed a third round of meetings with lobstermen in September to discuss ways to improve the current licensing system. “I’ve been in management a long time. Most often what’s been missing was the benefit of open dialogue prior to legislative meetings and hearings. I think it’s best to have those conversations up front and then develop laws that take into account what was heard. Or to not take any action at all, that’s even more important,” Keliher said in a recent interview.

DMR’s first round of 16 meetings during the winter of 2013 “almost killed me,” Keliher said with a laugh. The Gulf of Maine Research Institute’s 2012 report, “An Evaluation of the Lobster Limited Entry System,” had just come out after a summer of plunging prices. The topic at hand was the possibility of instituting a tiered licensing system for lobstermen. Of the nearly 6,000 commercial lobstermen in the state at the time, approximately 1,600 turned out for those meetings. “Some of it was novelty, checking out the new commissioner,” Keliher recalled. “But also I think there was some appreciation of the dialogue.” As a result of these conversations, Keliher and his staff have been able to better understand the needs and concerns of Maine lobstermen and develop policies that are more responsive to their needs.

By Melissa Waterman

The wire lobster trap was introduced as a commercial product in 1980, making it a feature on the docks for 35 years this year. However, like many revolutionary products, its process of evolution took much longer.

James W. Knott, Sr., founder of Riverdale Mills in Northbridge, Massachusetts, began experimenting with the wire trap in the 1950s. Long a summer resident of Cape Ann and a lobster license holder, Knott would bring wire mesh to fishermen there.

“He used to bring the wire to the Rockport docks and guys would put it on the sides of wood traps,” said James W. Knott, Jr., CEO of Riverdale Mills. “Then they went to making all-wire traps. That didn’t work, so they went back to traditional heads.”

The problem for lobstermen was marine worms, which liked to eat the traditional half-round wooden slot traps. Wire, however, was not on the worms’ diet. “Worms don’t eat the mesh. Plus it weighs more in the water and less on deck,” said Knott.

By Nancy Griffin

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RIVERDALE MILLS COATED WIRE TRAP TURNS 35

By Nancy Griffin

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In the News
November is a tough month. Suddenly it’s dark way too early. Nor’easters can blow up or, as was the case last year, a sudden snowstorm can envelop the state with a blanket of wet, heavy snow. Although the Gulf of Maine stays warm much longer than the air above it, it still can be a hard time of year to be out there hauling traps as so many lobstermen will continue to do throughout the month.

In this issue of Landings, we take a look at who some of those younger lobstermen are. Maine’s population has the oldest median age of any state in the country. So it’s not much of a surprise to learn that the average age of Maine’s lobstermen is around 50 years old. Lobstering is an occupation that a man or woman generally sticks with through-out their lives. Most will cut back a bit as they get older, re-tiring only when hauling becomes too hard on their body. Landings introduces us to several of this new generation of young lobstermen who are entering the fishery at a time when both supply and price are doing well. They have a sense of the future that shows maturity as well as a sober as-sessment of how Maine’s environment is changing.

As part of this issue’s focus on the young, Landings highlights the Eastern Maine Skippers Program (EMSP), a joint project of the Deer Isle-Stonington High School and Penobscot East Resource Center. Throughout the school year students from eight Downeast high schools participate in a hands-on investigation of a topic related to fishing. In past years, students have looked at developing a trap-based winter flounder fishery and the problem of invasive green crabs. This year the stu-dents will be focusing on Maine’s lobster industry.

We also talk to Department of Marine Resources Commissioner Patrick Keliher about the third series of meetings he has held with lobstermen since he became head of the agency in 2012. Keliher, who previously served as head of DMR’s Sea Run Fisheries and Habitat Bureau under Commissioner Patrice McCarron, introduces us to the entrepreneur and his innovative products. Finally, they say that necessity is the mother of inven-tion. For engineer, cyclist, and part-time lobsterman Jim Huebener, that necessity has turned into a successful business. For engineer, cyclist, and part-time lobsterman Jim Huebener, that necessity has turned into a successful business. Huebener’s Kettle Cove Enterprises makes bike bas-kets of both new and recycled lobster gear. Landings introduces you to the entrepreneur and his innovative products.

And, as surely as the sun rises and sets, health in-surance enrollment time is back with us again. This year the enrollment period for those seeking insurance through the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is shorter than in past years (November 1 to January 31, 2016). Landings provides infor-mation about the companies offering insurance this year and the penalties that those who do not enroll may face in 2016. Visit www.healthcare.gov to see what types of health insur-ance plans are available for you and your family.

And, as in previous years, the Maine Lobstermen’s Association has a healthcare Navigator on staff to help you understand your health insurance options and assist with enrollment if you choose.

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GUEST COLUMN: Creating demand through chefs and food writers

By Matt Jacobson

Friday, September 25, 2015, was the first official National Lobster Day. It was a thrill to celebrate lobster and the men and women of the lobster industry with a national and international audience. But even more, National Lobster Day was a huge success for the Maine lobster industry and for Maine.

Through the efforts of Maine Senators Collins and King, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution designating September 23, 2015, as National Lobster Day. This might seem like an inconsequential development, but we at the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative took it very seriously. We contacted publications and journalists, television stations and producers to tell them about the day and share Maine’s amazing lobster story. The holiday was featured in 20 print and online articles and more than 100 broadcasts, reaching 153 million people. For comparison, a 30-second TV ad during “the big football game” reached just 112 million people—and cost $4.5 million. We also built excitement around the live “Maine New Shell Lobster” during his recent visit to America! Chef Lidia Bastianich created Heirloom Tomato, Housemade Burrata, Steamed Maine Lobster. You can find the recipe here: www.splendidtable.org/recipes/Heirloom-Tomato-Housemade-Burrata-Steamed-Maine-Lobster

National Lobster Day was a prime example of our strategy in action: Create demand for Maine Lobster by influencing media and chefs. Our focus is to educate the world about Maine Lobster by sharing our unique story. We introduce them to Maine New Shell Lobster, a seasonal delicacy only available from Maine between July and November when our lobstermen catch it. We teach people about the fascinating men and women in the industry who dedicate their life’s work to lobstering in the cold, clear and pristine waters of Maine. We explain how our industry has a rich family tradition of fishermen and shore-side partners and the many people’s livelihoods that are supported when they buy Maine Lobster. We talk about sustainability and how Maine Lobster is the original sustainable seafood—our first sustainability laws were passed in 1829, long before they were fashionable.

Ultimately, we’re telling them the story of Maine. And chefs are hearing our story—fact not only did the President of China enjoy Maine Lobster at the White House, but the Pope was also served Maine Lobster during his recent visit to America! Chef Lidia Bastianich created Heirloom Tomato, Housemade Burrata, Steamed Maine Lobster. You can find the recipe here: www.splendidtable.org/recipes/Heirloom-Tomato-Housemade-Burrata-Steamed-Maine-Lobster

It seems that Maine Lobster is the story of chefs and media located in more U.S. cities. We are also deep in the planning of our activities for next year. You can expect to see the same messaging around the live “Maine New Shell” product and similar themes focused on the different culinary applications, the great people and place that produces Maine Lobster and our sustainability story. We intend to bring that message and education to more chefs and media located in more U.S. cities.

We learned much in 2015, our first year of operations. We’ve learned that people love our sustainability story—knowing that our lobstermen actually throw back lobsters that are too small, too big or are female and breeding. People are interested in sharing their stories of Maine and Maine Lobster on social media. Chefs across the country now prepare new and unique dishes with Maine New Shell Lobster, using unexpected flavors like wasabi, honey and ginger. All of these observations lead us to the conclusion that more education of chefs and media will accelerate these trends and ultimately grow the demand for Maine Lobster. The story of Maine works, and we’re going to keep on telling it.

With guest chef Anita Lo, the White House served Maine Lobster, and the menu was highlighted in more than 67 Chinese media articles and reached hundreds of millions of people. Throughout the day, social media exploded with more than 20 million mentions of National Lobster Day.

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This fall the Eastern Maine Skippers Program enters its third year. The regional program, a joint effort of the Penobscot East Resource Center and Deer Isle-Stonington High School, is aimed at high school students from eight Downeast schools who are currently fishing or aspiring to become fishermen. The students focus on a topic which relates to the region and has relevancy to the larger world. That topic is then incorporated into their school curriculum.

"This program came out of the local communities recognizing that students were fishing and were somewhat disengaged from high school and education," said Megan Flenniken, who recently took over management of the program at Penobscot East Resource Center. "It's not a vocational program. The outcomes are very definitely academic."

"It's important that we reach them and engage them in all parts of the industry, the management, the science, all of it."

This year 86 students from eight high schools (Deer Isle-Stonington, George Stevens Academy, Vinalhaven, North Haven, Narraguagus, Jonesport-Beals, Mount Desert Island and Ellsworth) will concentrate on the Maine lobstering industry. Last year they tackled the issue of invasive green crabs, asking the question of what could be done to control the crabs and also foster new businesses. The prior year they studied the viability of developing a winter flounder trap fishery for the region, designing the traps and successfully applying for a special license from the Department of Marine Resources to harvest the fish.

Lobster fishing is something that most students in the region are very familiar with, yet the complexities of the industry might be new to them. "The curriculum is divided into three parts," explained curriculum leader Val Peacock, who is consulting with the program through the Rural Aspirations Project. "We have the 'in office' section, which is concerned with the business aspects of lobstering, then the 'on the water' section, which involves things such as seamanship and oceanography. The third section is 'at the table' which has to do with what happens to a lobster after it leaves the boat."

"The older lobstermen see the young ones coming in and knowing only the good times when the landings are high. It's important that we reach them [younger students] and engage them in all parts of the industry, the management, the science, all of it," said Flenniken. "Someone may be really strong in things having to do with history but not know anything about building a flounder trap, for instance."

The program therefore draws on the expertise of those in the surrounding communities who have the specialized knowledge the students require. Peacock recounts the experience of working with students at Narraguagus High School on the flounder project three years ago. The teacher involved knew very little about winter flounder but Curtis Haycock, a local Milbridge fisherman, did. Haycock came in to meet with the students, assisted them in designing a trap and then helped set it at sea. "Sometimes we may bring people [with particular knowledge] into each school. Or sometimes there are already people in the community with that knowledge, for instance how to operate a lobster pound," Peacock explained.

The participating students will gather on November 18 at the Schoodic Institute in Winter Harbor to kick off the year-long program with a review of Maine’s lobstering industry. In January the students will focus on specific questions related to lobstering that are relevant to their communities. In March they will make presentations on those questions at the Maine Fishermen’s Forum in Rockport. The final presentations will take place in May. "We have some students who will be in the program for the third year. They will have made public presentations to large groups maybe ten times by this year," Flenniken noted.

"The older lobstermen see the young ones coming in and knowing only the good times when the landings are high. It’s important that we reach them [younger lobstermen] and engage them in all parts of the industry, the management, the science, all of it," she said.

Photo courtesy of PERC.
Under new federal rules implemented on June 1 to protect right whales from entanglement in lobster traps, lobstermen must "trawl up" their traps outside of the exemption line set in state waters. There must be a minimum of three traps per trawl from the 3-mile line to the 6-mile line. For zones A, B and C, there must be a minimum of five traps per trawl from the 6-mile line to the 12-mile line and zones D, E, F and G are required to fish a minimum of 10 traps per trawl from 6 to 12 miles. For all zones, outside of 12 miles there must be a minimum of 15 traps per trawl; this number increases to 20 traps per trawl in Zones F and G from November 1 until the end of February.

Some lobstermen have complained that the trawling up requirements are dangerous and put them and their crew at risk in offshore waters. We asked John Higgins, a NOAA specialist in protected species fishing gear modifications, whether he had heard any complaints about trawling up from those who fish offshore. We reprint his response here.

While I have had a few calls from Maine lobstermen discussing the challenges of trawling up, for the most part, Maine lobstermen have accepted the trawling up changes well. Trawling up was a bigger challenge in Massachusetts and Rhode Island waters because trap pot fishermen do not have miles of exempt state waters as Maine does. Because of this, the trawling up mandates came right to the shore and captured many small vessels with limited capacity, some of which were outboard boats.

We are in a monitoring phase and it is difficult to measure success, gear compliance and so on. The population of North Atlantic right whales has grown and I think it is important that fishermen know their efforts and expenses may be paying off. When I tell fishermen that the right whale population has grown from around 300 to more than 450 over the past 10 years (a 50% increase), some will respond, "Great, more to entangle!" My reply is, "Imagine if the population was not growing and how that would affect the federal rules. Usually a fisherman is glad to hear the population has grown.

Keep in mind that, more often than not, most fishermen are happy to learn the population has grown because they respect these animals that live and work in the same waters as they do. If a fisherman is arguing with me over the whale plan it is more often about how these animals are protected, not that these animals are protected.

In the years when I fished both offshore and inshore, from Long Island to the Gulf of Maine, I never heard a fisherman have a bad word to say about these large whales. When we saw one at the very least it took the boredom out of a very long, hard day. The captain would turn to the crew, point off across the horizon and yell, "Hey, check that out." Then we would stop flaking nets, look up and take it in for a moment together, nod our heads until someone shouted, "Cool!" (Now they say awesome.) Then it would be back to our eyes on our work with never a bad thing to say, not on all the boats I worked.

The bigger story is how well the overwhelming majority of fishermen in Maine have accepted the rule. Again I am certain that is a result of the MLA, the Maine Department of Marine Resources and some individual fishermen speaking as one Maine voice at the Take Reduction Team meeting. If you are worried about the safety of your vessel and crew in complying with the offshore trawling requirements under the whale rules, please call John Higgins to explain your concerns. It is important that your concerns are heard by NMFS! He can be reached via cell at 207-771-3669 or landline at 207-359-4404.

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Thus far trawling up has been more of a problem in Mass. and R.I. than in Maine. Photo by Steve Motta.
But what of the younger lobstermen? In a state dominated by the older generation and faced with changes in economics and the ocean environment their parents could not imagine, how are today’s new lobstermen faring?

Erin Hanley, age 20, of Bass Harbor exudes a sense of cheerfulness. It’s a good time to be a lobsterman. In 1995, when Hanley was born, Maine lobstermen landed slightly more than 37 million pounds of lobster at an average price of $2.74 per pound. Forty years ago, when her parents’ generation was born, lobstermen landed 16.5 million pounds at an average price of $1.61. By contrast, last year lobster landings in Maine topped 123 million pounds, with an average price of $3.69 per pound. That’s more than $100 per trap, drawing to Maine’s lobstermen, both young and old.

Hanley graduated from Mt. Desert High School in 2012, a year earlier than the rest of her class, and promptly became a full-time lobsterman. “I started with my dad [Patrick Hanley],” sterning for him. “I got my license at 18 after finishing the apprenticeship program,” she explained. Hanley fishes from her 25-foot General Marine boat named Erin’s Way, which she’s owned for two years.

Buying the boat did not put Hanley in debt: “I had money saved up for the boat. An older man in the harbor had the boat but someone hit it and put a big hole in it. My dad said I should get it. So I paid for it and then paid to fix it up,” she said. “I love my boat. I think I’ll have it one more year and then get something bigger.”

She also paid for her gear up front. She, like other student apprentices, fished 150 traps before gaining her commercial license. Then she began buying traps from other fishermen in her area, steadily building her gang of traps by 100 traps per year as allowed by Maine law.

While Erin stands out from the older generation of Maine lobstermen, in part because she is a woman and in part because she uses social media apps like Snapchat and Facebook, she retains certain elements that have long characterized Maine’s fishermen. “I just like to work. I have good work ethics. It’s not an easy job but it’s a challenge. And I make pretty good money,” she said laughing. Erin has nothing but enthusiasm for lobstering, for her boat, and for the community in which she fishes. “People ask me why I do this, why don’t I go to school. The older guys tell me I should go to school because this won’t last forever. But I love it,” she said.

It’s common knowledge that many of today’s young people are saddled with major debt. Those who attend college may face the burden of school loans that will constrain their lives for years. According to an article in the Atlantic, “Thirteen percent of student debt is owed by borrowers between the ages of 22 and 29, the generation that has grown up in a world of debt.”

“Thirteen percent of student debt is owed by borrowers between the ages of 22 and 29, the generation that has grown up in a world of debt.”
I have a lot of respect for lobstermen. After 15 years in my position that respect has only gotten stronger. There are so many people in the industry who are truly committed to ensuring that we keep the lobster population robust and lobstermen thriving so that the next generation can have the opportunities they did. After reading this month’s lead story in Landings about some of the younger lobstermen just starting out, I am even more encouraged about the future. Before we did the Lobster Leadership Program last year, there was a mindset among many older fishermen that the younger generation has no clue and doesn’t want to be involved in anything but their boats and their traps. People were worried that no new leaders would step up and carry the industry forward. As it turns out, nothing could be further from the truth.

We are taught as children that assumptions can be dangerous. In this case, our assumptions have been a bit misguided. Young lobstermen are not the disadvantaged so many of us thought. In fact, the group of lobstermen who participated in the Lobster Leadership Program are all incredibly bright, forward and independent thinkers, who care deeply about the future of the industry. They were not actively involved in the nuts and bolts of lobster management because they didn’t think anyone cared what they thought. After having the opportunity to learn about lobster science, management and marketing and gain some perspective on Maine’s lobster fishery through visiting Prince Edward Island lobstermen, all that changed.

Those young lobstermen and others have stepped up, and in a big way. Many have been elected or appointed to serve on lobster zone councils, the Lobster Advisory Council, the Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Council, the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative and the Maine Lobstermen’s Association Board. They say that they have been warmly welcomed by those who have served in those positions for many years. Which is as it should be.

Having younger lobstermen participate in industry meetings and discussions has certainly affected the MLA and how the Board thinks and works. Many Leadership Institute alumni regularly attend our monthly MLA Directors meetings. And they don’t just show up; they actively participate in discussions and bring their perspectives to the group. They learn about the issues our industry is grappling with, challenge ideas and help move the conversation forward.

These young people are influencing decisions and definitely making a difference.

The Landings article shatters another misconception about the next generation. Older fishermen grumble that the younger generation is too reckless in spending and not planning cautiously enough for the future. Since they have lobstered only during mostly good times, the assumption goes, they don’t know what it means to scrim and save for the possibility of bad times. Yet those profiled in this month’s paper have a strong sense of how to run a small business. They and many others like them are being strategic with their investments and planning for their future. That type of thinking speaks well also for the future of Maine lobstering.

With the average age of a Maine lobsterman now 50 years old, a good portion of the nearly 6,000 lobstermen in the state are already well-established and beginning to think about retirement. They have built their homes, raised their families, and are now on the other side of their careers. These men and women include a dedicated bunch of passionate and active leaders, who have helped shepherd Maine’s lobster landings to record highs and guided the industry to a stable and profitable place.

New blood, new faces, new ideas. It’s heartening to know that within such a traditional fishery, where often change comes slowly if at all, the transition from the older generation to the new is taking place quietly and smoothly. We look forward to watching the next generation of leaders make their own distinctive marks in Maine’s lobstering world.

As always, stay safe on the water.

STEAMING AHEAD

• Safety stickers for vessels fishing outside of 3 miles were due on October 15; the new life raft regulations will be in place in February 2016.
• The “American Lobster in a Changing Ecosystem” conference will be held the week of November 2 in Prince Edward Island.

The majority of the Directors meeting was dedicated to discussing the outcome of the DMR’s round of 10 meetings with the lobster industry to discuss observer trips and the lobster licensing system. Patrice presented a summary of the discussion from the meetings. The Directors reviewed a variety of data including the length of waiting list by zone, changes in the number of lobster licenses and tags by zone, the age structure of the lobster fishery by zone, in addition to other information.

The Marine Resources Committee continues to be concerned about this issue. Senator Linda Baker, Marine Resources Senate Chair, informed Zone E lobstermen that at least two committee members attended each of the Commissioner’s meetings. The committee wants to be partners with the industry and DMR and they want to continue the licensing conversation.

The MLA Directors recognized that each zone views this issue differently. The board reviewed the feedback and noted that there does not appear to be any consensus among lobstermen resulting from the DMR meetings. The Board supported the idea of leaving licensing changes to the zone councils. They were not comfortable with notion of the Legislature potentially imposing a one-size-fits-all solution for all of the lobster zones. The MLA will continue to
SAFETY AND OFFSHORE TRAWLING UP REQUIREMENTS

Are you concerned about your ability to safely comply with the offshore trawling up requirements implemented as part of the whale rules? The MLA has raised this concern with NMFS, but we are not sure how to solve it because the situation for each vessel is unique.

So, what can you do? Call John Higgins, NMFS Gear Specialist, at 207-359-4404 (land line) or 207-771-3669 (cell). He can document your safety concerns and meet you to view the issues specific to your vessel. Based on his experience working with other lobstermen, he may have solutions used by others to comply with the rules. The bottom line is that we need to get these safety issues in trying to comply with the whale rules documented by NMFS. This step is essential to helping us find a solution that will keep you safe. If you believe the trawling up requirements pose a safety issue for your lobstering operation, please call John Higgins!

TRAP TAGS CAN BE HOG RINGED

If you need to cut out trap tags to shift your lobster gear, remember that you no longer need to get replacement tags from DMR. Be sure to cut out your tags in a manner that keeps all of the identifying information intact so it is clear to Marine Patrol that it is a legal 2015 trap tag and then hog ring the tag into the bridge of the trap. Catastrophic losses for replacement tags still need to go through Marine Patrol for reissue. Questions? Call your local Marine Patrol Officer.

ROYAL RIVER DREDGING

Beginning the last week of October, the Army Corps of Engineers began dredging two small sections of the channel of the Royal River Federal navigation project (FNP) in Yarmouth. The dredged sediments will be placed at the Portland Disposal Site located approximately 15 nautical miles from the dredging site. All fishing gear must be removed from within the specified Haul Route to avoid damage to or loss of fishing gear during the disposal of dredged material. A map of the haul route is available at www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/ProjectsTopics/RoyalRiver.aspx. FMI on this project or if you have an inquiry regarding the loss of fishing gear suspected to be the result of dredged material disposal, contact Michael Walsh, the Corps Project Manager, at 978-318-8586.

CANADIAN LOBSTER SEASON OPENINGS

The Upper Bay of Fundy lobster fishery, LFA 35, opened its 2.5 month season on Oct. 14 and will close on December 31. This fishery has a trap limit of 300 traps. The Southwest and Southeast Nova Scotia lobster fisheries, LFA 33 and 34, are scheduled to open their six month seasons on November 30 and will close at the end of May, 2016. LFA 33 has a trap limit of 250 traps; LFA 34 has a trap limit of 375 and 400 traps and is Canada’s largest lobster fishery. The New Brunswick Bay of Fundy lobster fisheries, LFA 36 and 37, will open their two month season on November 10 and close on January 14, 2016. These fisheries have a trap limit of 300 traps. The Grand Manan lobster fishery, LFA 36, opens its 7.5 month season on November 10 through June 29. This fishery has a trap limit of 375 traps. The Grand Manan fishery around Machias Seal Island, LFA 388, finishes its 4-month season on November 6. This fishery is limited to 375 traps. The Gulf of St. Lawrence lobster fishery, from northern New Brunswick across to the southwest side of P.E.I., LFA 25, finished its two month season on October 10. This fishery has a trap limit of 275 traps.

HAULING RESTRICTIONS LIFTED

As of November 1, it is legal to haul lobster traps at any time of day until May 31st. It is always legal to set lobster traps at any time throughout the year. Hauling restrictions are in place in both state and federal waters during the period ½ hour after sunset until ½ hour before sunrise from June 1st to October 31st; and during the period from 4 p.m., EDST, Saturday to ½ hour before sunrise the following Monday morning from June 1st to August 31st.

review data and discuss this issue during upcoming meetings in order to prepare for the state-wide discussion which will be underway by the new year. The DMR plans to submit legislation proposing changes to the lobster entry system in the next legislative session. They hope to bring the draft legislation to the zone councils before it is debated by the Legislature.

Amy Lent, Director of the Maine Maritime Museum, thanked the MLA Board for its help with the new lobster exhibit which opened this summer. It has been very well received and is attracting a lot of visitors. The museum will continue to make improvements and updates to the permanent exhibit as necessary. The next MLA Directors meeting will be November 10 in Belfast.

MLA PUBLIC OUTREACH

MLA Director Patrice McCarron sat on a panel during the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership’s 2015 State of the Bay conference. The session was entitled “Perspectives on our Changing Coast.” McCarron gave an overview of the Maine lobster industry and the importance of the lobster industry to Casco Bay. She noted that the health of the bay is essential to the future of the lobster industry, as well as the many dealers, processors and other support businesses located around the waterfront of the bay. McCarron also gave two lectures as part of the Maine Maritime Museum’s lecture series celebrating the launch of the new lobster exhibit. The talk was entitled “Grit & Determination: Past, Present, and Future Issues Facing Lobstering,” McCarron presented an overview of the Maine lobster industry and explained the history of challenges lobstermen have faced, what they deal with now, and what is on the horizon in the 21st century.

DOUBLE GEAR MARKING IN EFFECT FOR JEFFREYS LEDGE AND JORDAN BASIN

Effective September 1, 2015, two additional Gear Marking Areas around Jeffreys Ledge and near Jordan Basin became part of the federal whale rules. Gear fished in the Jeffreys Gear Marking Area must be marked in three 12” sections with red and green; gear fished in the Jordan Basin Gear Marking Area must be marked in three 12” sections with red and purple. All other Maine lobstermen fishing gear outside the exemption line must have their endlines marked in three 12” sections with red.

JONESPORT BUOY IS BACK!

The NOAA buoy off of Jonesport is back online. Buoy 44027, located 20 nm Southeast of Jonesport, is owned and maintained by the National Data Buoy Center. The buoy went offline on March 24, 2015 and was successfully re-deployed the week of October 21, 2015. Visit www.ndbc.noaa.gov to monitor buoy data.
The Area 1A herring fishery reopened on October 1 with the start of the third trimester. All permitted herring vessels, both purse seine and midwater trawls, are allowed to fish this area from October 1 to December 31, or until the quota is landed. The ASMFC’s Atlantic Herring Section set the Trimester 3 (October 1 to December 31) days out effort control measure to allow three (3) consecutive landing days per week in Area 1A from Sundays at 6 p.m. to Wednesdays at 6 p.m. Thursday through Sunday are “no landing” days.

Landings will be monitored closely; the directed fishery will be closed when 92% of the Area 1A quota is projected to be reached. For the Trimester 3 Area 1A fishery that value is 6,971 metric tons (mt).

The ASMFC implemented its annual rolling spawning closures to protect spawning herring and prevent damage to herring egg beds. Herring taken legally outside the Spawning Area Closures may be transported through the area only if all of its fishing gear has been stowed.

- Eastern Maine Spawning Area: August 15 through September 11, 2015
- Western Maine Spawning Area: September 1 through September 28, 2015.
- Western Maine and Mass/NH Spawning Area: September 21 through October 18, 2015; and resumed October 21 through November 4, 2015.

### Atlantic Herring Landings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Last 2 Weeks Catch</th>
<th>Cumulative Catch</th>
<th>Quota June 1 thru Sept 30</th>
<th>Total Annual Quota</th>
<th>Percent Quota</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1A</td>
<td>3,453</td>
<td>24,344</td>
<td>20,926</td>
<td>30,290</td>
<td>80.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1B</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,889</td>
<td>4,922</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11,346</td>
<td>32,100</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>34,516</td>
<td>44,910</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,263</td>
<td>72,695</td>
<td>104,566</td>
<td>69.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The New England Fishery Management Council approved the new herring catch limits for the 2016 through 2018 fishing seasons. These specifications account for management uncertainty to further ensure the Atlantic herring catch will not exceed the Allowable Biologic Catch (ABC) in a given year.

The Council also adopted river herring and shad catch caps for 2016-2018 based on catch estimates for these species from 2008 through 2014. The catch caps apply to midwater trawl vessels in the Gulf of Maine and Cape Cod Catch Cap Areas, and to both midwater trawl and small mesh bottom trawl vessels in the southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Catch Cap Area on all trips landing more than 6,600 pounds of Atlantic herring. No catch caps were adopted for the Georges Bank Catch Cap Area.

### COAST GUARD SAFETY STICKERS

The deadline for lobstermen who fish outside 3 miles to successfully complete a dockside safety exam and be issued a safety decal was October 15. The decal must be renewed at least every five years. If you had already received a safety decal issued after January 1, 2013, you are not required to have your vessel reexamined until five years from the date when the decal was issued. If you are boarded by the Coast Guard and found not in full compliance, you may be subject to enforcement action to include a civil penalty, termination of the vessel's voyage, or other operational controls.

The Coast Guard has an online commercial vessel checklist. Simply answer the questions and this tool will generate a custom checklist of items required for your particular fishing vessel. You can find it at www.uscg.mil/dl13/cfvs/test/1ChecklistCover.html.

To schedule an exam, contact:
- Seabrook, NH to Waldoboro: Kevin Plowman, 207-780-3526, kevin.l.plowman@uscg.mil
- Waldoboro to Ellsworth: Brian Smith, 207-664-3931, brian.m.smith@uscg.mil
- Ellsworth to Eastport: Garry Moores, 207-838-4440, fxexaminer@myfairpoint.net

### COAST GUARD LIFE RAFTS

Effective February 26, 2016, new safety regulations require that vessels fishing outside of 3 miles must carry survival craft that ensures no part of an individual is immersed in water.

### MLA WELCOMES NEW STAFF

The MLA was sad to say goodbye to April McNutt, who guided Maine lobstermen and their families through the Maine's Health Insurance Marketplace created under the Affordable Care Act.

We are excited to welcome Alisha Keezer to the MLA staff as our new health insurance navigator. Alisha has her degree in Public Health and is working with the public to understand Maine’s health insurance marketplace and assist with enrollment.

MLA is also excited to welcome Andy Pelletier to the MLA staff. Andy will be working as our new membership director, focusing on keeping MLA’s membership strong and looking for ways to ensure that MLA remains responsive and relevant to our members.

### MLA V-NOTCH SURVEY

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year’s V-notch Survey, which took place the week of October 12. Maine’s commitment to V-notchting our egg-bearing female lobsters has been critical to the success of our fishery. V-notchting has become a major part of the conservation measures in the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission lobster management plan. The MLA has been conducting this survey since 1985 and we couldn’t do it without your support. Thank you!

---

**Atlantic Herring Landings**

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### Atlantic Herring Specifications 2016 to 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>2016-2018</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1A</td>
<td>30,300</td>
<td>30,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1B</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>4,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>29,100</td>
<td>32,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>40,900</td>
<td>44,910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>104,800</td>
<td>104,566</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If NMFS determines that <4,000mt of herring have been caught in NB weir fishery by Oct 1, an additional 1,000 mt will be allocated to Area 1A.

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**Coast Guard Safety Stickers**

The deadline for lobstermen who fish outside 3 miles to successfully complete a dockside safety exam and be issued a safety decal was October 15. The decal must be renewed at least every five years. If you had already received a safety decal issued after January 1, 2013, you are not required to have your vessel reexamined until five years from the date when the decal was issued. If you are boarded by the Coast Guard and found not in full compliance, you may be subject to enforcement action to include a civil penalty, termination of the vessel’s voyage, or other operational controls.

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- Waldoboro to Ellsworth: Brian Smith, 207-664-3931, brian.m.smith@uscg.mil
- Ellsworth to Eastport: Garry Moores, 207-838-4440, fxexaminer@myfairpoint.net

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**MLA SELECT BUSINESS MEMBERS**

**Show your support for these businesses!**

**ACCOUNTANTS**
- Back River Financial Group
  
  John Halle
  690 Maine Ave
  Farmingdale, ME 04344
  207-622-5776
  info@backrivergroup.com
  www.backrivergroup.com

**BAY DEALERS**
- Bassy Bait LLC
  152 Rear Batchelder Rd.
  Seabrook, NH 03874
  603-300-2846/603-308-2849
  info@bassybait.com
  www.bassybait.com

**FINANCIAL & INVESTMENT**
- Farm Credit East
  615 Main St.
  Auburn, ME 04210
  800-831-4230
  www.farmcredittrust.com

**FISHING, MARINE AND INDUSTRIAL SUPPLIES**
- Grundens USA Inc
  PO Box 2864
  Pouldo, WA 98370
  368-779-4209/800-733-7237
  info4@grundens.com

- Hamilton Marine
  with locations in Searsport: 207-548-6302.
  Southwest Harbor: 207-244-7870.
  Rockland: 207-594-8481.
  Portland: 207-774-1772.
  Jonesport: 207-497-2778.
  info@hamiltonmarine.com
  www.hamiltonmarine.com

**Discounts available to commercial fishermen**
- North Atlantic Power Products
  Dan Jones
  15 Continental Drive
  Exeter, NH 03833
  603-418-0470
  djones@dpplp.com
  10% off on parts and service.

**EDUCATIONAL & TRADE SHOWS**
- Richard Stanley Custom Boats
  PO Box 275
  Bass Harbor, ME 04631
  207-533-3175

**GIFTS**
- Maine Camp Outfitters
  300 Sunset Rd.
  Sunset, ME 04603
  800-560-6990
  andy@mainecamp.com
  www.mainecamp.com

**HYDRAULICS**
- Coastal Hydraulics Inc.
  PO Box 2823.
  Seabrook, NH 03874
  603-474-1914
  sales@coastalhyd.com
  10% discount on all in-stock items for MLA members.

**INSURANCE**
- Smithwick & Mariners Insurance
  366 US Route 1
  Falmouth, ME 04105
  207-781-5553/800-370-1883
  smithwickins.com
  www.smithwick-ins.com
  Discounted vessel insurance for MLA members.

**LEGAL SERVICES**
- Maine Camp Marketing Collaborative
  2 Union St.
  Portland, ME 04101
  207-541-9330
  info@lobsterfrommaine.com
  www.lobsterfrommaine.com

**LEGISLATION**
- Law office of J. Scott Logan, LLC
  75 Pearl Street
  Portland, ME 04101
  207-699-1314
  20% discount on foreclosure defense, bankruptcy, legal fees.

**LOBSTER/SEAFOOD/WHOLESALE/RETAIL**
- Atlantic Edge Lobster
  71 Atlantic Ave.
  Boothbay Harbor, ME 04538
  207-563-2300
  aed@myfairpoint.net

- Calendar Islands Maine Lobster LLC
  6A Portland Fish Pier
  Portland, ME 04101
  207-541-9140
  john@calendarislandslobster.com

- Canobie Seafoods, Inc.
  1077 Bar Harbor Rd.
  Trenton, ME 04685
  207-667-2250
  rpdoaey@yahoo.com

- Channel Fish Co.
  370 East Eagle St.
  East Boston, MA 02128
  617-569-3200
  paula@channelfishco.com
  www.channelfishco.com

- Cozy Harbor Seafood Inc.
  PO Box 389
  Portland, ME 04112
  207-879-2665
  jnorton@cozyharbor.com
  www.cozyharbor.com

- Craig’s All Natural LLC
  25 Wincorl Lad.
  Durham, NH 03824
  603-397-5331
  craig@caalatural.com
  www.caalatural.com

- Cranberry Isles Fishermens Coop
  PO Box 158.
  Islesford, ME 04646
  207-244-5438
  cranberrycooop@gmail.com
  http://littlecranberrylobster.com

- Garbo Lobster
  Pete Daley
  PO Box 334.
  Hancock, ME 04640
  207-422-3217
  peted@garbolobster.com

- Little Lobster Bay Inc.
  138 Salttrack Way
  Newington, ME 03803
  603-313-3170
  kellee@littlelobsterbay.com
  www.littlelobsterbay.com

- Luke’s Lobster
  859 Grand St.
  Brooklyn, NY 11211
  212-387-8487
  ben@lukeslobster.com
  www.lukeslobster.com

- Maine Coast LLC
  15 Hamnaford Drive, Unit 2
  York, ME 03909
  207-363-0876

- Shucke Maine Lobster
  150 Main St, Suite 4
  Richmond, ME 04357
  207-573-4800
  johnny@shuckemainc.com

- Spruce Head Fishermen’s Coop
  275 Island Rd.
  South Thomaston, ME 04088
  207-594-8029
  shlcoop@gmail.com

- Stonington Lobster Coop
  PO Box 87.
  Stonington, ME 04681
  207-367-2286
  www.stoningtonlobstercoops.com

- Swans Island Fishermens Coop
  PO Box 116.
  Swans Island, ME 04685
  207-526-4327
  info@swanlobstercooper.com

**PROPELLERS**
- New England Propeller, Inc.
  Ron Piek
  9 Apollo Eleven Rd.
  Plymouth, MA 02360
  781-747-6466
  neprop@aol.com
  Discounts on marine propellers, shafting, and related items, sales and repair.

**REFRIGERATION SERVICES**
- Applied Refrigeration Services
  771 Broadway
  Windham, ME 04062
  207-893-0145
  info@appliedrefrigeration.com
  www.appliedrefrigeration.com

- Central Maine Cold Storage
  84 Heritage Park Rd.
  Bucksport, ME 04461
  207-702-9045
  brian@cmcns.biz

**RESTAURANTS**
- Barnacle Billy’s Inc.
  PO Box 831.
  Ogunquit, ME 03907
  207-646-3575
  billy@billysilly.com
  www.barnaclebilly’s.com

- Red Lobster Seafood Co.
  450 S Orange Ave, Suite 800
  Orlando, FL 32801
  407-383-4061
  www.redlobster.com

- The Clam Shack
  PO Box 6200.
  Kennebunkport, ME 04046
  207-967-3321
  steve@theclammshack.net
  www.theclammshack.net

**SAFETY TRAINING & EQUIPMENT**
- Littlefist Services, LLC
  Dan Geer
  15 Hannaford Drive
  York, ME 03909
  207-363-9220
dgeer@survivalatasea.com

- 5% off soft top with proof of MLA membership. Discount can be combined with other promotions.

**SALT**
- Maine Salt Company
  677 Coldbrook Rd
  Hermon, ME 04401
  207-448-2976
  maccem@juno.com
  www.mainsalt.com

**TRAP BUILDERS/ STOCK SUPPLIES**
- Brooks Trap Mill
  211 Beecheswood St.
  Thomaston, ME 04884
  207-354-8763
  stephen@brookstrapmill.com
  www.brookstrapmill.com

- Friendship Trap Company
  570 Cushing Dr.
  Friendship, ME 04547
  207-545-9147
  mike@friendshiptrap.com
  www.friendshiptrap.com

**SALES**
- Cape Cod Cold Storage
  7C Commons Ave.
  Applied Refrigeration Services
  508-747-6666
  neprop@aol.com

- 9 Apollo Eleven Rd.
  Ron Peck
  New England Propeller, Inc.
  207-893-0145
  info@appliedrefrigeration.com
  www.appliedrefrigeration.com

- 7C Commons Ave.
  Applied Refrigeration Services
  508-747-6666
  neprop@aol.com

- 5% off list price on traps purchased at the Friendship store.

**TRADE SHOWS**
- Sea Rose Trap Co.
  137 Pleasant Hill Rd.
  Scarborough, ME 04074
  207-730-2063
  scarboroughtrapco@gmail.com
  www.searosetrap.com

- 5% off list price on traps to MLA members
Present your MLA membership card at the following businesses and receive generous discounts!

- **Applied Refrigeration Services**
  Windham, ME -- $250 off new installations.

- **Back River Financial Group**
  Farmingdale, ME -- Free initial consultation and review of previous tax returns.

- **Bessy Bait, LLC**
  Seabrook, NH -- $5 discount per drum on multiple drum purchases (must show current MLA card).

- **Coastal Hydraulics**
  Seabrook, NH -- 10% discount on all in stock items for MLA members.

- **Commercial Fisheries News**
  Deer Isle, ME -- Discounted annual subscription rate for $18.75 with MLA membership noted on check.

- **Craig’s All Natural**
  Durham, NH -- 10% discount on all Victinox Cutery.

- **Coastal Hydraulics**
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- **Civilian Workers News**
  Deer Isle, ME -- Discounted annual subscription rate for $18.75 with MLA membership noted on check.

- **Craig’s All Natural**
  Durham, NH -- 10% discount on all Victinox Cutery.

- **Friendship Trap Company**
  Friendship, ME -- 5% off list price on traps purchased at the Friendship store.

- **Hamiton Marine**
  Searsport, Rockland, Portland, Southwest Harbor, Jonesport, ME -- Discounts available to commercial fishermen.

- **Law Office of J. Scott Logan, LLC**
  Portland, ME -- 20% discount on foreclosure defense and bankruptcy legal fees.

- **Liferaft Services, LLC**
  York, ME -- 5% off liferaft repack with proof of MLA membership. CAN be combined with other promotions.

- **Maine Camp Outfitters**
  Sunset, ME -- 10% off all apparel and promotional product orders.

- **Maine Lobstermen’s Association**
  Kennebunk, ME -- 10% off MLA membership.

- **Maine Maritime Museum**
  Bath, ME -- Free admission to MLA members.

- **Midcoast Marine Electronics**
  Rockland, ME -- 10% off list price on all marine electronic products.

- **National Fisherman**
  North Hollywood, CA -- Special annual subscription rate.

- **New England Propeller Inc.**
  Plymouth, MA -- Discounts on marine propeller, shafting, and related items, sales & repairs.

- **North Atlantic Power Products**
  Exeter, NH -- 10% discount on parts and service.

- **Nicholas H Walsh PA**
  Portland, ME -- 20% off legal services.

- **North Atlantic Power Products**
  Exeter, NH -- 10% discount on parts and service.

- **Penobscot Marine Museum**
  Searsport, ME -- Free admission for MLA members.

- **Richard Stanley Custom Boats**
  Bass Harbor, ME -- $1,000 off final price of hull with MLA membership.

- **Sea Rose Trap Co.**
  Scarborough, ME -- 5% off trap list price when you show your MLA card.

- **Smithwick & Mariners Insurance**
  Falmouth, ME -- Discounted vessel insurance plus 5% discount with proof of CG approved Drill Conductor course within the last 5 years.

- **SW Boatworks**
  Custom Boat Building and Repair
  358 Douglas Highway
  Lamoine, ME 04605
  207-461-6081
  swboatworks@gmail.com
  www.swboatworks.com

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DISCOUNT DIRECTORY

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**McMillan Offshore Survival Training**
Belfast, ME -- 10% discount on USCG Drill Conductor training.

**Midcoast Marine Electronics**
Rockland, ME -- 10% off list price on all marine electronic products.

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**SW Boatworks**
Lamonie, ME -- $1000 discount for hull or top

---

**Weathercone Seafood Inc.**
Kittery, ME -- 10% off mail order purchases. Just mention you are an MLA member.
1-800-914-1774.
As a younger fisherman, I always want to experiment and try new ideas so I can catch more lobster. The folks at Friendship Trap are always there to help me develop these ideas and get the traps just the way I want them. AND, I get a top quality trap that’s built to last and get the traps just the way I want them.

—Trevor Hooper
Coria, ME

I really enjoy providing helpful information to our customers. I see what’s working along the coast and can provide ideas that can help them design their traps. Effort spent getting their traps just the way they need them pays off!

—Jerry Wadsworth, Friendship Trap road sales

Here to serve you!
Jerry Wadsworth (207) 542-0842 jerry@friendshiptrap.com
Jimmy Emerson (207) 483-6555 jemerson@friendshiptrap.com
Friendship Office: (800) 451-1200; (207) 354-2545
Columbia Falls Office: (800) 339-6558
Visit our website. www.friendshiptrap.com

If you receive tax credits for your 2015 insurance plan?

Open Enrollment for 2016 begins November 1, 2015

• Did you know that last year over 60,000 Mainers received a Tax Credit towards their Health Insurance premium? The average tax credit per enrollee was $337 a month!
• Rates for 2016 Marketplace plans in Maine are similar to last year. Maine’s premiums are below the national average and significantly lower than the projected increases for some cities across the nation.

All plans in Maine’s Marketplace cover preventive and essential services such as:

Optional Premium Services:
• Hospitalizations
• Emergency care
• Maternity care
• Prescriptions
• Doctors’ visits
• Preventive care

Take charge of your health and get coverage!

Free Preventive Services:
• Screenings
• Vaccines
• Counseling

Did you receive tax credits for your 2015 insurance plan?

Make sure to update your account to continue receiving tax credits in 2016!

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HEALTH INSURANCE ENROLLMENT BEGINS NOV. 1

By MLA staff

Yes, it is that time again, time to consider enrolling in Affordable Care Act (ACA) health insurance plan or, if you are already enrolled, to update your information and re-enroll. The enrollment period is shorter this year than in the past, from November 1 to January 31, 2016, so now is the time to get at it!

Most Maine residents purchase their individual or family health insurance policies through Maine’s health insurance marketplace located at healthcare.gov. The marketplace, also called a health exchange, is set up to facilitate the purchase of health insurance in each state in accordance with the ACA. According to the Maine Bureau of Insurance, three companies will offer plans in Maine’s marketplace this year: Community Health Options (CHO), Anthem Health Plan of Maine, and Harvard Pilgrim Health Care. Combined, these companies offer about 40 individual policies through the marketplace.

It’s even more important to enroll in a health insurance plan this year than in past years because the penalty for not enrolling has risen. If you do not have health insurance coverage in place for 2016 and do not qualify for an exemption, your tax penalty when you file your 2016 taxes will be either 2.5% of your yearly household income or $695 per adult and $347.50 for each child under 18 (up to 2 children), whichever figure is higher. The total liability for a family is capped at 300% of the individual penalty, or $2,085. Ouch!

To find out what it would cost to buy health insurance for you and your family from any of these companies, visit Maine’s Health Insurance Marketplace at www.healthcare.gov. Your quote will reflect whether or not you qualify for an Advanced Premium Tax Credit, which would lower the cost of the premium. The policy rates vary based on the level of coverage, where you live, your age, whether you smoke, household size and your income.

Small businesses

Beginning in November, the Small Business Health Options Program, known as SHOP, is available through Maine’s health insurance marketplace at www.healthcare.gov.

THE MLA WELCOMES NEW HEALTH INSURANCE NAVIGATOR

This month the Maine Lobstermen’s Association (MLA) welcomes Alisha Keezer as the organization’s new health insurance Navigator. Keezer, 23, is a native of Biddeford Pool. She attended Wheaton College and University of New England (UNE) from which she graduated in 2014. She is currently completing her Master's degree in Public Health at UNE.

"What draws me to public health is the feeling of helping someone. You feel satisfied with yourself at the end of the day," Keezer explained. "I have a passion to help and I think I know how to interact with people so they understand their options," she said. As a child Keezer lived three doors away from the pier in Biddeford Pool so she grew up around fishermen. She's looking forward to working with lobstermen and their families to help them find the appropriate health insurance through the ACA. "I have a passion to help and I think I know how to interact with people so they understand their options," she said. A competitive swimmer in her college days, Keezer is ready to put her enthusiasm and skills to work for Maine’s lobstering communities.
Keliher continued from page 1

result of those meetings, DMR withdrew the proposal of a tiered licensing system put forth in the report. "History shows that fishermen have always had to react to a drafted law. The sea change was to truly have a conversation," he said.

Lobstermen gave Keliher and his staff an earful. But despite the sometimes rough exchanges during the meetings, the talk that took place afterward in the parking lot or via email tended to be fruitful. "After any meeting people would come up to talk to me. It's all about laying out the information so people understand, so that we get through to them," Keliher noted.

In February, 2014, Keliher once again hit the road, this time to talk to lobstermen about data showing a drop in juvenile lobsters along the coast and about the problem of latency among lobster license holders. Latency refers to the number of unused traps that lobstermen could at some point put in the water. "Those meetings were somewhat somber," Keliher recalled. "The settlement numbers made lobstermen feel sort of like 'uh-oh, the eggshell's cracked.' Plus there was natural skepticism about the science." It was at this round of meetings that the notion of creating a state Fisheries Management Plan for lobster was first introduced.

This year's latest round of meetings in September focused on the licensing system brought different responses from each zone, according to Keliher. "For example, Zone A is the poster child for the other zones. They changed from trap tags to licenses for their entry standard and 22 people came off the waiting list [in the last 2 years]. That gives some predictability," Keliher said. In Zone B, by contrast, very few lobstermen are leaving the fishery. "Lobstermen came to the Zone B meeting saying 'Yup, we never envisioned this. We didn't have to go through this waiting list to come in and we need to find a way to fix it.' It [changing the entry/exit standard] is something that we can do that does not threaten the fishery right now. Licenses will continue to decline by zone, but in a trickle, not in a rush," Keliher said.

While the typical fisherman's notion of government is that its aim is solely to constrain fishing activities, Keliher's point of view is different. "Technology exists right now that could destroy any fishery," he said, referring to the complex electronics and other fish-finding gear used by many fishermen. "Our job is to regulate to assure the sustainability of the stocks. At the same time, we have to be an advocate for the fishermen as well as the fish. It's a balance." Keliher spoke of the state's scallop fishery as a successful model of that balance. As a result of closing scallop beds for three years throughout the coast on a rotating basis, Maine's scallop landings have increased dramatically during the past two years. "We worked hand-in-hand with the fishermen to allow fishing while the stock recovers," Keliher said. "I remember meeting with about 200 scallop fishermen in the Whiting town hall. They were pissed off. We said, 'here's what we have to do [based on NEFMC criteria], so help us, talk with us.'"

Creating a Fisheries Management Plan for lobster will also require this type of collaborative process. Components of the plan went out to the Lobster Advisory Council in the spring, then to the Zone Councils. The next step will be to send out the Stock Assessment section through the same process, followed by specific elements, called "triggers," during the winter. "While the Lobstermen's Union continues to talk about the FMP as if this is a power grab on the part of DMR, it's not. It does not have the force of law, it's a guidance document," Keliher emphasized. "We are doing this now, when the sky's not falling. At each meeting I ask people in the room to raise their hands if they think that lobster landings will stay at this level in the future. No one raises their hand."
Knott Sr. bought the former textile and paper mill on the Blackstone River in 1979, after spending 20 years as president of Coatings Engineering Corporation, the largest custom coating company in the world. Knott Jr. joined the company in 1979, worked as its chief operating officer from 1988 to 1997, "then went off to do other things, inside the industry and out," he said. He returned three years ago to run the business.

When Knott Sr. introduced the trademarked Aquamesh vinyl-coated wire in 1980, he had already worked for years to perfect the steel mesh by making it impervious to corrosion. His wire traps initially were constructed first, then dipped in vinyl. Eventually he changed that system. Aquamesh wire is produced using a two-step method of first galvanizing rolls of steel mesh (called "galvanizing after welding," or GAW), then coating with polyvinyl chloride (PVC) to protect the wire from harsh ocean conditions.

The first load of Aquamesh was delivered in 1980 to the coast of Maine, long known as the center of the New England fishery. Traps made with Aquamesh now comprise 80 percent of all U.S. lobster traps.

"We always used to sell the mesh in rolls. One of the big changes we’ve adopted is that 75 percent is now sold in panels for trap builders or fishermen. We take large orders and cut to size, then they fabricate the traps. We also sell tools for bending wire," Knott explained.

"It’s low-cost and highly effective,” said Knott Jr. “Each fisherman likes to finish in his own way: one or two heads, different colors, etc.” At first the mesh was only green vinyl-coated, but now comes in seven colors. In Maine, the most popular color is yellow, while Canadians favor blue. Some fishermen like to use a different color on the ends or doors to distinguish theirs from other lobstermen’s traps.

Riverdale has competition, primarily from China, but, as CEO Knott explains, while the mesh from China is less expensive it is also less durable, showing signs of rust in as few as two years. "Lobstermen mostly buy ours, which says they care about quality. We make it all, we don’t buy it, so we control the inputs that go into the vinyl," said Knott. He noted that the Chinese mesh is "not designed for sub-sea use, not as abrasion-resistant, and the sea water extracts some compounds from the vinyl. They chose the wrong inputs because they are economy-driven, not quality-driven. And ours is better environmentally."

The company buys all its steel in North America, from either the U.S. or Canada. The steel comes to the company by a train that delivers directly to the Riverdale Mills factory. "This helps the industry and helps keep rates down to fishermen," Knott said.

The process starts with hot rolled steel, drawn into wire in any diameter desired. “We start with 1/3-inch rod and make wire, then we weld the wire into mesh. After the weld, there’s a hot galvanized zinc bath that makes the mesh very corrosion resistant,” he said.

Next an epoxy coat is applied followed by a powder coat with PVC. The exact process is proprietary to Riverdale Mills. After coating, the mesh is finished to be sold in either rolls or sheets. "Our product goes several years before there is any evidence of rust," Knott noted.

The mill where the wire is made had a long and varied history before Knott Sr. began manufacturing coated mesh. It began in the early 19th century as the first mass manufacturer of scythes. Later the mill expanded to forge bayonets for the Union Army during the Civil War. After that it became a textile mill, then in 1910 was turned into a mill for special coated papers. With changes in manufacturing, the mill fell on hard times until Knott bought it.

Riverdale makes several types of wire—galvanized, stainless steel, and copper alloy wire—in many configurations. Besides Aquamesh, the company’s trademarked products include Geomesh for land uses including erosion control; WireWall, used to define parts of the U.S.-Mexico border and the Kuwait-Iraq border; and SoftStep for the poultry industry. The latest change in Riverdale’s Aquamesh business is in the aquaculture market. One of the biggest uses of the wire now is for cultivation of shellfish, primarily oysters.

“We work closely with a company in eastern Canada called OysterGro. They use our mesh for their products. Usually those products are rectangular baskets used to raise oysters in bags at the surface of the water because it turns out there are more nutrients in surface-level water. You end up with better shaped oysters," said Knott.

Knott believes the lobster market has a bright future. Despite the increasing diversity of Riverdale’s product lines and the industries served, in Knott’s mind the lobster industry comes first. "We are committed to the lobster industry. We love all the fishermen," said Knott. "If it wasn’t for them, we wouldn’t be here.”
WINTER OUTLOOK: STRONG EL NIÑO, WARMER WEATHER

By Sarah Paquette

Get ready for El Niño!

El Niño refers to a period of months when the waters of the central and eastern Pacific Ocean are much warmer than average. The warm water in turn causes the atmosphere above the ocean to grow warmer, which then affects the climate over much of the United States. A strong El Niño will typically influence the climate and weather during the winter. This year’s El Niño is amongst the strongest on record.

The El Niño phenomenon was first noticed by South American fishermen in the 1600s. The warmer-than-usual water that brushed the western shores of the continent during El Niño blocked upwelling of cold water which brought the anchovy schools close to shore. Not a good thing for the anchovy fishermen.

The two strongest El Niño events on record prior to this year, 1982-1983 and 1997-1998, produced quite mild winters from the Pacific Northwest to the Northeast. “If people remember those years, they might expect a repeat this winter,” said NOAA Regional Climate Services Director for the Eastern Region Ellen Mecray. “But not so fast,” she cautioned. “We can look back at past years when El Niño was strong and get an idea about what this winter will be like, but there are many factors that affect the weather here in the Northeast,” she said. “Typically, a strong El Niño year means warmer temperatures and more precipitation.” But, she said, that is if you only look at the effect of El Niño. Other factors influencing winter weather include the North Atlantic Oscillation, jet streams, and oceanographic factors. “The Gulf of Maine is warmer now than it was in past El Niño years. Maybe that means stronger storms this winter. We aren’t really sure,” Mecray said. Mecray said that one of the best sources to explain the uncertain nature of an El Niño winter is in a blog published by NOAA’s Beyond the Data (www.climate.gov/news-features/blogs/beyond-data).

The winter forecast for New England predicts a normal amount of precipitation but a distinctly greater chance of warmer temperatures. Still, Mother Nature could throw us another winter of heavy snowfall.

Pershing said that just because the winter may be warmer on average, that may not be the case in Maine, specifically.

Garbo depends on the hard work and stewardship of Maine lobstermen.

Thank you!

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Maine Lobster Zone Council Members (as of November 2015)
Names shaded in gray reflect the winners of the 2015 election. Congratulations!!!

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Leg: Rep Brian Hubbell | 288-3947 | Rep Walter Kumiega III | 348-2548 | Rep Wayne Parry | 286-9145

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HAS SEAFOOD SUSTAINABILITY LOST ITS WAY?

By Ray Hilborn
Professor in the School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences
at the University of Washington

This editorial first appeared on October 22 on the C-Food-Science of Fisheries Sustainability web site (http://cfosuw.org/).

Where is the science in seafood sustainability and certification? It is about money and values – science has been largely lost.

Seafood sustainability is again in the news as the Global Seafood Sustainability Initiative (GSSI) released its tool for evaluating the sustainability of fisheries. The GSSI tool has drawn immediate criticism from World Wildlife Fund (WWF) as they recently published an article titled, “GSSI compliance does not indicate sustainability certification, WWF warns.” This is an interesting development since WWF is on the board of GSSI.

GSSI is intended to provide an agreed standard for the wide range of certification and seafood labeling schemes. As their web site says “GSSI is a global platform and partnership of seafood companies, NGOs, experts, governmental and intergovernmental organizations working towards more sustainable seafood for everyone.” So who is right in this case, does the GSSI benchmarking tool tell you if a fishery is sustainable?

At its core, seafood sustainability is about the ability to produce food from the sea in the long term. Are the fishery and its management system operated in such a way that our grandchildren can still enjoy the same production from the fishery (subject to the constraints of external factors such as climate change) as we do today?

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, whose objective is food security, has been a big supporter of GSSI. For FAO, sustainability is about continued food production. During the 1990s when overfishing in developed countries was at its height, many retailers supported seafood certification because they wanted to have products to sell in the future ... again a focus on food sustainability.

However, environmental NGOs such as WWF are interested less in food sustainability, and more in reducing the environmental impacts of fishing, whether that be catch of non-target species like sharks, or impacts of fishing gear on the seafloor. Consequently, WWF has been a strong supporter of the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), which is the leading certification scheme for sustainable fisheries. The MSC standard covers much more than sustainable food production and sets a high bar for environmental impacts of fishing. Yet environmental NGOs, including some national chapters of WWF, reject MSC certification because they feel the environmental standards in MSC are not high enough.

Due to the support of a broad range of diverse stakeholders, GSSI is a potential challenger to the MSC as the premier standard of what fish species are sustainably fished. If the GSSI standards are widely accepted, competitors to MSC that have a lower standard may be accepted by retailers as defining sustainability. Currently, consumer and retailers face a broad range of conflicting seafood advice. Once the criteria moves beyond just the sustainability of the fishery to include environmental impacts, things become confusing as there are so many different types of impacts with no consensus on which ones are more important than others. This is where fisheries certification moves from the arena of science, to one of values.

For consumers and retailers, all the conflicting seafood advice is confusing. Take pollock from Alaska, the largest fishery in the US. This fishery is MSC certified; their fish land on sustainability ratings. Retailers, like you, can choose whether to buy North Pacific pollock from the Alaska fishery agreement or the catches from the Gulf of Alaska for your seafood displays. The GSSI tool, however, will tell you if a fishery is sustainable.

So where does this leave consumers, retailers and the rest of us interested in fish as food? The answer is confusing and will likely remain so. GSSI was seen as a hope to sort out the conflicts in seafood labelling – given the WWF response it doesn’t seem likely it will do so.

There is a major role for science in seafood sustainability. Science can determine if the management of a fishery will lead to long-term sustainability of food production. Science can also evaluate the environmental impacts of a fishery. However, science cannot tell you what environmental impacts are valued – that is a question of individual choice or public policy.

The most interesting development in seafood sustainability is the force driving certification, and — spoiler alert — it isn’t consumers. Not too many people buy their fish based on sustainability ratings. Retailers, like you, can choose whether to buy North Pacific pollock from the Alaska fishery agreement or the catches from the Gulf of Alaska for your seafood displays. Whole Foods, Costco or Safeway, do not want the media on their backs or an environmental NGO picketing their store for selling unsustainably harvested fish; they would rather be seen as supporting sustainable fishing to avoid negative press. They consider seafood certification that is backed by key NGOs like WWF as their protection. The next logical step for retailers is formal partnership agreements with the relevant NGO to advise them on what fish products to sell and to pay for this service.

This is a dangerous development because the seafood certification turned partnership becomes a secure funding source for the NGO. Tim Wilson, in his 2012 paper, called this relationship between “friendly” NGOs that provide cover from “hostile” NGOs that might picket a retailer “naked extortion.” If, however, initiatives like GSSI were to be widely accepted, those steady sources of funds will dry up.

Moreover, it is in the nature of NGOs to raise money to fund their activities; alarmist appeals to stop fisheries collapses continue to bring in the big bucks. News of fisheries successes might, at best, raise an indifferent, “meh.”

I know of many private conversations where quite reasonable NGO staff admit the need to find new crises to keep donations flowing. It’s no wonder then, that no matter how well fisheries are actually performing, the bar must be raised again and again to maintain the story that fisheries are failing to meet the ever-shape-shifting sustainability standards.

In the immortal words of Deep Throat [from the movie “All the President’s Men”]: Follow the money! Science, poor beggar, has largely been lost.
For the past 21 years, former U.S. Marine Jim Huebener has lobstered out of Cape Elizabeth on Stickman, his Pointer skiff. The 59-year-old mechanical engineer and part-time lobsterman also has a passion for cycling. He brought all three aspects of his life together in 2013 when he came up with a practical idea while commuting home from work on his bicycle. “I sometimes need to carry things when commuting and running errands, and my backpack is not always the best method. I’ve seen people using different types of bike baskets, but the ones I’ve seen are permanently mounted to the bike,” he explained. “I figured I could use my lobster trap materials to make my own basket, one that could be removed easily from a rack. I finally came up with one version that I liked the best. I named it ‘The Trap Basket.’”

Huebener makes the baskets with both recycled and new wire trap parts. “I cut the parts I’ve seen are permanently mounted to the bike,” he explained. “I figured I could use my lobster trap materials to make my own basket, one that could be removed easily from a rack. I finally came up with one version that I liked the best. I named it ‘The Trap Basket.’”

His company, Kettle Cove Enterprises, also offers a variety of bike basket accessories, such as shock cords to keep items from rolling around, rope handles to carry the baskets, even unused bait bags for small items that otherwise might fall through the wire. “I had the Trap Baskets road tested in Brooklyn, New York, by a group of local bikers and the accessories I offer are a result of that road testing,” he explained.

After fine tuning all aspects of his product, and testing the end result personally, Huebener reached out to area bike shops to see if they were interested in carrying his invention. “Because I knew them through my biking activities, it wasn’t a cold call. They’re now for sale in select bike shops from Portsmouth to Rockland, where they are selling well,” he said.

The feedback Huebener has received from customers on his Trap Baskets and accessories has been positive so far. “People love the lobster trap look, but they really enjoy how useful they are and how well they’re assembled. Plus they have the choice of whether they want baskets made from some repurposed parts with barnacles or all new components,” he said.

In addition to being a Maine-made product, there is another appealing aspect of Huebener’s Trap Baskets. For every Trap Basket sold, the company donates $1 to STRIVE U at the University of Southern Maine, a program that provides education and training to young adults in Maine with developmental disabilities.

Although the future looks bright for his Trap Baskets business and he has plenty of ideas brewing for more lobster gear-related products, Huebener has no plans to give up fishing. “I will lobster ‘til they bury me,” he said firmly.

LOBSTER TRAPS TRANSFORMED INTO BICYCLE BASKETS

By Shelley Wigglesworth

Jim Huebener has turned trap making into a new company. Photos courtesy of Kettle Cove Enterprises.
**PROSPECT HARBOR PROCESSOR EXPANDING AGAIN**

Maine Fair Trade Lobster, which has been processing lobsters in Prospect Harbor for three years, formed a new partnership with Forum Capital Group of Jacksonville, Florida, in October. Maine Fair Trade Lobster, which includes Garbo Lobster, East Coast Seafood and now Forum Capital, expects to more than double its production this year to 9 million pounds from 4.3 million pounds in 2013.

The size of Forum Capital’s investment was not disclosed, but Maine Fair Trade Lobster said the funds will enable the company to add products, improve logistics and increase operating efficiencies. Maine Fair Trade Lobster also is looking at building employee housing to expand its workforce from 150 to possibly as many as 225 employees. Employee dormitories would be built on a hillside the company owns that overlooks the plant. The company’s customers include, among others, Legal Seafood and Costco.

**LIBERAL PARTY WINS BIG IN CANADA**

Justin Trudeau will be Canada’s next prime minister after leading the Liberal Party to a majority government win, dashing the hopes of Conservative Stephen Harper, who has been in power since 2006. This will be the second time for Canada to be led by a Trudeau, as the 43-year-old Liberal leader follows in the footsteps of his father, the late Pierre Elliott Trudeau, who served as prime minister for almost 16 years before retiring in 1984.

**MONITORS ON VESSELS STARTING DECEMBER 1**

New England groundfishermen will have to start paying for at-sea monitors on their vessels beginning December 1, unless emergency measures are taken. NOAA officials said the money the agency had been using to pay for monitors who work in New England will run out around that date.

**AMERICAN EELS ARE NOT ENDANGERED**

On October 7, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced that the American eel is stable and does not need protection under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The decision, also known as a 12-month finding, follows an in-depth status review on a 2010 petition to list the eel as threatened under the ESA. After examining the best scientific and commercial information available regarding past, present and future stressors facing the species, the Service determined the eel’s single population is overall stable and not in danger of extinction (endangered) or likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future (threatened). Nonetheless, for the species’ long-term stability, the agency recommends continuing efforts to maintain healthy habitats, monitor harvest levels, and improve river passage for migrating eels. This is the second time the Service has evaluated the American eel for listing under the ESA and found listing not warranted. The first decision came in 2007 after an extensive status review.

**HAVE A TAILGATE PARTY WITH LOBSTER TAILS**

Tailgating celebrations have taken on a life of their own off the field, with more chefs and home cooks creating unique dishes to serve to their guests. To drive demand for Maine lobster tails and leverage the existing interest in tailgating, the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative took action on social media to engage fans and followers with clever football-related visuals and recipe inspiration. They also engaged media and food industry leaders by sharing Maine lobster tail recipes perfect for any tailgate gathering, whether at the game or at home with friends and family.
Events Calendar

November 1
Health Insurance Marketplace Open Enrollment begins! Visit www.healthcare.gov or call the MLA office at 967-4555.

November 2-5
ASMFC Annual Meeting, St. Augustine, FL.

November 3-6

November 4-5

November 9-10
Taking Stock: A workshop to collaboratively improve stock assessments, Plymouth, MA. FMI: 772-2321.

November 10
Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative meeting, Island Institute, Rockland. FMI: 541-9310.

MLA board of directors meeting, 5 p.m., Darby’s restaurant, Belfast. FMI: 967-4555.

November 12
Haddock and Beyond: Recent Success in New England fisheries, 7 p.m., Gulf of Maine Research Institute, Portland. FMI: 228-1699.

November 19
Sustainability and the American Lobster, lecture by Dr. Rick Wahle of UMaine School of Marine Sciences, 6:30pm, Maine Maritime Museum, Bath, ME. FMI: 443-1316

UPCOMING

December 1-3

December 2
MLA board of directors meeting, 5 p.m., Darby’s restaurant, Belfast. FMI: 967-4555.

December 10
The Future of Fish, 7 p.m., Gulf of Maine Research Institute, Portland. FMI: 228-1699.

CHEFS, WRITERS LEARN THE ROUTE OF “TRAP TO TABLE”

By Marianne Lacroix, Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative

“From trap to table.” The concept is second nature here in Maine, but how do you explain the hours of hauling, handling, and hard work that go into our lobster industry to someone from away? Bring them up to Maine, of course.

This September, the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative invited seven journalists who write for outlets like Today.com, Yankee Magazine, and Tasting Table, as well five chefs from top-tier restaurants in Boston, New York City, Chicago, and Atlanta, to visit Maine for an in-depth look at our lobster industry.

With a special itinerary designed to immerse the journalists and chefs in each step of the “trap to table” process, our visitors learned how to haul lobsters on board the Lucky Catch with Dave LaLibertie and the Sea Swallow with Clive Farrin, gauging the carapace, notching berried females and baiting traps. Back on the dock, the groups visited lobster dealers to get an up-close look at the storage, sorting and shipping techniques responsible for delivering live Maine Lobster to customers around the world. We then brought our guests to processing facilities to show them the methods used for producing lobster meat, tails and other specialty products. The group also visited the Maine State Aquarium to see oversized, undersized and unusually colored lobsters. The reaction at each stop along the way was unanimous – all were awestruck by the laborious, tradition-driven, and meticulous nature of the industry.

Our culinary and sustainability ambassador, Barton Seaver, played a crucial role in tying all of these lessons together. Over brunch at his home, Barton explained how lobster sustains countless communities up and down the coast of Maine. He also shared an array of culinary applications for New Shell lobster, inviting guests to roll up their sleeves and pick their own hard shell and new shell lobsters as he described the molting process and its effect on flavor. We heard from our panel of trained chefs that the difference in flavor is clear.

We selected this group of influential food writers and culinary leaders to show—rather than tell—our Maine Lobster story and to inspire them to share it with their respective audiences of engaged readers and hungry customers. Since the trip, we’ve seen excellent articles written by our media guests. We’ve learned of menu experimentation from the chefs, and we’ve empowered 12 authoritative writers to share their own Maine Lobster stories through their personal experiences in Maine.

Give the gift of the MLA!
Check out all the cool merchandise we offer on our website!

www.mainelobstermen.org/store

Chefs and food journalists learn all about lobsters aboard the Lucky Catch. MLMC photo.
Matt Ginn, executive chef at four-month-old Evo restaurant in Portland, was named Maine's Lobster Chef of the Year at a sold-out cooking contest in Portland in October, part of the annual Harvest on the Harbor festivities. Ginn created a poached lobster served Turkish style with hand-made pasta and roasted summer squash with yogurt and Roman beans. More than 225 people attended the event.

Chef Stephen Richards of Mine Oyster in Boothbay Harbor, the 2014 Maine Lobster Chef of the Year, was runner-up. He created a lobster dish prepared with a hand smoker. The lobster-glazed foie gras was layered with local goat cheese mousse, cranberry maple jam, brown butter creme fleurette and sweet and salty pine nut brittle.

Chef Matt Ginn of Evo restaurant holds his award at the close of the 2015 Lobster Chef of the Year contest. Photos courtesy of MLMC.

The annual contest is sponsored by the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative. The other chefs competing included Josh Berry of Union in The Press Hotel in Portland, Isaac Aldrich of Pilot House at Sebasco Harbor Resort in Bath, and Nicholas Kruikkala of The Thistle Inn in Boothbay Harbor, in addition to Ginn and Richards.

Ginn won a check for $1,000 and bragging rights to his title for the next year.

The winning dish: poached lobster served Turkish style with hand-made pasta and roasted summer squash with yogurt and Roman beans.

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