Landings, vol. 24, no. 6

Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance

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June 2016 | Vol. 24, No. 6

ALL HAIL THE MIGHTY HALIBUT!

By Shelley Wigglesworth

The commercial halibut season in Maine is a short one with many restrictions, such as a 25-fish-maximum catch per vessel per season. Yet it remains an old-school fishery that quite a few Maine lobstermen look forward to.

The window for commercial fishermen to trawl for halibut is May 1 to June 30, which is a good time for lobstermen to make some extra money before the busy summer lobstering season gets into full swing. Atlantic halibut can fetch anywhere between $7.50-$10 per pound, and catching just a few of these hefty flounders can result in decent pay for a day’s work -- if you’re lucky enough to haul one in.

Sixth-generation Spruce Head fisherman Erik Waterman, who lobster and drags for scallops and urchins, has also been halibut fishing for most of his life. I recently spent a day with Waterman and sternman David Achorn on Waterman’s boat, the Sea Star, as they went trawling for the elusive whitefish that so many fishermen have been “hooked” on for countless generations.

“They’re all the same concept as pot trawling, but instead of pots, you have hooks, 50 to 100 per trawl, depending on the area,” Waterman explained. He began pulling up the first line of the day by hand. “I like to see if I can feel anything. When a fish is hooked, the rope will be moving back and forth.”

Waterman sets with the tide. It was a mild and sunny day as the boat headed eight to twelve miles out to sea. Throughout the day he and Achorn repeated the process of hauling up the anchor on each trawl, using both the pot hauler and manpower, and checking lines. Achorn, an Army veteran who has fished with Waterman for the past few years, retrieved the hooks as they were brought up from the bottom of the ocean then re-baited them with alewives to prepare for the next set. He dropped the newly baited hooks and lines with the precision of an experienced pitcher: quick, steady, and deliberate. The two men worked in unison, speaking very little yet communicating clearly with one another the way so many seasoned fishermen do.

Waterman said that a good day halibut fishing for him is working four trawls and bringing in three to four fish. “I know some guys in Stonington and Vinalhaven, and they do real well halibut trawling, they can get seven or eight a day, but I’m happy with three or four. Some days, we don’t get any, but that’s just the way it goes with fishing,” he said.

Dave Achorn holds a 70 lb., 60 inch halibut caught on Erik Waterman’s Sea Star in May. E. Waterman photo.

READY FOR WHATEVER THE SEASON MAY BRING

By Melissa Waterman

The winter just past broke many records for its lack of snow and relative warmth. That warmth extended into the waters of the Gulf of Maine, leading many to conclude that Maine was heading into another hot summer. Lobster buyers, dealers, and lobstermen alike remember the crisis in 2012, when warm ocean waters led to an early lobster season in Maine at the same time Canadian lobstermen were hauling in large volumes of lobsters as well. Processors found

Continued on page 6
There’s so much happening along Maine’s coast as the summer season begins to pick up its pace. Lobstermen have their boats in and their traps in the water. The tourists that give such a boost to Maine’s economy are trickling in, drawn by the vibrancy of the working waterfront and our state’s stunning coast.

This month *Landings* takes a look at the upcoming lobster season. This year’s unusually warm winter led some to speculate that the lobster season would start in early- to mid-June. As this month’s article indicates, seafood companies in 2016 were prepared for whatever shape the season may take. Over the past five years, they have invested in additional facilities to hold lobsters for long periods of time. And by developing new markets for Maine’s signature seafood, demand has steadily increased.

*Landings* also features a story about one of Maine’s long-standing fisheries. Halibut are giant flounders which can grow to hundreds of pounds in size. In decades past those giants were caught by hardy fishermen using tub trawls. Today much smaller fish are caught during the short early summer season using similar gear. Erik Waterman, a Spruce Head lobsterman, brings patience and tenacity to the annual hunt for the mighty halibut.

Summer is also the time when Maine residents and visitors alike return to their favorite seafood shacks for a taste of Maine’s bounty. Seafood shacks typically began as a way for an enterprising fisherman and his family to make additional money from whatever was caught. Lobster rolls, clam cakes, fried fish sandwiches — these items become the stuff of which summer memories are made. *Landings* highlights some of Maine’s most renowned seafood shacks and the families who have made them great.

It’s not only people who come to Maine in the summer. Many marine species also spend time in the Gulf of Maine during the warmer months when the ocean is full of food. Sea turtles, typically found in warmer southern waters, migrate northward as the water warms. Some species of these cold-blooded reptiles can grow to great size on a diet of jellyfish and small crustaceans. Unfortunately those that stay too long into the fall can become impaired by the cooling water, a condition called cold-stunning. Others may become entangled in fishing gear. This month *Landings* features two articles on the status of sea turtles in the Gulf of Maine. Fishermen deal with a host of issues on land. At sea their work is equally complex. It can be a hassle to don a personal flotation device (PFD) when traps are flying up on the hauler and the lobsters are coming on strong. But as an article in this issue by staff from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) office in Alaska points out, many PFDs can be worn on deck by commercial fishermen without encumbering them in any way. Fishing is a dangerous practice; it’s all too easy to pitch off the deck in rough weather or to find yourself snarled in a fast-moving line. Wearing a PFD is just one way to lessen the chances of dying at sea.

In our continuing series on the Affordable Care Act and fishermen, *Landings* looks this month at the health insurance program for small businesses. The Small Business Health Options Program, called SHOP, allows an owner of a small business (1-50 employees) to offer health insurance plans that suit that company’s budget and the employees’ needs. Business owners can enroll at any time throughout the year and, in many cases, will receive tax credits toward the cost of the plans. This program is particularly appropriate for Maine, where three-fourths of all businesses are small businesses, classified as less than 500 employees. Finally, Matt Jacobson, executive director of the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative, once again gives his perspective on the art and science of building market demand for Maine lobster. The Collaborative, formed in 2013, is using all the tools available in a world of multiple social media platforms to make chefs and consumers aware of the stories involved in the Maine lobster industry. But, as Jacobson points out this month, it takes time and a good deal of patience to accomplish that task. Hats off to the Collaborative as it continues this important work.

We hope you enjoy this issue and, as ever, would love to hear your feedback.

**COASTAL OUTLOOK**

*Thoughts from MLCA President Patrice McCarron*

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**LANDINGS!**

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Color ads are an additional 75%. Discount for multi-month commitment.

The advertising deadline is the second Monday of each month.

Please contact

Melissa Waterman (melissa@mainelobstermen.org or 967-6221) for more information.

MLCAlliance is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, established in 2010, which achieves its charitable mission through programs in education, research and charity.
GUEST COLUMN: Persistence, patience lead to results

by Matt Jacobson

In the movie The Karate Kid, a martial arts master agrees to teach a bullied boy how to defend himself. One of the first lessons is to wax the master’s car – wax on, wax off. The boy fails to see the connection between chores like waxing a car, which teaches patience, and his specific goals, which are to defend himself.

In the same way, we sometimes get questions at the Collaborative about how our efforts connect to the industry’s goals of increasing demand for and interest in Maine lobster, ultimately leading to more stable economic conditions for everyone involved.

Because we know that more than 85% of all seafood consumed in the U.S. is eaten in a restaurant, we have focused our attention on chefs and people who go to restaurants. We know that chefs are becoming more important in determining food trends and can have significant influence on other chefs and general food tastes and desires.

While we use many mediums, the Collaborative is focused on telling stories that appeal to our target audiences. Storytelling in this way requires authenticity, since chefs and restaurant-goers are typically savvy about the things that matter to them. They want to know who caught the lobster – what sort of people are lobstermen? They want to know that lobster from Maine is sustainably and responsibly harvested. They want to know about the culinary options and the diversity of dishes they can prepare using Maine lobster. We focus on these stories every day we communicate. Simply put, we are storytellers.

Sometimes opportunities come to us. Several weeks ago a reporter for the Washington Post called. She was interested in doing a story about lobster and China. To be honest, China export stories are hard for us to use as a way to convey our messages to our target audience. What made this opportunity even more challenging is this person was a financial reporter, someone not likely to be interested in our message.

After speaking to her, however, it seemed there was a way for us to incorporate our messaging points, even in a story that was primarily targeted to a different group. Since the Washington Post has such a large reach, and since we are planning a big chef-centered event in Washington this summer, we decided to fully engage with the reporter.

First, we arranged for her to visit the processing facilities at Maine Coast and Ready Brothers Seafood in Portland.

From there, we arranged for the reporter and her photographer to join lobsterman Bruce Fernald on Little Cranberry Island for a day on the boat. When the reporter had questions about any part of her story, we arranged for her to speak with the people who knew the answers.

In the end, while the story was centered on the financial aspects of lobster exports to China, we managed to get information about the culinary diversity of lobster, its sustainability and responsible harvesting practices, and the people behind the lobster industry highlighted in the story. At the time of this writing, more than 40 million people saw the story in the Washington Post, 400 people shared it on social media, and several other news outlets ran the story. Altogether, more than 250 million people in the U.S. and China saw the story.

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But the story was fun for us because of the approach we took to tell it. It seems there was a way for us to incorporate our messaging points, even in a story that was primarily targeted to a different group. Since the Washington Post has such a large reach, and since we are planning a big chef-centered event in Washington this summer, we decided to fully engage with the reporter.

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We do not need to focus on how we are going to incorporate our messaging points into a story about lobster and China. We can create stories that appeal to our target audiences, and we can use those stories to excite the culinary world about our products.

Consider the story of this young boy who learns to wax a car, and then goes on to reveal the connection between his efforts and his specific goals. He learns how to be successful in life. And so does the Collaborative.

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Continued on page 4
NEFMC MAY HERRING WORKSHOP BRINGS OUT CONFLICTING SECTORS

by MLA staff

The New England Fishery Management Council held a two-day workshop in Portland in May to discuss options for future herring management. Nearly a hundred stakeholders from government, conservation and the commercial fishing community shared their competing views on the importance of herring in the ecosystem and to the coastal economy.

The workshop was organized by the Council as part of its development of Amendment 8 to the Atlantic Herring Fisheries Management Plan. Through Amendment 8, the Council expects to establish a long-term control rule for specifying acceptable biological catch (ABC) for the Atlantic herring fishery. A control rule is a formulaic approach for establishing the annual limit or target specifying acceptable biological catch (ABC) for the Atlantic herring fishery. A control rule is a formulaic approach for establishing the annual limit or target specifying acceptable biological catch (ABC) for the Atlantic herring fishery. A control rule is a formulaic approach for establishing the annual limit or target specifying acceptable biological catch (ABC) for the Atlantic herring fishery. A control rule is a formulaic approach for establishing the annual limit or target specifying acceptable biological catch (ABC) for the Atlantic herring fishery.

The workshop was conducted using a Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) method, which is a collaborative decision-making process involving public input and technical analysis upfront. It calls for more public input to guide the management strategy than the normal amendment development process. MSE will be used to help determine how a range of control rules may perform relative to potential objectives for herring stocks.

Most stakeholders agreed that herring is extremely important to both the ecosystem and the local economy. Lobstermen described the importance of her-ring to the lobster fishery for bait and the need to sustain the herring resource over the long-term. Tuna fishermen were concerned that commercial herring harvests may be too high, resulting in a lack of forage for tuna and other species. Herring fishermen identified the need for a rigorous scientific approach based on good data in setting quotas and the importance of predictability in the quota from year to year, and underscored how important the commercial herring catch is to coastal communities. Seabird scientists talked about the need for herring as a forage fish for many bird species; others discussed herring as an essential forage species for the entire Gulf of Maine ecosystem.

The Portland workshop produced recommendations on a range of potential objectives to the Atlantic herring ABC control rule and how these objectives may be tested (i.e., associated performance metrics), and the range of control rules that would undergo testing. A summary of the workshop recommendations will be presented to the Herring Advisory Committee, Herring Committee and the full Council in June.

In the near-term, the existing 2016-2018 herring specifications will remain in place. It is expected that the 2019-2021 specifications will be developed using the control rule adopted through the Amendment 8 process.

2016-2018 Herring Specifications

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As you know, while the Collaborative responds to inquiries like that of the Washington Post often, we also reach our target audience directly. By now, you’ve had the opportunity to visit our social channels (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube, LinkedIn and our Web site). It is important to keep these channels because the people we want to influence are on them. We work to identify creative ways to get the attention of these folks in an increasingly cluttered online space. But how do we make sure our message is getting through?

You might be familiar with Bill Simmons. Bill started a Web site called the "Boston Sports Guys" and ended up with ESPN. While there he created ESPN’s on-line presence. Recently, Simmons signed a $5 million-per-year contract with HBO. He was asked not long after if he thinks people will follow him from ESPN to another online platform. In late May he tweeted, "The best thing about making content in 2016 – if you have a good content, people are going to find it no matter who you are and where you are."

He’s right. Content matters. In the next couple of weeks, you are going to see the MLMC launch some amazing videos about Maine lobster that hit on our messaging and will be targeted very specifically to our audience. You’ll be proud of them – and they will definitely generate more interest in Maine lobster.

Wax on, wax off.
On July 12, 2015, Maine Marine Patrol learned that a six-foot-long leatherback sea turtle was entangled in the vertical lines of pot gear off the coast of Kennebunkport. Two officers, Chris Hilton and Ben Burns, diverted from their normal duties to help the turtle. It was important to reach the sea turtle quickly. Sea turtles, like their reptilian cousins, breathe air; the animal may drown if it cannot reach the surface to breathe due to entanglement in line or netting. Entanglement can also cause serious injury to the turtle as it struggles and tries to get away from the gear.

When Officers Hilton and Burns arrived on scene, they found the turtle's front flippers entangled by vertical lines from two sets of lobster pot gear. When they approached the turtle, it started diving and hauling the buoys under the surface. The officers gaffed the anchoring line and cleated it to their boat, allowing them to get close to the turtle. They cut the lines from the turtle and it swam off, with only chafing on its flippers as evidence of its ordeal. This turtle was lucky to have been reported early by a private boater and to receive such a quick response from the Maine Marine Patrol. Unfortunately, not all turtles are so lucky.

Dangerous rescue
When a sea turtle becomes entangled in line, releasing it can be risky and complicated. Lines can become wrapped many times around the neck and flippers, cutting off circulation and damaging the skin or holding the animal below the water. Entangled turtles must be handled carefully to avoid further injury and to give them the best chance of survival. All gear must be removed before release as even small amounts left on the turtle can eventually lead to serious injury or death. Due to the complexity of these cases and potential danger of handling large, powerful animals, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) works with the Sea Turtle Disentanglement Network, which is made up of nonprofit organizations and state and federal agencies that are authorized and trained to respond. In Maine, most entangled turtles are leatherbacks, which can weigh up to 1000 pounds. Handling an animal this big can be dangerous for responders. For everyone's safety, responders undergo specialized training and are legally authorized to disentangle sea turtles.

Ongoing problem
All sea turtles in U.S. waters are protected under the Endangered Species Act. Through management, conservation, and recovery efforts, and public outreach and education, responders strive to ensure the survival of sea turtles. Freeing entangled sea turtles is a stop-gap measure to address the issue of sea turtle entanglement in vertical line. Ultimately, we want to better understand why and how turtles become entangled in order to stop entanglements from happening in the first place. Only a fraction of the turtles that are entangled get reported; the rest most likely will not survive. Preventing entanglement without impacting fishing is a significant challenge. We continue to work with partners, including the fishing industry, to collect important information about these entanglements and discuss potential solutions.

Please report
We cannot do our work without reports from people like you who are on the water and see an entangled or injured turtle. We ask you to report sea turtle entanglements immediately to our marine animal hotline 1-866-755-6622 and stand by the turtle at a safe distance until you receive further instructions. Network members will respond quickly to assess the turtle, disentangle it safely and completely, and provide it with medical care, if necessary. In some cases, factors such as distance from shore or weather prohibit responders from reaching the entangled turtle quickly. To prepare for these situations, fishermen participating in certain federally managed fisheries, including the American lobster fishery, are authorized under their individual fishery management plan’s Biological Opinions to disentangle turtles from gear. These fishermen have received a placard outlining sea turtle disentanglement techniques. However, it is still important to report entangled turtles to the marine animal hotline first, as a member of the network may be able to respond. The Disentanglement Network has specialized tools, training, and access to medical care that could mean the difference between life and death for an entangled turtle.

For additional information, contact the Protected Resources Division in NOAA’s Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office at 978-281-9328.
themselves overwhelmed with lobsters; lobstermen saw the price they received drop like a stone.

Maine's coastal waters are warmer than last year but not as warm as in 2012, according to the Gulf of Maine Research Institute, which has been tracking Gulf temperatures in an effort to predict when this year's lobster season will begin. The temperature at 50-meter depths at four coastal buoys was approximately one degree C. warmer than normal in mid-April. Yet the month of May proved unusually cool. In 2012, by contrast, spring was warm, with several 80-degree days in late March. In that year, lobsters also began to molt at approximately the same time all along the coast, rather than beginning in the western regions and progressing east, as is typical.

“Guessing about when the lobster is coming is a game, not a business model. Industry success will come only when we better understand the law of supply and demand and better educate our customers about the seasonality of that supply and demand.”

Lobster buyers and processors in the state are taking no chances. During the past four years they have put effort into developing additional markets, expanded holding capacity, and diversified the products they produce.

"I think in several ways the experience of 2012 forced some careful evaluation of operations and ultimately led the dealer and processor community to expand their customer base," commented Matt Jacobson, executive director of the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative (MLMC). "More than that, new facilities, like Ready Brothers, Sea Salt, and Cape Seafood, allow more processing to take place as the market and catch demand it. The experience also taught our shoreside community to make plans to add capacity, mainly by adding processing shifts to their existing facilities."

Hugh Reynolds, president of Greenhead Lobster in Stonington, also believes it’s unlikely that there will be a reoccurrence of the situation in 2012. "But there still could be massive problems [with oversupply] when New Brunswick landings hit at the same time. There’s no way out of it. Between Canada and the U.S., we land 330 million pounds of lobster," he said.

Reynolds is hoping for a more traditional season, in which Maine lobstermen start bringing in significant volumes of soft-shell lobster starting in early to mid-June. "Last year was a good year because the landings were spread out," he said. "The highest point [of the season] was never in June. That’s the month when Prince Edward Island lobsters are done and Maine lobstermen have not started.”

Annie Teslikis, executive director of the Maine Lobster Dealers’ Association, argues that every year is different for Maine’s lobstermen and seafood companies. "Yes, 2012 was different. But so was 2008 when the housing bubble burst [and the recession began]. And so was 2015 when lobster supply was good and steady all season. There is no ‘normal’ in an industry that operates at the mercy of Mother Nature and human behavior and worldwide economic conditions and a dynamic market," she said.

To be prepared for the lobsters, whenever they may come in, lobster buyers in Maine and in the Maritime provinces have added facilities in order to hold more lobsters for longer periods of time.

"I believe Maine Coast is better prepared to handle an earlier shed than what we consider normal," said company president Tom Adams. "We have taken steps over the last several years to better position ourselves in the worldwide lobster market and to be ready to react to the changing industry. Probably most important is our ongoing expansion into and development of multiple markets geographically," Maine Coast ships lobsters to both Europe and Asia as well as to customers in the U.S. "Having a diverse market allows us to handle most qualities of lobster on a year-round basis," Adams said.

Building demand means building space to hold all those lobsters. Maine Coast started out in 2011 with a 100,000-pound land-based holding facility which uses filtered and refrigerated seawater. In 2014 the company expanded that capacity by 30,000 pounds. "This has allowed us to ship approximately 6 million pounds in the last twelve months with room to expand our sales moving forward," Adams said. "This year Maine Coast will grow again, this time on the Boston Fish Pier, where the company will operate a holding facility for 25,000 pounds of live lobster. "This location will allow us to better serve our shipping customers with rapid orders out of Logan Airport and freight forwarders out of the Boston area," Adams noted.

"After 2012, dealers invested heavily in everything, from fierce marketing efforts through trade shows and trade missions to additional processing facilities and new trucks and improved logistics," Teslikis said. In addition, lobstermen themselves became better aware of the effect that careful handling of lobsters, both on the boat and on the dock, has on price. "The Maine Lobstermen’s Association and the Maine Lobstermen’s Community Alliance have led the industry on improved product handling and increased understanding of lobster biology and animal health," Teslikis added.

Stephanie Nadeau, co-owner of The Lobster Company in Kennebunkport, foresees a season much like those in the past. "There’s still going to be a bottleneck. There’s only so much capacity when everyone [lobster fishing areas in the Maritime Provinces] is open," she said. "By June 1, they are all online." Nadeau’s company primarily ships lobsters to Asia, where demand has been increasing dramatically in recent years. The company has a 45,000-pound on-land holding facility in Maine and a 105,000-pound facility in Nova Scotia.

"If there is an early season, that will be a benefit for the local Maine restaurants to have the early lobsters. For me, I’m at the mercy of the processors," she said. John Hathaway, president of Shucks Maine Lobster, has been in the lobster processing game for a long time. Hathaway brings a long-term perspective to each year’s season. "Guessing about when the lobster is coming is a game, not a business model," he said in an email. "Industry success will come only when we better understand the law of supply and demand and better educate our customers about the seasonality of that supply and demand. Our goal should be to add value to that supply right here in Maine. Consumers want to buy great food, not a live animal.”

When the lobsters start coming in, Maine dealers will be ready. Photo courtesy of Greenhead Lobster.
MAINE LOBSTERMEN’S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

Maine Lobstermen’s Association

Advocating for a sustainable lobster resource and the fishermen and communities that depend on it since 1954.

These are the days we’ll remember. Some day in the future we will look back on this chapter of the Maine lobster fishery and say “those were the good old days!” We are living in a world of plenty. We have plenty of lobsterers, plenty of buyers and enough money to pay our bills. We enjoy this time of plenty because of our industry’s strict conservation program, the state’s owner-operator law and the culture of stewardship, and community that continues to sustain us.

In times of plenty, it is important to be thankful for all we have. It is also a good time to think about how we can be better. I’m not talking about being better simply for the sake of being better. But better as a way of making sure future days are as good as these today.

There is much about Maine’s lobster fishery that we must always fight to maintain. The MLA is frequently in the midst of these battles in order to preserve our traditions, our fishery and our way of life. But neither the MLA nor lobstermen themselves are perfect. I was reminded of the many struggles that our industry continues to face during a recent spate of conferences I attended. They spanned issues from the entanglement of large whales in lobster gear and the bycatch of cod and cusk in lobster traps to the amount of lost or derelict fishing gear in the Gulf of Maine and management of herring stocks. To each of you as individual lobstermen, these issues probably seem like nonsense. But when you think about them as an industry issue, it’s pretty clear that we have our work cut out for us.

When it comes to large whales, we all know the story. Fishing gear continues to entangle whales. Unfortunately, we don’t really know how whales are getting entangled, where whales are getting entangled or what we should do to prevent them from getting entangled. We don’t even know how much of the gear on whales comes from Maine’s lobster fishery and management of herring stocks. To each of you as individual lobstermen, these issues probably seem like nonsense. But when you think about them as an industry issue, it’s pretty clear that we have our work cut out for us.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS’ MEETING SCHEDULE

All meetings take place at Darby’s Restaurant, Belfast, unless otherwise indicated.

July 6, 6 p.m.
No meeting in August

STEAMING AHEAD

Tunes are good in Maine’s lobster fishery yet there are certain practices that may need to improve. MLA photo.

Times are good in Maine’s lobster fishery yet there are certain practices that may need to improve. MLA photo.

Maine Lobstermen’s Association

2 Scooter St., Suite 203
Kennebunk, ME 04043
207.967.4555
www.mainelobstermen.org

President: David Cousens
So. Thomaston, 594-7518
1st VP: Kristian Porter
Cutler, 259-3306
2nd VP: John Williams
Sonington, 367-2731
Sec/Treasurer: Donald Young
Cushing, 354-6404

Directors
Bob Barnes, Spruce Head, 596-0177
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Jim Dow, Bass Harbor, 288-9846
Dustin Delano, Monhegan, 542-7241
Arnie Gamble, Jr., S. Bristol, 644-8110
Robert Ingals, Bucks Harbor, 255-3418
Mark Jones, Beechbay, 633-6054
Jason Joyce, Swan’s Island, 526-4109
Jack Merrill, Islesford, 244-4187
Craig Stewart, Long Island, 829-2109
John T ripp, Spruce Head, 691-9744
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Gerry Cushman, Port Clyde, 372-6429
Herman Coombs, Orr’s Island, 807-8596
Dwight Carver, Beals, 497-2895

Maine Lobstermen’s Association

2 Scooter St., Suite 203
Kennebunk, ME 04043
207.967.4555
www.mainelobstermen.org

Board of Directors’ Meeting Schedule

All meetings take place at Darby’s Restaurant, Belfast, unless otherwise indicated.

July 6, 6 p.m.
No meeting in August

There are a lot of lobstermen fishing today and each one needs a lot of bait to execute our fishery at its current scale.

After this recent round of meetings and conferences, I can’t help but feel that the size of our fishery has become our Achilles heel. The impact of each individual lobsterman is minimal, but the cumulative impact of our entire industry is hard to ignore. Fishing 200, 400 or 800 traps, you say, does little harm. But when you multiply that by 4,000 or so active lobstermen, you see that we are dealing with more than 2 million lobster traps in the water.

Maine lobstermen must start to think about our footprint – not as individuals – but collectively as an industry. We must always fight to keep our owner-operator law in place so the fishery does not become corporately owned and continues to directly support thousands of Maine families along the coast. But it does no good to ignore our collective impact.

When I think about what may come next with whales, groundfish bycatch, herring or derelict gear, I have to wonder in this time of plenty if our industry could do more with less. What? Perhaps fewer months fishing, less area fished, fewer lobstermen, fewer traps? I really don’t know how we reduce the scale of our fishery, but it’s a question worth asking and a question that could have as many answers as we have lobstermen. I leave the question to you to ponder.

It’s a privilege to be a lobsterman during times of plenty, but nevertheless we will face some tough issues ahead. We’ve certainly done a lot right over the years and there is much about this industry that should not change. Still, there are some changes that perhaps each lobsterman should be thinking about and that our industry as a whole should be discussing. Fishing smarter, not harder! As always, stay safe on the water.
The MLA Board took a moment to honor Pat White, who passed away suddenly in mid-April. The family organized a beautiful service in York which was extremely well attended by Pat’s family, friends and colleagues from the lobster industry. MLA will honor Pat’s memory with a donation to the Alzheimer Foundation. Further, MLA will rename its annual Golden V-notch Award the Pat White Award.

The MLA Board elected officers to serve a one-year term. The slate of David Cousens, President; Kristan Porter, Vice President; John Williams, 2nd Vice President; and Donald Young, Secretary/Treasurer was unanimously supported by the Board after considerable discussion. David Cousens announced that he plans to step down in mid-April. Arnie Gamage stated that MLA will continue to monitor this issue.

Patrice reported that the Lobster Quality tour with Jean Lavallee was a success, attracting 170 attendees along the coast. The feedback from all who attended was extremely positive. There is a strong desire to continue to offer this program in future years. Yet Board members said that it was difficult to get many lobstermen to commit to attend. Some were put off by the notion of improving lobster handling. If the program is offered again, MLA should reconsider how it markets the workshops to lobstermen. It would be better to focus on lobster biology and the status of the lobster through the supply chain than lobster handling. The program may attract more lobstermen during the winter months, and could be linked to the Maine Fishermen’s Forum.

Patrice updated the board on an important herring workshop being held by the New England Fisheries Management Council on May 16-17 in Portland. The workshop will focus on which methodology the Council will use to set the herring quota in the future and how many fish should be available for commercial harvest versus being left in the ocean for ecosystem benefits. The meeting will not focus on the issue of the impacts of midwater trawl boats on inshore stock, known as localized depletion. That issue will be dealt with as part of Amendment 8 to the herring plan. The MLA Directors acknowledged the difficulty in balancing the lobster fishery’s need for a steady supply of bait while ensuring that the herring stock stays healthy.

ASMFC has set the herring fishing days for Area 1A. During June, vessels may land herring three (3) consecutive days a week. July 1 - 14, vessels may land herring four (4) consecutive days a week. July 15 - September 30, vessels may land herring five (5) consecutive days a week until further notice. By starting with three landings days per week and then adjusting to four and then five days during Trimester 2, the allocation is projected to extend through the end of the trimester. Landings will be monitored closely and the directed fishery will be adjusted to zero landing days when the trimester’s allocation is projected to be reached.

The initial Area 1A sub-annual catch limit (ACL) is 30,397 metric tons (mt) after adjusting for a carryover from 2014. The final 2016 Area 1A sub-ACL will include the following reductions: 8% bycatch, 3% research set-aside and 295 mt fixed gear set-aside. The Section allocated 72.8% of the sub-ACL to Trimester 2. The Atlantic Herring Section is scheduled to reconvene via conference call to review fishing effort and adjust landing days as necessary on July 11.

The NEFMC continues work on development of a management plan to protect deep sea corals. The Council plans to address the impacts of lobster gear in the deep sea coral areas. The Council is exploring the extent of their authority under section 303B of the Magnuson Act to regulate the lobster fishery if it is found to negatively impacts corals.

The MLA organized a small meeting of stakeholders in the Penobscot Bay area to discuss NOAAs upcoming hydrographic survey. While the details of the survey are not yet known, it was a productive meeting. It is anticipated that this in-shore survey may be conducted with jet boats or local lobster boats using cages. DMR has informed MLA that there is a lack of clarity in the federal regulations on the highfyler requirement for lobstermen fishing outside of 12 miles. Marine Patrol is working with NOAA Fisheries and Office of Law Enforcement to clarify the requirements. Until regulations are clear, DMR Marine Patrol will not be enforcing the offshore high flyer regulations.

MLA Directors discussed a request by a New Jersey lobster dealer, Point Lobster Company, which is seeking changes to the how states enforce various gauge sizes. The request has gone to ASMFC and the state of New Jersey. The MLA Directors support unfettered trade of lobster among states, however, the current restrictions have been put in place by the state of New Jersey. The MLA understands that New Jersey is looking to other states such as Massachusetts and Rhode Island for alternative means to enforce the minimum gauge size. MLA will continue to monitor this issue.

The ASMFC Lobster Board voted to task the lobster Technical Committee to explore further the relationship between Gulf of Maine and Georges Bank lobster stocks, investigate the benefits of harmonizing the competing management measures in areas 1, 3 and the Outer Cape, and to investigate and develop a Traffic Light Analysis as a potential control rule using average harvest and abundance values from the last 10 years as baselines.

The Board reviewed a report from its Technical Committee. Model simulations of the potential impacts of gauge size changes in the SNE fishery showed that a 5-10 mm increase in the minimum size would result in increased biomass over time. While this type of management action would result in short-term reductions in harvest, catch levels would be expected to stabilize in the long run. The report also highlighted that although natural mortality has increased over time, fishing mortality is a larger source of mortality in the stock.

A report by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management showed a correlation between traps fished and the exploitation rate in SNE, suggesting current trap reductions should reduce exploitation. The report also showed short-term harvest reductions from changes to the gauge size, especially as the result of increases to the minimum size.

Finally, a report from the Plan Development Team presented a suite of potential management objectives ranging from increasing spawning stock biomass through large reductions in harvest to perpetuating the fishery at the expense of the stock. The report also investigated the potential to standardize regulations in SNE, noting that this would reduce uncertainty in future stock assessments and improve enforcement.

Following these reports, the Board initiated development of an Addendum to address the poor condition of the Southern New England lobster stock (SNE), address various aspects of the Jonah Crab Fishery Management Plan (FMP) including Draft Addendum 1 and the harvest of claws, and discuss the potential for a National Monument in the New England coral canyons and seamounts area.

The Board approved Addendum I to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Jonah Crab. The Addendum establishes a bycatch limit of 1,000 pounds of crab/trip for non-trap gear (e.g., otter trawls, gillnets) and non-lobster.
ster trap gear (e.g., fish, crab, and whelk pots) effective January 1, 2017. This caps incidental landings of Jonah crab across all non-directed gear types with a uniform bycatch allowance. While the gear types in Addendum I make minimal contributions to total landings in the fishery, the 1,000 pound limit provides a cap to potential increases in effort and trap proliferation.

The Board also initiated the development of an addendum to consider establishing a coast-wide standard for claw landings in the Jonah crab fishery. The FMP currently specifies the fishery be strictly whole crab except for those individuals who can prove a history of claw landings in New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia. However, claw fishermen from New York and Maine have since been identified and these individuals are currently only allowed to land whole crabs. NOAA Fisheries provided regulatory guidance on implementation of the current exemption in federal waters, highlighting the exemption may not be consistent with National Standard 4 (measures shall not discriminate between residents of different states). As a result, the Board initiated a draft addendum to create a coast-wide claw standard with options for a strictly whole crab fishery, a whole crab fishery with the allowance for a specific volume of detached claws per trip, and the unlimited landing of claws that meet a 2.5" minimum length. The draft addendum will be presented in August.

Finally, the Board discussed potential federal and Presidential action which could limit lobster fishing in the offshore canyons and seamounts. The Board reviewed results from the ASMFC’s offshore lobster and Jonah crab survey which provided detailed information on lobster and Jonah crab fishing and revenue in and around the offshore canyons. The survey was initiated at the request of the New England Fishery Management Council, which is currently drafting an Omnibus 5 Deep-Sea Coral Amendment which could limit lobster traps in discrete coral zones or broad regions. Responses to the survey showed a high dependence on the canyons for revenue from lobster and Jonah crab fishing.

Law Enforcement Committee

The Law Enforcement Committee (LEC) reviewed recent work of the lobster enforcement subcommittee. David Borden briefed the LEC on the desire of the Lobster Management Board to ensure the success of trap reduction and stock recovery efforts, and the need for successful enforcement. The subcommittee will continue work on various enforcement strategies, especially for offshore enforcement.

The LEC heard a report from Rene Cloutier on the status of Maine’s trap tag accountability management. Th e Board recommended a draft regulatory guidance on implementing the current accountability measures in federal waters, highlighting the exemption may not be consistent with National Standard 4 (measures shall not discriminate between residents of different states). As a result, the Board initiated a draft addendum to create a coast-wide claw standard with options for a strictly whole crab fishery, a whole crab fishery with the allowance for a specific volume of detached claws per trip, and the unlimited landing of claws that meet a 2.5" minimum length. The draft addendum will be presented in August.

Herring Amendment 8

As Amendment 8 to the Atlantic herring fishery management plan takes shape, the Council is hosting a May 16-17 herring workshop in Portland, during which participants will share ideas about developing catch strategies that will more explicitly account for the role of Atlantic herring in the ecosystem. Staff will share the workshop outcomes at the June Council meeting in Portland.

The Council approved the problem statement below that will guide the development of management measures to address concerns about localized depletion. The Herring Committee’s work on this issue will be reviewed again at the September 2016 Council meeting.

“Scoping comments for Amendment 8 identified concerns with concentrated, intense commercial fishing of Atlantic herring in specific areas and at certain times that may cause detrimental socioeconomic impacts on other user groups (commercial, recreational, ecotourism) who depend upon adequate local availability of Atlantic herring to support business and recreational interests both at sea and on shore. The Council intends to further explore these concerns through examination of the best available science on localized depletion, the spatial nature of the fisheries, reported conflicts among users of the resources and the concerns of the herring fishery and other stakeholders.”

Finally, the Council initiated a framework adjustment to the FMP to consider revising the Georges Bank haddock catch cap and associated accountability measures and their implementation. Haddock, particularly on Georges Bank, is a robust stock. This is also the case with the Atlantic herring stock: it is not overfished, overfishing is not occurring, and catches have remained steady, between 70 and 95,000 metric tons, since 2010.

Because of interactions between the two stocks, the mid-water trawl fleet is faced with a potential major problem if the accountability measures are trig... Continued on page 10
The Council also approved two types of approaches that would apply to the per-
slippage reporting requirements (affidavit or VMS) on herring trips selected
for at-sea monitoring and electronic monitoring/portside sampling coverage.
The Council also approved two types of approaches that would apply to the per-
cent monitoring target levels. A "combined" approach for the at-sea monitor-
ingportside sampling alternatives, would mean that the selected coverage target
level. The second, an "additive" approach for the electronic monitoring/port-
side sampling alternatives, would mean that the selected coverage target level
would not include the SBRM coverage.

Proposed refinements were made to catch and biological sampling protocols
for at-sea monitors who would collect information on any retained catch (kept
and incidental) and discarded catch, to better meet the objectives identified
for the herring coverage target alternatives. In addition, at-sea monitors would collect
information on fish lengths, but not on marine mammals, sea birds,
and sea turtles. Finally, more training was recommended for monitors of high-
volume fisheries, as well as analyses on impacts related to ports currently available
for portside sampling.

In June 2015, NOAA Fisheries, implemented a revised SBRM amendment
that was developed in coordination with the New England and Mid-Atlantic Councils. The action implemented 1) a new prioritization process for the allo-
cation of observers if agency funding is insufficient to achieve target observer
coverage levels; 2) bycatch reporting and monitoring mechanisms; 3) analyti-
cal techniques and allocation of at-sea fisheries observers; 4) a precision-based
performance standard for discard estimates; 5) a review and reporting process;
6) framework adjustment and annual specifications provisions; and 7) provi-
sions for industry-funded observers and observer set-aside programs.
The Omnibus IFM Amendment proposes to establish a standardized admin-
istrative structure that could apply to any new industry-funded monitoring
programs. Currently, provisions include monitoring coverage targets for the
herring and mackerel fisheries, which are under development. Industry fund-
ing would be used in conjunction with, not instead of, federal funding to pay
for additional monitoring to meet FMP-specific monitoring coverage targets.

Atlantic Large Whale Plan Monitoring Group
NOAA Fisheries convened a whale plan monitoring group meeting in May to
discuss potential strategies to update the co-occurrence model. The co-occurrence
model was used to guide management decisions regarding whale rules for
fixed gear fisheries along the Atlantic coast. The fisheries data used in the
model varies significantly by state, and is now outdated. There was consider-
able discussion about what data should be collected and how data should be
collected, in order to increase the utility of the model. The group also discussed
whale sightings and abundance data inputted into the model and how that can be
improved. The group further considered evolving the model to make predic-
tions on the risk of entanglement in fishing gear, rather than simply predicting
co-occurrence of whales and fishing gear. This topic will be more fully explored
through the Take Reduction Team.

NEW MEMBERS ARE THE MLA’S LIFEBLOOD
by Melissa Waterman

For the past 52 years the Maine Lobstermen’s Association has advocated for
lobstermen from all parts of the Maine coast. Its longevity is due to the men
and women who make up its membership. Staying strong and relevant means success, how new members into the association year after year.

Sam Joy, 23, of Swan's Island joined the MLA while attending the Maine
Fishermen’s Forum in March this year. He had heard of joining, and on over the years until finally a fellow lobsterman put the pressure on. "Jason Joyce recruited me," Joy explained. "Then I was at the Forum and learned more about
what the MLA does in D.C. and Augusta and I thought, why not?" Joy was also intrigued by the MLA’s vessel insurance program which offers very competi-
tive rates on insurance policies offered through Smithwick and Mariner Inc.

For Donald Schwab, 28, of Port Clyde, being an MLA member is something of
a family tradition. "My grandfather [Charles Schwab] kept me after I signed up. I
got the papers and things in the mail but I guess I lost them. Then I signed up online. Super easy," he said. Schwab is the third generation of his family to be
an MLA member. He likes the MLA newsletter for him the information he gets via the MLA’s Eweekly email on Friday is more valuable. "I do everything
what the MLA does in D.C. and Augusta and I thought, why not?" Joy also was
intrigued by the MLA’s vessel insurance program which offers very competi-
tive rates on insurance policies offered through Smithwick and Mariner Inc. of
Falmouth. "My rate went up for this year so I’m interested in that," Joy said.

Thomas McLennan, 23, of South Thomaston became an MLA member at the Forum as well. "I don't know why I didn't do it before," he admitted. He had
been thinking of getting a new boat and realized that he could get a significant
discount on one built by SW Boatworks if he was an MLA member. "And I think
the MLA does good things and wanted to support it," he added.

In Boothbay Harbor, Andy Page, 28, thought it made sense to be part of an or-
ganization that was "doing things for the industry," as he put it. So he
became a member earlier this winter. "The MLA has been fighting against the
whale rules and so forth," he said. "Quite a few lobstermen around here are
members.

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a family tradition. "My grandfather [Charles Schwab] kept me after I sign up. I
got the papers and things in the mail but I guess I lost them. Then I signed up online. Super easy," he said. Schwab is the third generation of his family to be
an MLA member. He likes the MLA newsletter for him the information he gets via the MLA’s Eweekly email on Friday is more valuable. "I do everything
online," he explained.

It’s remarkable for anything to last 62 years. Credit for the MLA’s long tenure goes to its members and the MLA board of directors, who continue to make sure that Maine lobstermen have a united voice at the state, regional and fed-
neral level. Thanks to new members like these, the MLA looks forward to many
more years doing the same.
MAINE’S SEAFOOD SHACKS ARE AN OLD SUMMERTIME TRADITION

By Shelley Wigglesworth

There’s a reason why so many lobster and clam shacks in Maine have been around for so long. In addition to cooking up and serving fresh Maine seafood – lobster rolls, lobster stew, fried clams, clam cakes, fried scallops and haddock, and clam, fish and seafood chowders – using time-tested and often secret recipes, Maine’s successful take-out shacks all have a few other things in common. First, they all use only the freshest seafood. Second, they all offer exceptional customer service. Third, they all serve a side of nostalgia and tradition along with every order. Read on to learn more about a few of Maine’s finest shacks which have been welcoming tourists and locals alike for generations.

Jordan’s Snack Bar, Ellsworth

Jordan’s Snack Bar began as a general store then evolved into a family-owned and -operated restaurant in 1981, when the late Jimmy Jordan and his wife Carol founded Jordan’s Take Out. Their sons Shawn and Michael were both youngsters at the time but joined their parents working at the restaurant by doing small jobs. “I remember when my grandmother would be here working with us years ago too. It truly was and still is a family affair,” Shawn Jordan said.

Shawn bought the business from his parents before his father died six years ago and now he operates it along with his son Andrew and mother Carol. “We get our seafood exclusively from Maine Shellfish Company. Maine Shellfish provides an excellent product to us, and they always have for the last 35 years. “We get it as local as we can,” Tim Tower said. Barnacle Billy’s children now run the business; all of Barnacle Billy’s grandchildren have worked there at one time or another over the years. “The door is always open for them to take it over someday. I know my dad would have loved to see it stay in the family,” Tower-Koppstein said.

Carol founded Jordan’s Take Out. Their sons Shawn and Michael were both younger at the time but joined their parents working at the restaurant. “I remember when my grandmother would be here working with us years ago too. It truly was and still is a family affair,” Shawn Jordan said.

Bayley’s Snack Bar, Ellsworth

Bayley’s has been family-owned and -operated since 1915. “My great-grandfather settled in Pine Point and opened the lobster pound as a way to sell clams, lobsters and lobster meat that he had no outside market for,” said Susan Bayley-Clough, who runs the restaurant and fish market today with her husband, Vincent Clough. The couple purchases their lobsters and seafood directly from local harvesters just as Bayley-Clough’s great-grandparents did. “This allows us to pay our lobstermen top dollar for their catch as well as serve our customers the freshest possible product,” Bayley-Clough said.

Bayley’s has the distinction of being credited with creating and serving the very first lobster roll. “My great-grandmother Ella Bayley cooked and sold lobster along with every order. Read on to learn more about a few of Maine’s finest shacks which have been welcoming tourists and locals alike for generations.

Barnacle Billy’s, Perkins Cove, Ogunquit

Founded in 1961 by the late William “Barnacle Billy” Tower and local lobsterman Leon Perkins, Barnacle Billy’s is owned and operated today by Tower’s four children, William “Tim” Tower, Meg Tower, Court Tower and Cathy Tower-Koppstein.

Barnacle Billy’s offers a spectacular view with indoor and outdoor dining as well as a take-out window. “Barnacle Billy’s remains a favorite in Perkins Cove. It is tradition,” Tower-Koppstein said. “Consistency in all capacities is the key to our success. As a child, I remember my father making the lobster stew from scratch every day and my brother Court on a stool next to him watching him. Today, Court is the one making it fresh daily just like Dad did.”

Barnacle Billy’s buys its seafood from Bay Haven and Bayley’s Lobster Pound. “We get it as local as we can,” Tim Tower said. Barnacle Billy’s children now run the business; all of Barnacle Billy’s grandchildren have worked there at one time or another over the years. “The door is always open for them to take it over someday. I know my dad would have loved to see it stay in the family,” Tower-Koppstein said.

Vincent Clough. The couple purchases their lobsters and seafood directly from local harvesters just as Bayley-Clough’s great-grandparents did. “This allows us to pay our lobstermen top dollar for their catch as well as serve our customers the freshest possible product,” Bayley-Clough said.

Bayley’s has the distinction of being credited with creating and serving the very first lobster roll. “My great-grandmother Ella Bayley cooked and sold lobster through the window of the family house back in the day,” Bayley-Clough ex-

Continued on page 18
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BAIT

WHY BAIT?

WHY BUY SECONDHAND?

FRESH BAIT

FRESH BY TANK AND BARREL

FRESH BAIT

FRESH BY TANK AND BARREL

FROZEN BAIT

FROZEN IN BOXES

WHY BAIT?

WHY BUY SECONDHAND?

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WHY BAIT?

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Interested in participating in MLLI? Contact Patrice@mainelobstermen.org

Profile picture: Support Maine’s future leaders

The Maine Lobstermen Leadership Institute’s (MLLI) purpose is to develop leadership amongst younger lobstermen. Curriculum includes:
- lobster fishery science & management
- understanding lobster markets
- hands-on learning opportunities
- cultural exchange program with other fishing communities
- and mentoring from current industry leaders.

75% of 2014 MLLI participants are in leadership positions throughout the lobster industry.

Please support our future leaders.

Support MLLI! Donate!
www.mlcalliance.org

Riverdale Mills has been manufacturing Aquamesh® the same way for over 36 years using an exclusive Galvanizing After Welding (GAW) and automated PVC coating process. Our specialized GAW method typically lasts 5x-10x longer than imported Galvanized Before Welding (GBW) wire, setting Aquamesh® apart from its competitors.

AQUAMESH®
The Brand You Can Trust

Typographical errors are unintentional and subject to correction.
Business support matters

The health of Maine’s economy depends on the success of our lobster fishery. And that success happens when the industry works together to keep our profession thriving.

Here at MLA, we work hard to keep our lobstermen prospering. We are grateful to have strong support from the business community.

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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 Design Company
Appleton, ME -- 10% discount to surveys on lobster boats. Must be an MLA member & mention this listing to get discount.

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

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

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.

Mount Desert Oceanarium
Bar Harbor, ME -- Free admission to commercial fishermen and their families.

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.

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
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
Lamonie, ME -- $1000 discount for hull or top

Weathervane Seafood Inc.
Kittery, ME -- 10% off mail order purchases. Just mention you are an MLA member. 1-800-914-1774.

Winter Harbor Fishermen’s Coop
Winter Harbor, ME -- 10% off picked lobster meat.
SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS CAN OFFER HEALTH INSURANCE THROUGH SHOP

By Alisha Keezer

To make it easier for small business owners and their workers to get affordable health coverage, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) established the Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP) marketplace in every state. SHOP offers small businesses a simple way to find and buy health insurance coverage that meets the needs of employees and a company’s budget. Employees are often the greatest investment for a small business owner. Health insurance may be essential to keep and recruit employees, maintain productivity, and improve employee satisfaction.

The SHOP marketplace offers small companies (1-50 employees) a choice of health and dental insurance plans provided by private insurance companies. Small employers who offer coverage through the SHOP marketplace might be eligible for the Small Business Health Care Tax Credit which could be worth up to 50% of their contributions to employees’ premiums.

Not only does offering health insurance help to keep employees, it can also be an incentive to attract employees.

Before the ACA, small businesses faced many obstacles when it came to covering workers: higher premiums, unpredictable rate increases, few insurance choices, waiting periods, and higher rates for companies with women and older workers. Under the ACA, insurance companies now must show proposed rate hikes, can’t charge higher rates because of pre-existing conditions, can’t charge higher rates for women or older workers, and cannot have annual dollar limits on coverage. The ACA has helped end obstacles to coverage so that even small employers can offer access to affordable health insurance.

Through the SHOP marketplace, the owner of a small business has more choice and control over health spending. He or she can choose the coverage offered and how much to contribute toward employees’ premiums. The federal government’s online portal allows for flexibility when selecting plans, managing employee participation, and even paying premiums online. SHOP enrollment is open throughout the year so small business owners can enroll in plans when they wish; employees can easily enroll online.

Like the individual plans available through the marketplace, SHOP plans must offer the same set of essential health benefits. These benefits are prescriptions, doctor visits, pregnancy services, hospitalization, and more. SHOP also lists health insurance plans in three plan categories: Bronze, Silver, and Gold.

SHOP allows employers to decide how they want to offer health insurance plans. They can offer employees a single health or dental plan or a choice of plans within a plan category (Bronze, Silver, or Gold) so that employees can choose any plan within the selected coverage category. The benefit of offering employees a choice of plans is that they can choose plans that best fit their needs. Employers can limit those choices, however, to control their health insurance costs. They will still pay just one monthly bill even if offering multiple plans from different health insurance companies.

There are many benefits to using SHOP to provide affordable health insurance coverage to your employees. Not only does offering health insurance help to keep employees, it can also be an incentive to attract employees. Using SHOP may also be a good financial decision for businesses with less than 25 employees that qualify for tax credits. Small business owners may apply for SHOP coverage through an online application location at healthcare.gov. The online site allows an owner to compare plans side by side, choose a plan, manage employee participation, and pay for premiums online.

To determine if your business is eligible, the business must:

• Have at least one employee who is enrolling in coverage;
• Employ 50 or fewer individuals;
• Have a principal business address within the state where you’re buying coverage.

Tips to help you with your SHOP marketplace enrollment:

• Decide on your budget. Think about what you are able to spend on health insurance and decide how much you want to contribute towards your employees’ premium costs. Additionally, consider how much your employees can afford to spend on their coverage.
• Decide who you’ll cover. You must cover your employees but offering dependent coverage is optional.
• Learn what your employees’ health insurance needs are. Ask your employees about their health.
• Decide if you want to offer a choice of plans or one single plan.
• Review the available plans in your area. This can be done by going to healthcare.gov/see-plans/small-business/

If you need assistance, contact me to help you through the process.

Call 207-967-4555 or email alisha@mainelobstermen.org.

Alisha Keezer is the MLA’s health insurance Navigator. She can be reached at 967-4555 or alisha@mainelobstermen.org.
## DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES ADJUDICATION REPORT

**January 31 - May 15, 2016**

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<tr>
<th>WORK STATUS</th>
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<th>COMMENTS</th>
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Seafood shacks continued from page 11

plained. In fact, the family home is where Ella Bayley created the first commercially-sold Maine lobster roll. Bayley Clough explained why her great-grandmother created the lobster roll. "At the time Ella Bayley was selling lobsters, no one wanted to buy the culls, so she picked out the meat from them to make sandwiches for her family. She started out making them on white bread, but my grandfather didn't like the crust and she had to cut it off for him. That was too much work, so she thought to use a hot dog roll and the rest is history."

Bayley-Clough said customers look forward to coming back to their business each season and that many of them are like family. "People love our place because we are consistently careful about the fish that we sell, everything is as fresh and local as it can be. An owner is always in the house and we feel we have the most beautiful sunset view from a restaurant in Maine!"

The Clam Shack, Lower Village Kennebunk

Current owner Steve Kingston said the award-winning Clam Shack began in 1968 with a handshake and verbal agreement between Byron Gooch, one of the owners of the former Shackford and Gooch Fish Market, established in 1932, and Richard Jacques. "Shackford and Gooch was housed in our current Clam Shack Seafood Market. The Jacques family started the seafood takeout business there and eventually bought the adjacent building," Kingston said. "In the Shackford and Gooch days, fish and lobsters were delivered right to the wharf out the back door where they processed their own "Port Brand" boneless boxed codfish."

Steve and his wife Jeni purchased The Clam Shack and Clam Shack Seafoods from Richard Jacques in 2000 and today all three of their daughters work at the business with them.

All of the lobster served at The Clam Shack comes straight from nearby Cape Porpoise Harbor. "Eric Emmons is our lobsterman and he delivers anywhere from 300 to 700 pounds of lobster to us daily," Kingston said. "Maine Shellfish Company is our source for all other fresh seafood products. We stake our reputation on serving absolutely the freshest seafood around, and we stick to the recipes we inherited. Our customers know what to expect at the end of that long line, and it’s worth the wait!"

Port Lobster, Kennebunkport

Sonny Hutchins founded Port Lobster in 1953 and for a short period of time was in business with a partner, Lyman Matthews. The original Port Lobster building was housed in the former Peabody’s Boat House across the street from the current building and was accessible by boat or on foot. Hutchins explained how he got into the retail end of the business. "I had been in the lobstering business before I went into the Army. I grew up in it. My father was a lobsterman and then I fished too. I thought by doing this I would be getting into the easier part of it, but I found out it wasn’t," Hutchins said with a chuckle.

Well into his 80s, Hutchins recently sold the business to Allen Daggett, president of Cape Porpoise Lobster. But that doesn’t stop him from going to work every day. He still gets all of his lobster from eight to ten local lobstermen right in Kennebunkport, just as he has from the beginning. "At one time I was buying from 22 different local boats, some from Cape Porpoise too. Over the years, I have bought from up and down the coast. The furthest I’ve ever gone to buy any seafood is up to Jonesport," he said. In addition to selling fresh seafood at the market, Port Lobster has takeout lobster rolls, fried clam rolls, fried shrimp rolls and chowders as well as frozen entrees to take home such as lobster macaroni and cheese and lobster puff pastry. Two of Hutchins’ four children work with him at Port Lobster today.

The Clam Shack has won many awards for its popular lobster rolls. Photo courtesy of The Clam Shack.
By Alexis De Leon
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Alaska

“Why doesn’t someone just buy a bunch of PFDs and ask us what we think of them?” That’s what National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) staff heard in a meeting with fishermen several years ago. It proved to be the inspiration behind NIOSH’s Wearability Study, conducted with Alaskan fishermen. Every year fishermen die from falling overboard; it is the second leading cause of death for fishermen nationwide. From 2000 to 2014, 31 lobstermen died on the job; 19 of those deaths were from falling overboard. None of the lobstermen was wearing a PFD when they drowned.

Researchers from NIOSH in Anchorage, Alaska asked commercial fishermen from four gear groups (crabbers, trawlers, longliners, and gillnetters) to rate the comfort and functionality of six modern PFDs. About 200 fishermen evaluated the PFDs for one month while working on deck so that wearable PFDs could be identified.

Fishermen evaluated inflatable PFDs and foam PFDs that were either integrated into their rain gear or were worn in addition to rain gear. Since deck work and fishing season varies for each group, different types of fishermen had different preferences. Ultimately each group identified specific PFDs that are comfortable and easy to wear and are currently available for sale.

Originally about half of the crabbers interviewed felt that PFDs could be an entanglement hazard. After the 30-day, on-deck evaluation, crabbers preferred the Mustang and Stearns inflatable PFDs to wear while working on deck. Crabbers mentioned that these particular styles of PFDs did not snag on gear and were comfortable to wear because they were not tight or bulky. Fishermen interviewed from longline vessels also preferred the Mustang inflatable PFD. The Mustang MD3188 was rated as comfortable to wear because it did not interfere with working on deck, did not snag, and was non-chafing.

While inflatable PFDs were rated highest overall for comfort, there were specific types of fishermen who preferred foam PFDs. Fishermen who worked on drift gillnetters in Bristol Bay, Alaska, preferred the Regatta raingear with built-in foam flotation. Gillnetters were even more concerned about PFDs snagging on gear or becoming entangled. The raingear was rated highly for not snagging and being easy to clean.

A big surprise in the NIOSH study was to find that more than half of the trawl fishermen already wore PFDs while working on deck; only 12% claimed they never wore PFDs. Further investigation determined that many of the trawl fishermen worked for companies that had instituted mandatory PFD use policies for their company’s vessels. Based on their familiarity with working in PFDs, this group of fishermen rated four out of the six PFDs in the study as “wearable” while working on deck.

On the East Coast, the Northeast Center for Occupational Health and Safety: Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing (NEC) in conjunction with Fishing Partnership Support Services (FPSS) in Massachusetts plans to work with PFD manufacturers and the Northeast lobster commercial fishing fleet to conduct a similar study.

“They have already committed to the project. We are actively working with them to get it up and running,” said NEC outreach specialist Julie Sorensen. “This research will not lead to regulation of PFD use. Its single goal is to give fishermen the opportunity to offer input on what does or does not work for them regarding PFD use.”
In a state that’s famous for its marine crustaceans, marine reptiles don’t get much attention. Did you know that there are three species of sea turtles that visit the Gulf of Maine? Leatherback, loggerhead, and occasionally juvenile Kemp’s ridley turtles (a critically endangered species) all spend time in northern New England waters.

These species are well-equipped for their migratory life in the ocean. They have strong armor against predators; long, stiff fore flippers to pull them through the water while the hind flippers steer; and large eyes to gather light in dark depths. Plus a sea turtle’s nostrils are located high on the tip of the beak to catch a breath quickly at the surface.

“Turtles are usually a warm-water species,” explained National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Sea Turtle Recovery Coordinator Carrie Upite. “But [for some leatherback and loggerhead turtles] part of their life cycle includes migrating north to foraging grounds off Virginia up to the Gulf of Maine.” Depending on the water temperatures, leatherback and loggerhead turtles can be found off the coast of New England as early as June. Because turtles are cold-blooded reptiles, their body temperature is controlled by the temperature of the immediate environment. Water absorbs heat four times faster than air, thus a turtle must stay in relatively warm water in order to keep itself alive. “They are very dependent on water temperatures,” Upite said. “When the water begins to cool off in the fall, the turtles swim back south to warmer waters.”

But why is this only true for some turtles? “There isn’t a really good answer. Leatherbacks and loggerheads have also been found in the south during the summer, so we know not all of them migrate north,” Upite said. “It might just be that some turtles prefer certain foraging areas.” Leatherback turtles eat mostly jellyfish, while loggerheads enjoy small crustaceans, mollusks, and jellyfish. An adult leatherhead turtle may reach 375 pounds in weight; a leatherback may weigh 600 to 1,000 pounds!

“We don’t have a lot of information on sea turtles, and what we do have is based mostly on nesting females,” Upite continued. Turtles are difficult to study because they spend much of their time in the water. “It’s much easier to get data when they are on land,” explained Upite. But even that data, she warned, should be taken with a grain of salt. “It’s much easier to get data on nesting females,” Upite continued. Turtles are difficult to study because they spend much of their time in the water. “It’s much easier to get data when they are on land,” explained Upite. But even that data, she warned, should be taken with a grain of salt. “It’s much easier to get data when they are on land,” explained Upite. But even that data, she warned, should be taken with a grain of salt. “It’s much easier to get data on nesting females,” Upite continued.

Although the number of eggs a female turtle lays is high, the survival rate from egg to adult is low. A turtle faces many threats at each stage of life. “Animals, like raccoons, often dig up the eggs and eat them before they are hatched,” Upite said. Once they hatch, the small turtles have to make it across the beach to the water. Seagulls, ghost crabs and other predators can attack them before they reach the relative safety of the water. Even when they are in the ocean, the young turtles face additional threats. “Natural threats are pretty limited to sharks and cold stunning,” she said.

Cold stunning is what happens to the cold-blooded turtles when they remain in cold waters for too long (loggerhead turtles are not susceptible to cold stunning). The animals develop hypothermia-like symptoms such as a slow heart rate, slow blood circulation, lethargy and shock. Cold stunning typically happens in the fall when, for some reason, the turtles delay their return to warmer southern waters. Smaller turtles are more likely to suffer from cold stunning than larger ones.

Other threats come from human activities. “There are a lot of anthropogenic threats,” Upite noted. “Turtles can become entangled in fishing gear. Some are hurt by ship strikes, and they can choke on plastic debris. And of course oil spills threaten sea turtles,” researchers often find plastic debris in the stomachs of dead sea turtles. “Plastic bags look a lot like jellyfish when they are in the water, so turtles will eat them,” she explained. “Balloons are dangerous, too. A lot of people do balloon releases and then those balloons end up in the water and turtles think they are food.”

It’s a tough life for the three turtle species that migrate into our patch of the Atlantic Ocean. “It’s estimated that out of every thousand eggs laid, one will survive to adulthood. That’s why it’s so important to protect not just the eggs, but the adult sea turtles, too,” Upite said. For more information on sea turtles, tagging, and tracking projects, visit www.seaturtles.org.
The Northeast Regional Planning Body (RPB), formed of representatives from the six New England states, federally recognized tribes, federal agencies and the New England Fishery Management Council, issued a draft Northeast Ocean Plan, an historic, new approach to shaping management decisions regarding ocean resources in the region. Under the new plan, state and federal agencies have committed to using better data and working with local stakeholders such as fishermen, offshore wind developers, and other maritime interests, on planning and permitting projects that could impact important fisheries, habitats, cultural sites and commercial enterprises in New England. With this plan, the responsibility shifts to the federal agencies to make sure that what they do has the least amount of impact on the interests and livelihoods of ocean users.

The Northeast Ocean Plan incorporates data about how and where stakeholders operate in New England waters. These data layers show how many uses, such as fishing and shipping routes, may overlap each other. The data are available to the public via the Northeast Ocean Data Portal (http://www.northeastoceandata.org).

The Plan itself is open for a 60-day public comment period, which closes on July 25. Comments may be submitted on each chapter electronically at each chapter landing page, in-person at any of the upcoming public comment meetings, through the comment form listed on the Northeast Regional Planning Body Web site (http://neoceanplanning.org/plan), or by submitting written comments to Betsy Nicholson, NE RPB Federal Co-lead, NOAA, NMFS Northeast Regional Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930-2276.

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Waterman and Achorn caught their 25-fish quota in the first three weeks of the season last year; this year the fish haven’t been biting as eagerly. “It seemed like the fish were thicker and bigger last year. But you never know. Tomorrow we could get three on one trawl and it could just pick up from there. That’s the excitement of fishing and that’s what keeps you going,” he commented.

As each line was brought up from depths of a hundred feet or more, anticipation of a fish or two, maybe even three, built up, but was quickly diminished. After six hours of trawling all four sets and re-baiting, we came in that day empty-handed. Waterman wasn’t worried. “You just need to catch one to get right back into it again. Motivation gets you started but it’s the desire that keeps you going. We will be back at it tomorrow,” he said.

The next day, just as Waterman predicted from his years of experience, the crew on the Sea Star was indeed “right back into it” again. One fish was landed on the very last trawl of the day and weighed in at 38 pounds and 47 inches in length. It was a pretty desirable specimen, making for some extra cash and re-igniting that internal desire that keeps fishermen going back to the sea again and again.

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Waterman said he will continue to fish for halibut each year, and plans to continue to fish for as long as he is able. After all, it’s in his genes: six generations and counting.

“Fishing is all I know. I could learn something else but I don’t really want to. When you fish, you only have to answer to the bank and Mother Nature, no one else,” he said. “I love where I am, I love what I do. It’s about a lot more than just big catches. My father, grandparents, and great-grandparents on both sides all fished these waters before me and many of my family members are still fishing here now. It’s a good feeling to be doing the same, keeping the heritage. I’d rather be middle of the road making a living doing something I love than be the leader of the pack doing something I don’t.”
NEW FACES IN MARINE PATROL

Two new Marine Patrol Officers have joined the ranks after graduating in May from the Maine Criminal Justice Academy’s 18-week Basic Law Enforcement Training Program. After today’s graduation ceremony, Marine Patrol Officer Kenneth Conley (pictured second from left) and Marine Patrol Officer Michael Hendry (second from right) were sworn in by Department of Marine Resources Commissioner Patrick Keliher (far right). Colonel Jonathan Cornish (far left) spoke prior to the swearing-in ceremony offering words of encouragement and congratulations. After an additional 45-day Marine Patrol field training program, Officer Conley will begin serving in the Kittery Patrol while Officer Hendry will be serving in the Lubec patrol.

WATCH OUT FOR WHALES!

The new Whale Alert app provides a real-time display of the ocean and the position of the mariner’s ship, along with information about where whales have been seen or heard recently. It also provides information on speed restrictions and restricted areas, and recommends routes shippers can take to avoid endangered species such as the blue whale and the North Atlantic right whale. Collisions with high speed ships are one of the leading causes of death for some species of whales, and many mariners often try to navigate around them using outdated equipment.

The International Fund for Animal Welfare collaborated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on the app, which provides information on both U.S. coasts. More than 33,000 users have downloaded the app, which first came out four years ago, and recent changes — such as giving civilians the ability to report whale sightings — have made it more popular. The app is free and can be downloaded by anyone with an iPhone or Android.

GROUP TESTS SYSTEM TO RECORD GROUNDFISH CATCH

Starting on June 1, a group of fishermen began test driving a video monitoring system aboard their vessels, designed to take the place of at-sea monitors. The Maine Coast Fishermen’s Association has been working with the Nature Conservancy, Gulf of Maine Research Institute and federal regulators to launch the pilot project, in which the catch will be recorded onto a hard drive for review onshore. The hope for electronic monitoring is that cameras can vastly reduce the cost of labor, while collecting the same information as a human.

In the pilot project, the captain and crew will sort the catch, then place every single fish that will be discarded on a ruler so that the camera can see it, making a record of the fish and its length. Back on land, a reviewer trained by NOAA will watch the video and gather information about the species, length and weight of the discards. About 20 volunteers will fish with the video systems to assess the feasibility of video monitoring the groundfish catch.

GAUGE CHANGE ANGRS PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LOBSTERMEN

The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans changed the legal minimum lobster carapace size for Lobster Fishing Area 25 in late May. It increased the minimum size from 72 millimeters to 73 this fall, with further increases in the next few years. In 2017, the minimum size will increase to 75 millimeters and by 2018, it will rise again, to 77 millimeters. LFA 25 covers parts of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. The change means Prince Edward Island lobstermen will have to throw back the smaller lobsters, referred to as ‘canner’ lobsters because they are often sold to be processed as canned lobster.

The increase in carapace size will allow more female lobsters to reproduce and help with conservation, according to department scientists.
June 3
ASMFC Northern Shrimp Section meeting, 9:30 a.m., Portsmouth Public Library.

June 4
"Meeting the Boat: Steam Travel along Maine Waters” exhibit, opening June 4, Maine Maritime Museum, Bath. FMI: 443-1316.

June 7
Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative meeting, Island Institute, Rockland.

June 10
Drill Conductor Course, Gulf of Maine Research Institute, Portland. FMI: 338-1603.

June 12
Drill Conductor Course, U.S. Coast Guard Base, Jonesport. FMI: 338-1603.

June 16
Annual Lobster Conservation Meeting, 1 p.m., Odd Fellows Hall, Swan's Island.

June 17-19
LAUNCH, a Maine Maritime Festival including blessing of the fleet, Kennebunkport.

June 18

June 19
Lobster Boat Race, Rockland. FMI: 975-9690.

June 21-23
New England Fisheries Management Council meeting, Holiday Inn by the Bay, Portland.

June 26
Lobster Boat Race, Bass Harbor. FMI: 244-9623.

June 27
Pizza Night Benefit for the MLCA, 3-9 p.m., Rudy’s of the Cape, Cape Elizabeth. All funds raised go directly to the MLCA Lobster Leadership Institute. FMI: 799-0270.

UPCOMING

July 2
Moosabec Reach Lobster Boat Races

July 6
Maine Lobstermen’s Association board meeting, 5 p.m., Darby’s restaurant, Belfast. FMI: 967-4555.

July 10
Stonington Lobster Boat Races

July 15-17
51st annual Yarmouth Clam Festival, Yarmouth.

July 17
Stonington Fishermen’s Day, Stonington town dock.

July 19
Shellfish Advisory Council meeting, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., DMR offices, Augusta.

July 24
Friendship Lobster Boat Races

For more events, visit www.mainelobstermen.org.

2016 MAINE LOBSTER BOAT RACING

SCHEDULE

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<td>14 JUNE</td>
<td>Boothbay Harbor</td>
<td>Ashley Lawery</td>
<td>(207) 633-2915</td>
<td>2 JULY</td>
<td>Moosabec Reach</td>
<td>Nick Tibbets</td>
<td>(207) 342-2675</td>
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