MAINE FISHERIES STILL STRONG

By Melissa Waterman

It wasn’t a cheerful fall. Fishermen along the coast lamented the closure, once again, of the winter fishing season for Northern shrimp. Groundfishermen bemoaned the emergency six-month closure of the Gulf of Maine cod fishery, followed by the New England Fisheries Management Council’s decision to cut the 2015 cod quota by 75%, to 386 metric tons. And Maine’s elver fishermen were riled by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission’s decision to slightly reduce their quota in 2015.

Yet despite these highly publicized restrictions on several important commercial fisheries, the outlook for many of Maine’s marine resources in 2015 is good. “It’s always challenging to forecast for a year ahead, be-...
They call this time of year the dead of winter. Glancing out the window during the fleeting hours of daylight most of us would agree with the phrase. The ground is locked up under a coating of snow, the trees are bare and the only life to be seen are the pesky chickadees crowding the bird feeders.

For Maine’s commercial fishermen, this is a time to look back over the past season and think about the year to come. Of course, many continue to fish, lobstering offshore during the winter months or re-rigging their boats to take advantage of the brief scallop season. But for others, the height of winter means hauling the boat to the yard, stacking traps in the backyard, and tending the many things that get left undone during the busy fishing season.

In this issue of Landings, we take a look at the state of Maine’s commercial fisheries at the close of the year. Although the season for Pandulis borealis, the sweet Northern shrimp, has once again been cancelled due to low population numbers, many other species are doing quite well, in part because of proactive management strategies at the state level. We also give an overview of the annual Fisheries of the United States report which highlights the importance of Maine’s lobster fishery.

Health care is a recurrent topic in the news right now and it is one of those things that many fishermen in Maine neglect. Landings focuses on the steps fishermen should take to apply for or to reenroll in the affordable health care insurance program during the three-month open enrollment period, which closes February 15, 2015. It seems complicated but it is vital to get into the system during this short enrollment period.

We also feature a column by Penobscot Bay pilot David Gelinas on Automatic Information Systems (AIS). AIS gives fishermen the ability to communicate their presence to other vessels at sea, providing a crucial measure of safety when the weather is poor and visibility limited.

Many of Maine’s small fishing ports are in isolated areas, often at the end of a long peninsula far from medical facilities. That’s why an organization such as Lifeflight of Maine is so valuable. Lifeflight operates two “flying hospitals,” sophisticated helicopters that can reach those in medical need quickly, wherever they may be on the coast. In this issue of Landings we highlight the story of this remarkable organization which in just 16 years has assisted more than 18,000 people in the state.

In another article, Landings speaks with some of the lobster women of Vinalhaven. Each woman has come into the lobstering world via a different route but all share a strong love of fishing and a pride in their hard work. We also hear from Kennebunk lobsterman Gary Ridlon, who has been lobstering since he was a youngster and, at age 80, sees no reason to stop now!

Finally, we say good-bye to Marine Patrol Chief Joe Fessenden, who retires at the end of this year. Joe, who was featured in the paper this fall, has been at the Bureau of Marine Patrol for forty years. In this issue he says farewell to Marine Patrol Chief Joe Fessenden, whom he has worked so closely.

Winter is a wonderful time to kick back and take stock of where we are and where we have been. When next you hear from us it will be a new year, with a new state Legislature in session and a new round of coastal stories to tell.

Happy Holidays to you all. We’ll be back in February.

COASTAL OUTLOOK

Thoughts from MLCA President Patrice McCarron

Winter is a time of rest and also of unexpected beauty. Photo by Mike Leonard, courtesy of The Boothbay Register.

Patrice
By Christina Lemieux Oragano

The festive season is upon us and, for many Europeans, feasting on seafood is a central part of the celebrations. As a native of French extraction, married to a man of Italian descent and now living in the United Kingdom, I find myself with a particular and somewhat multi-cultural view of the role lobster plays in European holiday traditions. I love the distinctions that make the holidays in Europe unique, from my daughter referring to Santa as Father Christmas to the foods that make up the holiday meals. As Advent approaches, it’s a good time to look at the cultural significance lobster plays during December on this side of the pond.

In Southern Italy, Christmas Eve is celebrated with a seafood extravaganza. The origins of this feast, often called La Vigilia (The Vigil), stem from the Roman Catholic ritual of abstaining from meat on holy days. Prior to Midnight Mass, family and friends gather at home and enjoy an array of seafood dishes ranging from salt cod and sea bass to mussels, octopus and, sometimes, lobster. The number of fish, spread out family-style, varies from seven to as many as 10 or even 13 and is said to have a religious significance. Some families serve seven fish to represent the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church. Some serve 10 for the stations of the cross. Some serve 13 for the twelve Apostles plus Jesus.

Over the years, this feast has been popularized by Italian-Americans and is often referred to as “The Feast of the Seven Fishes” (Festa dei sette pesci). Elaborate versions of the meal can include a banquet where each fish dish is cooked in a different manner — for example, fried, baked or broiled — or uses a different main ingredient, from seafood salad to pasta served with a seafood sauce. Two lobster dishes I’ve seen referenced when reading about the Italian-American interpretation of La Vigilia are Lobster Oreganata — lobster baked with bread crumbs and oregano — and Lobster Fra Diavolo — spicy lobster with pasta in tomato sauce.

In Italy, however, it is much more common to enjoy lobster on New Year’s Eve. As explained by my southern Italian friend, La Vigilia is celebrated at home with “local seafood and homemade recipes.” New Year’s Eve is about “luxurious food and wine, spending lots of money and perhaps going to fancy restaurants.”

On this day, most restaurants feature lobster as a main menu item. Those Italians who can afford to, indulge. Of the $50 million dollars of U.S. lobster Italy imported in 2013, more than one-fifth of that lobster was delivered in the month of December, destined for Italians wanting to celebrate la dolce vita (the good life).

In 2013, France imported $35 million of U.S. lobster. More than a third of that lobster was delivered in December, prior to the holiday celebrations.

“Qu’est-ce que vous mangez cette année?” (what will you eat this year?) is a topic much discussed by the French in the weeks before Réveillon, France’s culinary highpoint of the year. Celebrated on Christmas Eve, Réveillon dates from the mid-1800s, when a fine meal was prepared for

Continued on page 21

Smithwick & Mariners Insurance Agency

We are a full-service independent insurance agency providing personal, commercial, business & marine insurance.

- VERY COMPETITIVE LOBSTER BOAT PROGRAMS
- Wide Range of Package Options
- New Vessel, Older Vessel Including Wood Construction - we can obtain coverage for any well maintained boat

We specialize in Lobster Boats, Draggers, Scallopers, Gillnetters, Boat Builders, Marinas and more.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE - DEDICATED TO SERVICE

366 U.S. Route 1 - Falmouth, ME 04105 - Tel: 800-370-1883 • Tel: 207-781-5553 • Fax: 207-781-5571
77 North Water Street, New Bedford, MA 02740 - Tel: 800-348-1405 • Tel: 508-993-7411 • Fax: 508-990-7733
With affiliated offices in Damariscotta, Bath, and Kennebunk

www.smithwick-ins.com
FROM THE DOCK:  Col. Fessenden says good-bye

Dear members of Maine’s commercial fishing industries,

The Maine Lobstermen’s Association has given me the opportunity to say good-bye to all of you by publishing this letter in MLA’s December and January newsletter. I wanted to let you know that I will be retiring from the Department of Marine Resources on January 9, 2015.

I started this journey with the department on June 23, 1975, when I was sworn in as a Coastal Warden and assigned to the South Bristol/New Harbor patrol. At that time, I had no idea where this opportunity was going to take me. After almost 40 years of service to the department and the industry I have decided it is time for me to step aside. Major Jon Cornish will be succeeding me as Chief. Jon and I have worked together during the past 30 years. We both hold the industry in high esteem and have closely worked with you to help protect and conserve marine resources.

I am confident that I am leaving you with a new Chief who will work hard to maintain the Marine Patrol tradition of working with the fishing industry. During my career, I had the opportunity to work with and meet many of you as I conducted patrols along our great coast. All along the way I have made many friends from the Portland waterfront and assigned to the South Bristol/New Harbor patrol. At that time, I was sworn in as a Coastal Warden, and I have worked the Portland waterfront and witnessed the expansion of the groundfish fleet and the hard times it has fallen on, but I am confident it will rise again. The Gulf of Maine will rebound and a new generation of groundfishermen will be part of it.

DURING MY CAREER, I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH AND MEET MANY OF YOU AS I CONDUCTED PATROLS ALONG OUR GREAT COAST.
The possibility that the New England Fisheries Management Council (NEFMC) would prohibit lobster fishing in areas recently designated as closed to protect spawning codfish caused an uproar in Maine’s lobster industry in mid-November. On November 10, John Bullard, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Northeast administrator, announced six-month emergency closures of both recreational and commercial cod fishing in parts of the Gulf of Maine. And fishermen took ten years to actually shut down fishing where there are concentrations of cod, so there will be zero cod caught,” said Bullard at the time.

Angry cod fishermen responded by alleging that lobstersmen setting traps in local harbors were getting away with large amounts of cod and so should also be banned from fishing. The issue of cod bycatch in the offshore lobster fishery quickly made its way into discussion at the NEFMC meeting in Newport, Rhode Island, on November 19.

Both the Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) and the Maine Lobstermen’s Association (MLA) opposed the effort to shut down lobstering because of cod bycatch. As DMR commissioner Patrick Keliher stated publicly, the number of cod (177,000) referenced as having been caught in the traps of Maine lobstersmen during the Council’s discussion was simply raw data pulled together for the Marine Stewardship Council’s sustainability certification process for Maine lobster.

“The data, which were from 2008, were a very rough estimate, and do not fully account for the variability of bycatch in the lobster fishery in different parts of the coast, in different depths, and in different seasons. That variability is significant. This rudimentary analysis should not be the basis for management decisions,” stated Keliher.

In our case it was a lucky accident that the Corps had money at the time it did.”

established a new loan financing program, and put in place changes to the project review process.

The law also tackled funding issues in the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF). The HMTF was created by Congress in 1986 to fund the operation and maintenance of ports and harbors. It is funded by a Harbor Maintenance Tax which is charged against the value of imports and domestic cargo arriving at ports that have federally-maintained harbors and channels. HMTF monies are used for maintenance dredging, dredged material disposal areas, jetties, and breakwaters.

But since 2002, the Fund has seen an ever greater surplus at the end of each year. The HMTF receives around $1.3 billion in taxes annually, but only half that amount was distributed for harbor maintenance projects.

Rep. Chellie Pingree, in concert with other coastal state Representatives, pushed for a provision in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act requiring that 10 percent of the annual allocation of harbor maintenance appropriations be directed to “emerging harbors,” defined as a location “that transits less than 1 million tons of commerce.” Furthermore, the Act now authorizes 100% of HMTF money go to harbor dredging projects by 2025. The provision regarding “emerging harbors” authorizes about $30 million nationally for maintenance of these small, shallow draft harbors in the next federal budget, however but Congress must still appropriate the funds.

“In our case it was a lucky accident that the Corps had money at the time it did,” Tupper commented. Perhaps such luck will not be needed by other Maine harbors in the future.

The MLA also took issue with the notion that the volume of cod caught in lobster traps was significant to the overall Gulf of Maine population. “There haven’t been any real studies of this,” said MLA executive director Patrice McCarron. The organization submitted a letter to the NEFMC stating in part, “The MLA has serious concerns regarding the science used to characterize the level of cod bycatch in the lobster fishery and the lack of peer-reviewed research on the impact this bycatch may have on cod stock recovery in the Gulf of Maine. The lobster fishery is executed in distinct spatial-temporal patterns any data relating to cod bycatch in the lobster fishery thus must be analyzed on a spatial-temporal scale that corresponds to lobster fishing activities. Furthermore, in order to characterize the incidence of bycatch, sample size must be representative of the fishery.”

Fishing pressure, the MLA lob- ster management falls under the purview of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMC). We have adjusted our management measures involving the lob- ster fishery and the lobster management plan, to which Maine and other East Coast lobstering states adhere, must be undertaken through a Commission process. "The MLA strongly urges the Council to refer any concerns regarding the potential impact of the lobster fishery on the recovery of cod stocks to the ASMC for analysis by the Lobster Technical Committee. Any management recommendations should be referred to the Lobster Board and include broad input from lobster industry stakeholders," the MLA letter stated.

At its November 19 meeting the NEFMC members voted 14-1-1 that the closed-area measures do not apply to lobster pot gear. It directed its groundfish Plan Development Team to collaborate with ASMFC’s Lobster Technical Committee to fully analyze available data to better understand cod bycatch in the lobster fishery. It further agreed that any future management measures involving the lobster fishery would be considered by ASMFC.

“The decision [by NEFMC] is appro- priate,” commented Commissioner Keliher. "It will allow necessary time to conduct a more rigorous analysis of available data," McCarron agreed.

“This is great news and will give us a chance to participate in research and discussions as this issue moves forward," she said.

By Melissa Waterman

December 2014/January 2015 | LANDINGS | Page 5

1954-2014: MLA IS 60!

The MLA has been successful in gaining support from thousands of lobstermen over the years. Without that support, the MLA would not exist and its voice would not be credible. Thank you for 60 years of support.
cause managing healthy stocks and rebuilding depleted stocks is an ongoing effort that we’re always going to be in the middle of, and we always have more work to do,” said Meredith Mendelson, deputy commissioner of the Department of Marine Resources (DMR).

Halibut

Some fisheries are holding their own or improving. Let’s take a look at Atlantic halibut. These are giant flounders, weighing 100 to 200 pounds or more. In 1988, Maine fisherman landed more than 125,000 pounds of these tasty fish, at a value of $280,000 or $2.23 per pound. Landings took a dive after that, plunging to 6,217 pounds in 2000. But due to improved management of the species at the federal and state level (currently Maine fisherman can only fish for halibut during May and June and are limited to a total of 25 fish), landings slowly picked up again. By 2005 Maine landings were slightly less than 25,000 pounds, at $2.82 per pound. In 2013, Maine fishermen landed 50,311 pounds of halibut, at a value of $5.53 per pound. Not a bad recovery in just a decade.

Scallops

Maine’s scallop fishery is another example of a stock that has rebounded. “Essentially we have been able to make real gains in the past couple of years,” explained Trish Cheney De Graf, scallop resource manager for DMR. “It was through some harsh rebuilding measures — limited entry, due to the activities going on during the warmer summer months (farm- ing, lawn care, animal and human refuse). The spring melt, on the other hand, generally resulted in clean water flowing in the Kennebec. With this knowledge, DMR was able to open more shellfish beds along the river. In 2012 83% of days were open [in the year]. In 2013 it was 93% compared to the 58% it would have been prior to this change,” Kanwit said. “I believe that if we can assure that the clam beds are clean, you should be able to harvest them.”

Landings statistics reflect these changes. Soft shell clam harvests have gone up over the past few years, from 1,899,000 pounds in 2009, to 2,178,000 pounds in 2013. The soft shell clam harvest in that year brought slightly less than $17,000,000 to the state, much of it to the small towns and villages of Downeast Maine.

Black Sea Bass

Black sea bass is another fishery that, although in its infancy, could become a source of revenue for Maine fishermen. Black sea bass were once a rare catch in the Gulf of Maine. These pelagic fish like the warmer waters found below Cape Cod. But as the waters off the Maine coast grow warmer, black sea bass have become more common. So DMR took steps to ensure a sustainable fishery in the future.

“... [T]he department determined that it was important to develop regulations that would provide opportunity for both recreational and commercial fishermen while ensuring that this new commercially viable species can be sustained,” said DMR Commissioner Patrick Keliher in August when announcing new management measures to regulate the fishery. The state’s regulations will harmonize with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission’s existing fishery management plan for black sea bass. Soft shell clam quota was set for 2014 with a daily limit of 50 pounds.

“While this is a small fishery, it is a nice opportunity for younger fish- ermen just starting out and small- er operators because it is a high-value fishery,” said Ben Martens, executive director of the Maine Coast Fishermen’s Association, in a press release. “With declining stocks of other species like Atlantic cod, this also provides an opportunity for fishermen interested in pursuing the growing interest in boutique hook and line fisheries.”

“Our changing environmental conditions will drive many conversations [about fisheries management],” Mendelson said. “DMR wants to talk with Maine fishermen and think collaboratively with the industry about how to improve monitoring and management so that these resources can continue to support both those currently fishing and the generations to come.”

Fisheries continued from page 1
Each year the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration publishes a report on the commercial fisheries of the country. Fisheries of the United States 2013 provides statistics on what was landed and where. We present here selected information related to New England fisheries drawn from the report.

American lobster landings were over 194.3 million pounds valued at $461.1 million—a decrease of 227,000 pounds, but an increase of nearly $30.8 million (7 percent) compared to 2012. Maine led in landings for the 32nd consecutive year with over 127.2 million pounds valued at over $368.4 million—an increase of nearly $1.6 million (over 1 percent) compared with 2012. Landings along the Atlantic coast were more than 369.5 million pounds valued at $49.2 million—an increase of more than 28.5 million pounds (almost 1 percent) compared with 2012. Massachusetts, the second leading producer, had landings of 15.3 million pounds valued at $61.6 million—a decrease of 227,000 pounds, but an increase of nearly $30.8 million (7 percent) compared to 2012. North Atlantic pollock landings were 4.1 million pounds (down 5 percent) and $6 million (down more than 10 percent).

The U.S. menhaden landings were more than 1.5 billion pounds valued at over $2.87 billion—a decrease of 2.2 million pounds (nearly 44 percent) from 2012 and were more than 10 percent over the 10-year average. Atlantic sea herring were 208.3 million pounds valued at $32 million—an increase of over 17.3 million pounds (9 percent), and nearly $3.2 million (11 percent) compared with 2012. Landings of butterfish, Atlantic cod, cusk, flounders (winter/blackback, summer/summer), haddock, red and white hake, ocean perch, and yellowtail were more than 298.4 million pounds valued at $95.3 million. Gulf region landings were 1.1 billion pounds valued at over $34 million. Gulf region landings were 1.1 billion pounds valued at $34 million—an increase of over 23 percent) compared to 2012. North Atlantic pollock landings were 11.1 million pounds valued at $11.4 million—a decrease of 3.7 million pounds (nearly 25 percent), and $1.8 million (more than 13 percent) compared with 2012.

The U.S. menhaden landings were more than 1.5 billion pounds valued at over $429.2 million—an increase of more than 28.5 million pounds (almost 11 percent), and $290.000 (almost 13 percent) compared with 2012. Landings of Atlantic sea herring were 208.3 million pounds valued at $32 million—an increase of over 17.3 million pounds (9 percent), and nearly $3.2 million (11 percent) compared with 2012.

Landings of butterfish, Atlantic cod, cusk, flounders (winter/blackback, summer/summer), haddock, red and white hake, ocean perch, and yellowtail were more than 298.4 million pounds valued at $95.3 million. Gulf region landings were 1.1 billion pounds valued at over $34 million. Gulf region landings were 1.1 billion pounds valued at $34 million—an increase of over 23 percent) compared to 2012. North Atlantic pollock landings were 11.1 million pounds valued at $11.4 million—a decrease of 3.7 million pounds (nearly 25 percent), and $1.8 million (more than 13 percent) compared with 2012.
By Shelley Wigglesworth

Gary “Rid” Ridlon has been lobstering out of Cape Porpoise harbor since 1946 when he was just 12 years old. His father and grandfather before him also fished the same area. It was his great-uncle who took him offshore as a youngster and showed him the ropes. “My father didn’t bother much with me, it was my uncle who taught me most everything back then when it came to fishing. I liked it and I stuck with it,” Ridlon said.

In the mid 1950’s, Ridlon branched out from working with his uncle and began lobstering alone. At that time, redfish was the primary bait used by lobstermen; the cost for a barrel was around $2.75. Lobster were fetching between 30 and 35 cents per pound. Lobstermen were desperate to get more money for their landings, not only to make a decent living but to have some local control over their livelihood in order to stay competitive.

“That’s when we [lobstermen] went on strike and I got involved with the Maine Lobstermen’s Association. We were pushing to get 40 cents a pound back then, and they rallied behind us, “ he said.

According to Ridlon, the MLA was a crucial organization and one that lobstermen up and down the coast relied on during the 1950s. “We knew when we went on strike that we needed to be organized and represented to be taken seriously if we wanted to get fair prices and such. It was hard to get everyone together back then on our own,” he added.

With the exception of the four years he spent serving in the U.S. Air Force, Ridlon, a Korean War veteran, has worked only on the ocean. In addition to lobstering he has also gillnetted and fished for halibut and mackerel. He has never worked a job onshore in his life, nor has he ever had a desire to. “Other than being in the service, I’ve always just fished. I’ve never given much thought to doing anything else. Why would I?” he said.

In his early years of fishing, Ridlon fished from punts, and eventually ended up owning and operating three “real” boats, as he calls them, during the past six decades. His first “real” boat was named after his late wife, Marjory; the second boat was called Teroma, a name that incorporated the first two letters of the names of his two daughters and his wife (Terri, Robin and Marjory) and his current boat is the Amoret which is Teroma spelled backwards. When he was in his prime, Ridlon fished up to 800 traps. Today he still fishes a respectable 400 traps and he does this all alone, without the help of a sternman. “I try to take it easier nowadays,” he chuckled.

When asked about some of the positives and negatives he has experienced lobstering over the years, Ridlon answered, “The good part is that you get to be your own boss, and that is worth a lot. You get to meet a lot of good people too, and work with your family and friends. I’ve had good years and bad years fishing just like everything else in life. The toughest part of all of it is that everything depends on the price of lobsters. The prices go up and down but all the other costs just keep going up.” He added, “I’ve had my share of close calls out on the ocean too, but we don’t need to go into that.”

The witty and energetic eighty-year-old said he has no immediate plans to retire or stop fishing any time soon, despite having some shoulder troubles. He is still on the water as often as he can be, doing the job he knows and has loved for the better part of his life. “My father fished until he was eighty-three, so I’ve got to fish for at least the next three years anyway to keep up with him,” Ridlon laughed. And no doubt this hardy Maine lobsterman will do it.

Local artist David Edward Allen painted a portrait of Ridlon several years ago. D.E. Allen photo.

For generations, Farm Credit East has helped commercial fishing operations plan for and finance the equipment they need to harvest more profits for their business. Today, we continue to provide flexible financing and solid advice for aquatic businesses of every type and size.

How can we help you net more profit for your business? Call today to review our wide range of options.

Looking for a lender that understands your business?

LOANS FOR:
• Boats
• Trucks
• Gear
• Permits
• Operating lines
• Haul out and repair

Auburn • 800.831.4230
FarmCreditEast.com

Proceeds from the Lobster Trap Tree Raffle will go towards Rockland’s Lobster Trap Tree.

$50 for two chances to win 50 lobster traps!

ONLY 300 TICKETS SOLD

Drawing is January 5th, 2015

Locations to purchase tickets are:
Brooks Trap Mill, Hamilton Marine & Camden National Bank

For generations, Farm Credit East has helped commercial fishing operations plan for and finance the equipment they need to harvest more profits for their business. Today, we continue to provide flexible financing and solid advice for aquatic businesses of every type and size.

How can we help you net more profit for your business? Call today to review our wide range of options.

Looking for a lender that understands your business?

LOANS FOR:
• Boats
• Trucks
• Gear
• Permits
• Operating lines
• Haul out and repair

Auburn • 800.831.4230
FarmCreditEast.com

FARM CREDIT EAST
The holiday season is a great time to take stock of our lives and reflect on the past as we prepare for the year ahead. For the Maine lobster industry, 2014 will be remembered as a positive year. Throughout this fishing season, lobstermen have reported strong, steady catches, good quality lobster and improved prices. The positive cash flow has noticeably reduced the level of stress and anxiety that has permeated the industry in recent years. Once again, the lobster resource has provided for Maine fishermen and so many others in our coastal communities.

But we cannot take the success of the 2014 season for granted. Sadly, this year’s success was dampened by the tragedy of the three Maine lobstermen who were lost at sea. MLA offers our sincerest condolences to the families of Jeremy Philbrick, Tom Hammond and Tyler Sawyer. These losses serve as a reminder of how dangerous a life at sea can be, and a reminder of how lucky each of us really is.

While the overall vibe in Maine’s lobster industry was positive, there were a few ups and downs, and, of course, a few disagreements among ourselves. But in hindsight, Maine lobstermen have fared very well. One need only look at our colleagues in the groundfish industry or those who depend on shrimp to get through the winter to put the battles fought within the lobster industry in perspective.

Despite the expected bumps in the road, I believe that the changes endured by Maine’s lobster industry this year have been manageable, and a few were positive. On the positive side, the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative (MLMC) now has a full year of operations under its belt and is finally getting some legs under it. To date, the MLMC has adopted a brand strategy for Maine lobster and hired a talented executive director. It will have an ad agency hired by year’s end and be ready to kick off its marketing plan in 2015. With strong leadership in place, the MLMC truly has the potential to positively impact markets and consumer demand for Maine lobster. The MLA fought hard to get a credible marketing organization in place for the lobster industry and we will be vigilant in pushing the MLMC to be effective and accountable to the industry.

The MLA has worked hard to build a strong working relationship with lobstermen in Canada. In January, a contingent from the MLA Board travelled to Canada to discuss how our industries can work together to strengthen the position of lobstermen on both sides of the border. Open communication was deemed critical to making this happen. In May, MLA partnered with the Maine Lobstermen’s Community Alliance to offer a leadership program for a group of ten young lobstermen. Through this program, the lobstermen learned the basics of lobster management, science and marketing and visited Prince Edward Island to experience firsthand the Canadian lobster fishery and processing sectors. Many of the program’s participants have since stepped into leadership roles here in Maine.

In 2014, the Department of Marine Resources again proved its willingness to work with lobstermen in Canada. In January, a contingent from the MLA Board travelled to Canada to discuss how our industries can work together to strengthen the position of lobstermen on both sides of the border. Open communication was deemed critical to making this happen. In May, MLA partnered with the Maine Lobstermen’s Community Alliance to offer a leadership program for a group of ten young lobstermen. Through this program, the lobstermen learned the basics of lobster management, science and marketing and visited Prince Edward Island to experience firsthand the Canadian lobster fishery and processing sectors. Many of the program's participants have since stepped into leadership roles here in Maine.

In 2014, the Department of Marine Resources again proved its willingness to work with lobstermen to ensure a viable future. Commissioner Keliher, for the second year in a row, held more than ten meetings with lobstermen in their communities to hear their vision for the lobster fishery. With the results of the November election, it is likely that the lobster industry can look forward to continuing to work with Commissioner Keliher.

The MLA also stepped up to help lobstermen understand options available through the Affordable Care Act. With a trained health insurance Navigator on staff, MLA has been able to help lobstermen and their personnel to explain how the new health insurance law affects them, provide information on health insurance policies, and assist with the enrollment process. In a single session, the MLA board met on November 11 in Belfast and discussed the outcome of the election. MLA will continue to support Governor LePage and recommit to working with him to ensure a strong, healthy lobster industry over the years to come. The MLA board discussed the lobster season. Lobster landings remain strong, the price remains higher than last year though there was a significant price drop when the Grand Manan season opened. Fresh bait

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

Jan. 7, noon
Feb. 4, noon

STEAMING AHEAD

Maine Lobstermen’s Association ... Advocating for a sustainable lobster resource and the fishermen and communities that depend on it since 1954.

President: David Cogneau
So. Thomaston, 207.594.7518
1st VP: Jim Dow
Bass Harbor, 207.288.9846
2nd VP: Kristan Porter
Cutler, 207.259.5306
Sec/Treasurer: Arnold Gamage, Jr.
So. Bristol, 207.644.8110

Directors
Bob Baines, Spruce Head, 966.0777
Dwight Carver, Beals, 497.2895
Gerry Cashman, Port Clyde, 372.6429
Jim Henderson, Camp Ellis, 486.4363
Robert Ingulli, Bucks Harbor, 255.3418
Mark Jones, Boothbay, 633.6054
Jay Smith, Boothbay, 633.6054
Jason Joyce, Swan’s Island, 526.4109
John Williams, Stonington, 367.2731
Craig Stewart, Long Island, 846.3158
Robert Ingulli, Bucks Harbor, 255.3418
Mark Jones, Boothbay, 633.6054
Jason Joyce, Swan’s Island, 526.4109
Jack Merrill, Islesford, 244.4187
Tad Miller, Mattinicus, 372.6941
Wills Spier, Yarmouth, 846.9279
Jay Smith, Nokomis, 563.5208
Craig Stewart, Long Island, 846.3158
Elliot Thomas, Yarmouth, 846.6281
John Williams, Stonington, 367.2731
Donald Young, Cushing, 954.6404
Jack Young, Vinalhaven, 863.4905

Executive Director
Patrice McCarron
pmccarron@mainelobstermen.org

Staff

Navigators
April Gilmore McNutt
april@mainelobstermen.org

Assistant
Sarah Pauszko
sarah@mainelobstermen.org

Maine Lobstermen’s Association 203 Lafayette Center
Kennebunk, ME 04043
info@mainelobstermen.org
207.967.4555
www.mainelobstermen.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS’ MEETING SCHEDULE
All meetings take place at Darby’s Restaurant, Belfast.

Jan. 7, noon
Feb. 4, noon

MLA DIRECTORS MEETING
The MLA board met on November 11 in Belfast and discussed the outcome of the election. MLA will congratulate Governor LePage and recommit to working with lobstermen to ensure a viable future for Maine fishermen to get the information they needed to enroll in an affordable health insurance plan.

The last bit of good news for 2014 concerns the effect pes- ticides may have on marine species such as lobster. Early in the year the Legislature considered a bill proposed in response to the perceived threat of a few pesticides. The bill failed but the Legislature in turn became proactive in supporting research to look at specific pesticides that pose the greatest risk to the marine environment here in Maine. This project will provide much-needed information that will inform possible future laws to protect our marine re- sources.

Among the “manageable” changes of 2014, Maine’s lobster industry swallowed another round of whale rules which will go into effect next June. While I doubt I could find a single lobsterman who would say he’s happy about more whale rules, I know of many who are very satisfied with the outcome for Maine. The true litmus test is to look at how the new whale rules affect other states compared to Maine. The MLA and DMR advocated for, and got, an area-based approach that places the most aggressive whale protection measures where the risk of encountering whales is greatest. Maine avoided closures by ramping up gear modifications in the highest-risk areas. Maine’s inshore exempted waters remain exempt from the new rules. By comparison, Massachusetts lobstermen lost their winter fishery because of a vast closure and must comply with a complete ban on singles all the way to the beach. A ban on singles has long been a non-starter for Maine and we have fought hard over the years to keep it that way. The MLA has been fighting for common-sense whale rules since the manage- ment process began back in 1995. We are very proud of what we have achieved on behalf of Maine lobstermen in this most recent round.

Maine’s lobster industry also received a shot across the bow from the New England Fisheries Management Council when it became clear that, to the Council, no fishery is off the table when it comes to protecting cod. MLA heard loud and clear from lobstermen that the lobster industry is not in any way responsible for the current state of the cod stock. Simply questioning Maine lobstermen’s possible impact on cod recovery seemed to bring the lobster industry together, tapping deep into the pride and stewardship of every lobsterman. The MLA made it clear: lobstermen are stewards of their resource. Lobster traps are a passive gear. Lobstermen do not believe they are harming the cod stocks. Fortunately, this issue has been referred to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and more research will be conducted. But you can bet that the spotlight is on, so getting every cod caught in a trap back alive matters.

The year 2014 has proven that the lobster industry is a vi- brant, sustainable and profitable industry, but it is not im- mune to the pressures that have plagued many other fish- eries. The MLA will continue to lead the industry through these battles as they arise, and search for pragmatic, long- term solutions that ensure a viable lobster fishery for gen- erations to come.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! And as always, stay safe on the water.

Continued on page 10
MLA continues from page 9

(herring) is getting tight since all her- ring areas currently are closed. Area 2 is the only area with approximately 28,000 metric tons left for 2014. The board noted that EPA pollution per- mits must be carried on vessels be- ginning December 19, 2014. The MLA board discussed the rising concern over cod bycatch in lob- ster traps raised through the New England Fisheries Management Council (NEFMC) Framework 53 process. Patrice consulted Carl Wilson on the accuracy of the cod by- catch estimate taken from the MSC report. Wilson stated that the data is being misinterpreted. DMR has data on cod bycatch in lobster traps from sea sampling. Wilson characterized the incidence as rare and cautioned that it is based on an extremely small sample size which makes it difficult to generate a realistic estimate for the fishery. Patrice attended a re- search update at the University of Maine looking at cod and cusk by- catch in lobster traps. To date, these studies indicate low encounter rates and very high survivability. Sample size is very small. MLA will continue to closely monitor this work. The MLA’s position is that cod bycatch in lobster traps is rare; those caught are released alive. MLA is open to working with researchers on improv- ing data on cod bycatch and on edu- cating lobstermen to ensure the fish are returned alive. [NOTE: The MLA held an Executive Committee meet- ing and sent written comments on the FW 53 discussion to the NEFMC meeting in November. MLA stated the association’s concerns over any proposal to restrict lobster fishing in groundfish closed areas, citing the need for more research and to work through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC).] MLA received a request to help or- ganize a Penobscot Baykeepers Program. The MLA Directors replied that the MLA is already overcommit- ted but encouraged individuals who are interested to get involved. The Health Insurance Marketplace opens November 15. MLA has two staff members trained to assist lob- stermen in the enrollment process. MLA is accepting nominations for lobstermen to serve on the MLA Board; the nomination form will opens November 15. MLA has two nominating the Maine Fishermen’s Forum. MLA received a request to help or- ganize a Penobscot Baykeepers Program. The MLA Directors replied that the MLA is already overcommit- ted but encouraged individuals who are interested to get involved. The Health Insurance Marketplace opens November 15. MLA has two staff members trained to assist lob- stermen in the enrollment process. MLA is accepting nominations for lobstermen to serve on the MLA Board; the nomination form will

MLA Seeks Nominations from Members for Board of Directors

Here’s YOUR opportunity to get involved in setting the course for the future of YOUR Industry

Annual Meeting will be held Friday, March 6 at 9am

Did you know?
• MLA Directors are elected for a 3-year term
• MLA Directors meet monthly, except August, in Belfast.
• Board members expected to attend at least 4 meetings/yr.
• Maximum # of Board members: 21
• Current Board: 20 members
• # Directors with Terms expiring: 12
• Average age of MLA Board: 57
• Youngest MLA Board member: 44
• Oldest MLA Board member: 71
• Number of Board members representing islands: 6

MLA Board representation by lobster zone:

2015 Board Recruitment priorities
• Zone G representation
• Young lobstermen
• Dedicated lobstermen
• Lobstermen who reflect industry’s needs and priorities

NOMINATION REQUIREMENTS
• To make a nomination, you must be an MLA member in good standing.
• All nominees must hold a valid commercial lobster license and be an MLA members in good standing.
• Deadline for nominations: February 2, 2015.
• Feel free to nominate yourself, or someone else.

Thank you for helping to keep the MLA strong!

Mail your nomination to the MLA office: MLA, 203 Lafayette Center, Kennebunk, ME 04043. Or feel free to call in your nomination to 967-4555 or email: patrice@mainelobstermen.org.

Continued on page 11

SOUTHERN MAINE HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY

The NOAA Ship Ferdinand R. Hassler will be conducting hydrographic sur- vey operations in southern Maine -- between Wells and Cape Elizabeth -- intermittently from January through February, 2015.

Additional planned operations in Maine over the next three years in- clude western Penobscot Bay in 2016 and Casco Bay in 2017. These planned survey operations are subject to change due to weather and logistical constraints. Multibeam so-
narr will be used to acquire detailed bottom data, delineating and obtaining least depths of potential hazards to navigation. It is understood that there may be fishing gear in the area during survey operations. The Ferdinand R. Hassler will exercise every caution while towing surveying to avoid entanglement. In the event fishing gear becomes entangled, the ship will immediately stop and clear the fishing gear.

There is an email subscription list to provide updates on the activities of NOAA ships performing hydrographic survey work and to announce any changes in schedules. You can subscribe at www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov. After entering email address and appropriate contact information, select the "Vessel updates in progress" option to receive updates. The email subscription lists are managed by the Navigation Manager and the Hydrographic Surveys Division, the Navigation Manager and the Hydrographic Surveys Division.

The Lobster Management Board approved development of an Interstate FMP for Jonah crab and initiated the development of Draft Addendum XXIV to Amendment 3 to the Interstate FMP for American Lobster. The Jonah crab FMP was in response to concern about increasing fishing pressure on Jonah crab, which has long been considered a bycatch in the lobster fishery. Growing market demand has doubled landings in the past seven years. Given the absence of state and federal management programs and a stock assessment for Jonah crab, there is concern that current harvest rates may affect the resource's sustainability. The Draft Jonah crab FMP will consider management objectives, proposed regulations, monitoring requirements, and recommendations for federal fisheries.

Draft Addendum XXIV will address inconsistencies between state and federal American lobster trap transfer regulations. Options will be drafted to improve alignment between state and federal measures for full business conservation tax, trap transfer increments, and dual permits transferability rules. Draft Addendum XXIV will be presented for consideration and approval for public comment at the Commission's meeting. For more information, contact Kate Taylor, senior FMP coordinator, at ktaylor@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

The Atlantic Herring Section received an update on the development of Draft Amendment 3 to the Atlantic herring FMP. The Addendum establishes a 907,671 pound coastwide quota for yellow eel fisheries, reduces Maine's glass eel quota to 9,688 pounds, and allows for the continuation of New York's silver eel weir fishery in the Delaware River.

Maine will continue to maintain daily trip level reporting in its glass eel fishery and require a pound-for-pound payback in the event of going over the quota. The state also will implement a fishery-independent life cycle survey covering glass, yellow, and silver eels within at least one river system.

The Board's actions respond to the 2012 benchmark stock assessment indicating the American eel population is depleted. Addendum IV is the second phase of management action in response to the stock assessment. For more information, contact Kate Taylor, senior FMP coordinator, at ktaylor@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.
MLA SELECT BUSINESS MEMBERS  Show your support for these businesses!

**ACCOUNTANTS**
- Back River Financial Group
- John Hallie
- 690 Main Ave
- Farmingdale, ME 04344
- 207-662-3772
- info@backrivergroup.com
- www.backrivergroup.com
- Free initial consultation and review of previous tax returns.

**BAIT DEALERS**
- Bosby Bait LLC
- 2 Morse Rd
- Hampton, NH 03826
- 603-300-2846/603-300-2849
- info@bosbybait.com
- www.bosbybait.com
- 85% discount on drum per drum on multiple drum purchases (must show current MLA card).

**BOAT BUILDERS/BOAT REPAIR**
- Richard Stanley Custom Boats
- PO Box 275
- Bass Harbor, ME 04605
- 207-272-6279, 207-518-9649
- landisfishing@maine.rr.com
- www.richardstanleycustomboats.com
- 1$000 off final hull price with MLA membership.

**HYDRAULICS**
- Coastal Hydraulics Inc
- PO Box 2806
- Seaforth, ME 04874
- 603-474-1914
- sales@coastalhyd.com
- 10% discount on all in-stock items for MLA members.

**INDUSTRY ORGANIZATIONS**
- Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative
- 2 Union St.
- Portland, ME 04101
- 207-541-9310
- info@lobsterfrommaine.com
- www.lobsterfrommaine.com

**INSURANCE**
- Acadia Insurance
- Mandi Neikerson
- 1 Acadia Commons
- Westbrook, ME 04092
- 207-874-1642
- mandi.neikerson@acadia-ins.com
- Smithwick & Marinners Insurance
- 366 US Route 1
- Falmouth, ME 04105
- 207-781-5500/5501
- scottt@smithwick-ins.com
- www.smithwick-ins.com
- Discounted excess insurance for MLA members. Additional 5% discount with proof of completed C.G. Fishing Vessel Drum Conductor course within the last 5 years.

**LOBSTER/SEAFOOD/WHOLESALE/RETAIL**
- Channel Fish Co
- 370 East Eagle St.
- East Boston, MA 02128
- 617-569-2800
- 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 Winuncellar Rd.
- Durham, NH 03824
- 603-397-5331
- craig@craigussalural.com
- www.craigussalural.com
- 10% discount on all Victorious Cuttle

**RESTAURANTS**
- North Atlantic Power Products
- Novatec Brands LTD
- O’Hair Corporation
- Orion Seafood International
- Penobscot Bay & River Pilots Assn.
- Penobscot East Resource Center
- Pete’s Marine Electronics
- PB&F CPAs
- P J Lobster Company
- Polyform US
- Port Clyde Fishermen’s Co-op
- Quahog Lobster Inc.
- Re/Max Oceanside
- South Shore Lobster
- South Bristol Fishermen’s Cooperative
- Superior Bait and Salt
- Superior Marine Products Inc.
- The Compass Insurance Group
- The First NA
- Vinalhaven Fishermen’s Co-op

Many Thanks to these fine businesses, the MLA’s Keeper members!
**2015 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION**

The Maine Fishermen’s Forum Board of Directors offers a scholarship fund to benefit immediate family members (son/daughter, or a grandson/granddaughter) or legal dependent of someone actively involved in Maine’s seafood industry, regardless of financial need or academic achievement. Undergraduates attending a two or four year college who are in at least the second year of their program or students who are in at least the second semester of their Certificate Program will be eligible. Applications will be accepted through February 25, 2015. Scholarships will be awarded by a random drawing to be held during the 39th annual Maine Fishermen’s Forum. Please note that previous winners are not eligible.

**Do you qualify? Check all that apply:**
- Are you a sophomore, junior, or senior right now? You must be at least a sophomore in college to apply.
- Do you have an immediate family member actively participating in Maine's seafood industry?

**What do you need to apply? Check all that apply:**
- Complete the following application & send to the address at the top.
- Provide an official transcript or Registrar’s letter of current standing along with this application.

**You qualify for the scholarship drawing ONLY IF you checked all 4 of the boxes above.**

**STUDENT INFORMATION**
- Student Name:
- Street/Mailing Address:
- City:
- State: Zip:
- Home Phone:
- Email:

**SCHOOL INFORMATION**
- College/University name:
- Location of college:
- Expected year of graduation:
- Your major:
- College standing as of Sept 2015 (circle one)
  - Freshman
  - Sophomore
  - Junior
  - Senior

**MAINE SEAFOOD INDUSTRY FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION**
- Name:
- Relationship:
- Street/Mailing Address:
- City:
  - State: Zip:
  - Home Phone:
  - Email:
- Vessel Name or Commercial License Number:
- Describe Participation in the Maine seafood industry:

---

**MLA Items | Color | Size | Price**
- Women’s Zip-Hoodie (bunnies) | Light blue | S, M, L | $35
- 1/4 Zip Fleece | Navy | ML, XL, 2XL | $20
- MLA Classic T-shirt | Gray | M, L, XL, 2XL | $15
- Child Lobster Lifecycle T-shirt | Oatmeal | S | $10
- Child Lobster Busy Tshirt | White | XS, S, M | $10
- MLA Beanie | Gray | one size | $15
- MLA Logo Hat | Blue | one size | $15
- MLA Tote | Oatmeal | one size | $15

**MLA Items Color Size Price**

---

**STAY WARM THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!**

Consider giving your loved ones an MLA membership or shirt. Visit us online or give us a call to place an order!

Shop online and view the full catalogue
www.mainelobstermen.org/mla-store

**MLA Logo Hat**
Blue
one size
$15

**MLA Items**

**Maine Fishermen’s Forum**
PO Box 288
Bath, ME 04530
(207) 442-7700

**Maine Fishermen’s Forum**
PO Box 288
Bath, ME 04530
(207) 442-7700

---

**December 2014/January 2015 | LANDINGS | Page 13**
CONFUSED ABOUT YOUR HEALTH INSURANCE OPTIONS?

The MLA can help!

Here’s what’s new:

- You have until February 15th to sign up and avoid a penalty.
- If you’re under 30, low-premium catastrophic plans are available.
- You can’t be turned down for preexisting medical conditions.
- You have until February 15th to sign up and avoid a penalty.
- If you’re 65 or older, you qualify for Medicare.
WHEN YOUR ENGINE MEANS BUSINESS, MILTON CAT MEANS MORE.

Milton CAT is the Northeast and upstate New York Caterpillar dealer. Our complete range of marine power systems solutions is backed by a team with exceptional knowledge and experience.

- More engine choices.
- More fully equipped and staffed locations.
- More support for your commercial fishing vessel, ferry, tug, or pleasure craft.
- More ordering and delivery options for unparalleled part availability.

Contacts:
(in ME, NH, VT ) Stewart Tuttle, 207-885-8082, Stewart_Tuttle@miltoncat.com
(in MA, RI ) Kevin Hampson, 508-634-5503, Kevin_Hampson@miltoncat.com

Happy Holidays

From Your Friends at Riverdale Mills

RIVERDALE

1.800.762.6374 • www.riverdale.com

BROOKS TRAP MILL & MARINE SUPPLIES

Buy your raffle tickets today for a chance to win one of two drawings for 50 NEW LOBSTER TRAPS!!

Trap Tree Raffle Tickets available now at all four locations!!

Jonesboro, ME  (207) 434-5791
Portland, ME  (800) 244-8727
Thomaston, ME  (800) 426-4526
West Bath, ME  (855) 840-6027

Visit us online at: www.brookstrapmill.com

It’s time to place your orders for traps, trap kits, and supplies. We’ll help you find just what you need at great prices!!
Introducing: A Wax-Free, 100% Recyclable Box for Lobsters and Seafood that Really Works!

For 50-lb. Non-Leakers, Leakers, Covers, Trays, or for custom applications, contact us today for more information at vpc@volkboxes.com or call Frank at (207) 571-5505.

Supershield™ Boxes. Wax-free, super-strong and super-water-resistant. FDA and CFIA approved. Designed to meet your retail, restaurant and foodservice customers’ demanding sustainability requirements. Finally—a recyclable shipping solution that really works!

Ready to Catch a Tax Break?

We get it — and we’ve got 17 years’ experience helping commercial lobstermen and fishermen like you with tax planning and preparation that keeps you from falling into the trap of overpaying.

NOW ACCEPTING NEW CLIENTS!
Call John Hallee at 207-622-3772 or email info@backrivergroup.com today.

Present your MLA membership card at the following businesses and receive generous discounts!

Accutech Marine Propeller, Inc. Dover, NH -- 20% off propeller repair. Discounts vary by manufacturer for new propellers, shafting and other hardware.


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 Victorinox Cutlery.

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

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

Maine Lobstermen’s Association Kennebunk, ME -- 10% off to harvesters on 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.

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

North Atlantic Power Products Exeter, NH -- 10% off marine gears, controls, accessories, and parts.

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 3 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.

Winter Harbor Fishermen’s Coop Winter Harbor, ME -- 10% off picked lobster meat.

MLA MEMBERS DISCOUNT DIRECTORY
Lifeflight of Maine is a nonprofit organization. Although organized by Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems and Central Maine Healthcare Corporation, it does not receive funding from them. In addition, many of its patients have no health insurance. “We bill Maine Medicare or the insurance company if they have one,” said Judge of the flights, which may cost $6,000 to $7,000 per trip. To cover its costs, Lifeflight created a foundation in 2003. Donations to that foundation come from individuals, towns and corporations. Just this summer, 56 long distance swimmers in mid-coast Maine raised $110,000 for Lifeflight through a sponsored 3-mile swim from Lincolnville to Islesboro.

In November, Linda Bean made a dramatic donation to the foundation. She gave $3 million toward the $6 million cost of a third Lifeflight helicopter. While Lifeflight averages one to two calls per 12-hour shift, “There were more than 500 times last year we got calls we couldn’t answer,” Judge said at a press conference announcing the donation. “Many of our coastal fishing families live on remote islands like Frenchboro, Vinalhaven, Monhegan and Matinicus. When time is of the essence and a person is in trouble, Lifeflight is there,” Bean said at the press conference.

Continued on page 25
SAFETY AT SEA: Automatic Information System — “Can you see me now?”

By David Gelinas

One of the newer electronic instruments currently found on ships and aboard some smaller vessels is the Automatic Information System (AIS). As of December 2004, all vessels of over 300 Gross Tons on international voyages are required to have a “Class A” AIS transponder. All commercial traffic calling in Maine waters such as tankers, freighters, cruise ships, and tug boats have AIS.

AIS allows vessel operators to “see” one another on a display screen or, more beneficially, on an electronic plotting device such as a chart plotter, radar, laptop, or Electronic Chart Display & Information System (ECDIS). Information typically available includes vessel name, position, speed, and navigational status. AIS-equipped vessel operators are able to see other AIS vessels, usually within VHF range, even if such vessels are located on the far side of an island or beyond the practical range of radar. AIS operates by using two VHF frequencies and relies on the Global Positioning System (GPS) satellite system for precise timing and position information. The two VHF frequencies ensure that at least one will be available regardless of interference, allowing for continuous communication with other vessels. The precision timing afforded by the GPS enables AIS receivers to automatically communicate with one another, and prioritizes communications between vessels according to their proximity to each other.

While ships and other commercial vessels are required to use type “A” AIS units, the more affordable “Class B” units are showing up more frequently on smaller vessels. Class B AIS units operate at a lower power and with less communication frequency than Class A units, but still mesh seamlessly into the AIS system. These units can use an existing VHF antenna with the addition of a splitter and only require the mounting of a separate small GPS antenna. This is the type of unit that would be used on a small fishing vessel such as a lobster boat. A more detailed technical explanation of the AIS system can be found on the U.S. Coast Guard’s Navigation Center Web page, and from various manufacturers’ information made available on the Internet.

The Captain of a fishing vessel equipped with AIS would be able to see the position of all commercial vessels on the waterway, as well as other small vessels similarly equipped. They would be able to see the name, course, range, and speed of an approaching vessel. Some AIS units offer a programmable Closest Point of Approach (CPA) alarm function. Communications between AIS-equipped vessels are greatly enhanced, as you can call a particular vessel by name, instead of the sometimes anxious VHF broadcast on channel 16: “Calling the boat approaching my starboard bow…”

In addition to the obvious benefits of avoiding collisions, perhaps the greatest benefit of fishing vessels adopting AIS is enhanced safety in a search-and-rescue situation. While we all carry EPIRBs, bear in mind that the EPIRB system relies on rescue efforts coordinated from shore. In a crisis situation where every moment counts, it’s likely that the closest vessel that could render timely assistance is another fishing vessel. With AIS, as long as the distressed vessel’s AIS unit still has power, that vessel’s position will show up on the chart plotter of any other AIS-equipped fishing vessel within VHF range, even if the vessels are separated by a land mass. Further, in rough weather, the useful range of radar can be severely limited due to sea state. It can be expanded by using the greater coverage of AIS.

One of the greatest benefits of using AIS is the enhanced safety of fishing vessels. By adopting AIS, you can greatly improve your safety while on the water. You will be better able to understand your surroundings and communicate more effectively with other vessels. This can greatly improve your safety and make your fishing trip more enjoyable. By using AIS, you will be able to see other vessels in your area and communicate with them if necessary. This can greatly improve your safety and make your fishing trip more enjoyable.
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HEALTH INSURANCE ENROLLMENT IN 2015

By April Gilmore McNatt and Melissa Waterman

Threading one’s way through the labyrinth of the Affordable Care Act health insurance program can be tricky. People who are already enrolled with healthcare.gov must be sure to update their application before December 15 if they expect any changes to household income or size in the first quarter of the year. This will ensure uninterrupted coverage in January, 2015. Those who are not in the program right now must complete an application before February 15, 2015, or face heavy penalties when tax time comes around.

The subsidies available through healthcare.gov are based on family size and income. Individuals and families enrolled through healthcare.gov whose income falls below a certain level can qualify for federal subsidies that will bring the monthly premium cost down to an affordable level. For most lobstermen, annual income changes. Thus updating your application on healthcare.gov is particularly important.

One family with three children whom I worked with during the previous enrollment period did not qualify for a subsidy last year. They chose to enroll anyway. This year their income level was different. The family reapplied through healthcare.gov and found a lower-priced plan with even better benefits, and they qualified for a subsidy.

So, if you didn’t qualify last year for a subsidy, it’s worth taking another look this year. The Federal Poverty Level, which is a measure used to help determine how much financial help a consumer can get to pay for coverage, was increased this year. The rule of thumb is that if your income is less than four times the Federal Poverty Level, you can receive a subsidy toward your health insurance premiums. For an individual, you can earn up to $95,400 and still qualify for a subsidy (more information is available at www.healthcare.gov/qualifying–for-lower-costs–chart/). If you didn’t qualify last year based on your 2014 projected income, you might this year.

You also must consider the ramifications of the annual premium income assessment. If a family’s annual income was more than what was originally estimated, the family could lose its health insurance subsidy in 2015. That change will depend on how much greater the actual income was compared to the estimated income. For example, if a family of two estimated their adjusted gross income would be $50,000 last year and they ended up making over $62,000, they may lose the subsidy or see a greatly reduced subsidy for 2015.

There are two scenarios if you do not update your application depending on whether or not you authorized healthcare.gov to access your current tax information to verify your income and assess your eligibility for subsidies. If you do not update your application, and did not authorize healthcare.gov to access your tax information, you will automatically be reenrolled in your same plan, if it is still offered, but you will pay the full price of your monthly premium –ouch! Simply not updating will result in paying full price for a plan that formerly had subsidies to help lower the cost – at least until your income is verified.

If you do not update your application but did authorize healthcare.gov to access your tax information, you will be automatically reenrolled in your current plan, but your subsidy will be adjusted – up, down or eliminated – based on the income reported in your most recent tax filing.

A great reason to take another look at what’s available this year on healthcare.gov is that there are more plans available. Last year there were just two companies offering health insurance through Maine’s health insurance exchange: Maine Community Health Options and Anthem. Now for 2015, a third company, Harvard Pilgrim, will also be offering plans. All three companies offer qualified health plans that cover the essential health benefits that are required to be covered by insurance plans under the Affordable Care Act. The rates are competitive and can be found at www.healthcare.gov/see-plans/.

Do you want to shop for a new plan? Anyone currently paying for health insurance through healthcare.gov can change plans during the open enrollment period, November 15 to February 15, 2015. It is still offered, but you will pay the full price of your monthly premium –ouch! Simply not updating will result in paying full price for a plan that formerly had subsidies to help lower the cost – at least until your income is verified.

If you do not update your application but did authorize healthcare.gov to access your tax information, you will be automatically reenrolled in your current plan, but your subsidy will be adjusted – up, down or eliminated – based on the income reported in your most recent tax filing.

I have seen the highs and lows in several fisheries. Shrimp, soft shell clams, scallops, urchins – the list goes on and on. During my career, I have observed the Northern shrimp fishery come back three times. I believe these other fisheries will also come back.

The lobster resource has weathered all of this and continues to thrive. Record-breaking landings continue. I would like to think all of us had a hand in this. One practice that has impressed me the most is the high rate of voluntary enrollment within the lobster fishery. It is obvious that lobster fishermen have bought into our conservation laws and rules and comply with them. It is my opinion that this practice has led to record landings and a sustainable fishery.

During the past 40 years it has been an honor to serve you and the State of Maine. I have had the privilege to be a part of the commercial fishing industry.

I will miss you all.

Good luck and stay safe.

From left to right, MLA president David Cousens, MLA health insurance Navigator April McNatt with with Christie Hager, Region 1 Director of U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services and Mayor Brennan of Portland at a November press conference announcing the opening of the Health Insurance Marketplace. MLA photo.
THE LOBSTERING WOMEN OF VINALHAVEN

By Shelley Wigglesworth

More and more women can be found working alongside lobstermen on Maine waters these days and are making their presence known in an industry that has been predominantly operated by their male counterparts for decades. According to the Department of Marine Resources, 4 percent of the state's 5,171 commercial lobster licenses are held by women. However, a much larger number of lobsterwomen is the island of Vinalhaven. I caught up with three of these hardworking women to find out what led them to fishing and to listen to their views on their lives as lobstermen. Leslie Dyer was born and raised on Vinalhaven and has been a third generation fisherman, “she said. “My namesake, Leslie Dyer, Sr., my great-grandfather, was one of the founders of the Maine Lobstermen’s Association. His son, Les Dyer Jr., was my grandfather and also lobstered for many years. Basically my whole family is in the business now, including my dad and my brother. I come from a long line of fishermen,” said Dyer.

Wendy Bickford and a large halibut. W. Bickford photo.

The divorced mother of three with a master’s degree in fine arts explained how she got into lobstering for a living. “It’s not usually a profession that a 39-year-old woman gets into, but it was a job, and as a single mom I needed the income,” Dyer said. What started out as a way to make money eventually grew into much more for Dyer — into a livelihood that she enjoys and is proud of. “The feeling of accomplishment at the end of the day, after I’ve helped haul an average of 300 traps and see the catch and realize that I can do it is a good feeling,” Dyer said. “I have tried to set a good work ethic and be a good example for my kids, too. They know how hard I work to provide for them.”

Though proud of her work, Dyer also noted the grueling physical aspect of fishing as well. “I have aches and pains I never had until I worked aboard a boat.” Despite this, she said the payoff is well worth it for her. “Having a good haul and catch and hoping my check will reflect what we have reaped from the sea makes up for everything.”

Kachina Watt has been a sternman aboard the F/V Starfish with Steve Rosen since 2010. Like Dyer, Watt was born and raised on Vinalhaven. “My parents passed when I was young and my older brother took over guardianship of me when I was 11. He was a sternman and was known around the island as one of the fastest and hardest-working sternmen around. I enjoyed listening to him tell stories of being on the boat and catching all kinds of lobsters. It made me really want to do it too. Later on, my boyfriend in high school had his lobster license and an outboard boat so in the summer I would go with him.” Watt explained. She gave college a try after graduating from high school in 2000 but eventually returned to the island to fish and has been doing just that ever since. Watt has no regrets whatsoever. “I love lobstering, although it can be very discouraging in the spring when there is nothing to be caught. Some days in the spring after bait and fuel I end up owing money! We haul ten-trap strings, 15-trap strings and 12-trap trawls. Sometimes I’m tired and I hurt but in the end I love it. I get plenty of time to rest in the winter months.” Watt feels she is doing exactly what she is supposed to be doing and sees lobstering as a life-long career. “I will work in the stern of a boat until I physically cannot do it anymore,” she said.

Wendy Bickford was born and raised in Rockland but has lived and worked on Vinalhaven for the past 15 years. “I come from a lobstering family,” she explained. “My dad, Robert Cross Jr., was a fisherman in Rockland waters through my entire childhood,” she said. Bickford is the mother of two teenage children and also holds a Certified Nursing Assistant License. She said she fell into lobstering by chance. “When I moved to Vinalhaven I saw a few women working on the water and figured, ‘Hey why not me?’ The job opportunities are limited here and we all have bills to pay,” Bickford said. “So I got my hands on a site, tried the work and succeeded. I have been on the water ever since.”

Bickford hauls on the F/V Starlight Express. She commented on two of the aspects of her job she most enjoys. “A person sees many beautiful things on the water. I have seen things many may never see in a lifetime, and I like that my job keeps me fit,” she explained. What Bickford doesn’t always enjoy is the unpredictable and sometimes unforgiving weather conditions all fishermen are subject to. “Having to haul on really rough days or in extremely cold temperatures along with harsh seas and the long hours can really take a toll,” she said.

Eventually, Bickford would like to go back to school and obtain a nursing degree, but for now she is content lobstering. “That’s not to say a little credit now and again wouldn’t be appreciated. “I believe fishermen and women work extremely hard for their money. I feel the people who make the calls and decide the price of the product don’t really understand how hard we work to bring that delicacy to the world. It is heartbreaking work all the way around and I feel that is overlooked a lot,” she said.

Leslie Dyer hard at work. Photo courtesy of L. Dyer.

Join us in Supporting the Tradition of Making One’s Living from the Sea by Advertising in the Fishermen’s Voice.

The leader with 8,000 copies monthly from Eastport to Kittery and on to Cape Cod. 207-963-7195

Send letters, news, stories to:
P.O. Box 253 Gouldsboro, ME 04607
Email: info@fishermensvoice.com
www.fishermensvoice.com
the return from Midnight Mass after a day-long fast. Derived from the French word for ‘awakening’, the Réveillon feast revived dinners and also symbolized an awakening to the meaning of Christ’s birth.

Through the years, Réveillon meals have become more opulent and luxurious. While there is no set menu, oysters, escargots, foie gras, scallops and lobster are commonly featured in restaurants and in the homes of those hosting the feast. In 2013, France imported $35 million of U.S. lobster. More than a third of that lobster was delivered in December, prior to the holiday celebrations. The 2014 Christmas Eve menu at Le Meurice, one of the premier, three-star restaurants in Paris, includes oysters, scallops, sea bass, game pie and lobster with Jerusalem artichokes and black truffle, all for the eye-watering price of €650 (yes, that’s roughly $800). Réveillon celebrations may also take place on New Year’s Eve both in France and in other locations such as New Orleans or Québec.

The United Kingdom is primarily a Protestant country. The main Christmas meal is celebrated on December 25th and traditionally includes items such as roast turkey or goose, Brussels sprouts, bread sauce, pigs in a blanket (sausages wrapped in bacon) and lashings of gravy. But over the last decade an increasing number of British consumers have been selecting seafood as the focal point of their family meals. In recent years, English grocery stores have seen record-breaking seasonal demand for luxury fish and shellfish in December. In 2011, industry experts estimated the specialty fish market at Christmas to be worth as much as £20 million (roughly $31 million) and it was growing by 15 per cent annually.

United Kingdom supermarkets are capitalizing on this trend. Seven major British grocery stores, which represent almost 90 per cent of the British grocery market, are featuring frozen Canadian lobster in their range of Christmas products. Often this lobster is promoted at cut-rate prices.

The advertising agency I work for, TBWA, just released a Christmas TV commercial for the discount supermarket Lidl. The ad shows people feasting on a deluxe range of Lidl products, including Canadian lobster. The 2014 Christmas advertisement for the discount supermarket Iceland features a celebrity holding up a package of frozen lobster, exclaiming, “whole Canadian lobster…for a fiver!”

The British retailers behind these ads are using lobster to symbolize the quality and luxuriousness of their holiday product range but at a budget price, hoping to lure in more middle-class shoppers. The discount cost of the crustaceans is a headline-grabbing public relations exercise in itself. The low price makes a good newspaper headline: “Now we can ALL eat lobster: Budget supermarket Morrisons unveils £10 Christmas crustacean” or “A real catch! Iceland unveils plans for £5 Christmas lobster.”

As Europeans down to this year’s holiday feasts, some will be partaking in age-old traditions while others will be participating in modern trends. Regardless of the reason, it is wonderful to know the exceptional role lobster plays in celebrations during such a special time of year.

---

**MAINE DREDGE TEAM**

Maine’s Dredge Team met in October to discuss the status of Maine projects. Mark Habel from the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) provided updates on Maine’s dredge improvement projects.

Searsport Harbor

The ACOE has proposed additional sampling and testing methodology developed in consultation with the EPA. The methodology has been shared with NMFS and Maine DEP for review and comment. Therefore, the ACOE has delayed until mid-February, 2015, submission to the state of its consistency determination and application for water quality certification pending completion of additional sediment sampling and testing.

Piscataqua River (Portsmouth Harbor)

The ACOE’s Civil Works Review Board has approved the project and ACOE has initiated the next round of review of the project. Next steps including consultation with the governors of Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts; finalizing the Chief of Engineer’s report in order to secure federal funding for the project. ACOE continues to communicate with local officials in Wells and in Massachusetts about options for beneficial use of project-generated sand for beach nourishment, and with Kittery officials about beneficial use of project-generated rock. Absent a beneficial use, ACOE would consider disposal of the rock at the Cape Arundel Dump Site.

Portland Harbor

There has been no further discussion of deepening of the federal channel in Portland Harbor.

Blue Hill

This project is pending, awaiting approval by the Assistant Secretary of the Army (requested in December 2013) that is needed for the ACOE to execute a cost-sharing agreement with the Town of Blue Hill.

Great Chebeague Island

This project is pending, awaiting approval by the Assistant Secretary of the Army (requested in October 2014) that is needed to execute a cost-sharing agreement with Chebeague Island. The town still needs to decide on the scope of the proposed project, options for which include dredging the channel and turning basin or, alternatively, these areas plus an anchorage area. The cost of disposal at the Portland Disposal Site may be prohibitive so the project needs a disposal area in Casco Bay in order to be economically feasible.

Camden Harbor

The ACOE is in the preliminary stages of assessing potential work on the harbor’s inner and outer breakwaters.

Saco River (Section 111 project at Camp Ellis)
The ACOE and Fish and Wildlife Service have reached agreement on how to address Endangered Species Act issues connected to the project. ACOE is considering additional information needed to move forward with the project.

Ed O’Donnell of ACOE provided updates on federal maintenance dredging projects in Maine which the ACOE is currently working on.

Scarborough River

An ACOE contractor was scheduled to resume maintenance dredging in November; the project contractor encountered difficulties and did not complete the project last year during the fall-winter period when construction activity was allowed.

Portland Harbor

The ACOE completed maintenance dredging earlier this year. The project involved dredging and disposal of a lesser volume of material than estimated. An EPA enforcement action against the contractor for a dumping violation is pending.

Kennebunk River

The ACOE completed maintenance dredging this year. The project involved dredging and disposal of material that do not handle a large amount of cargo. When funding finally becomes available the environmental approvals for the Beals Island and Pig Island Gut projects may need to be renewed. The ACOE is considering options for coordinating the Saco River channel and Biddeford Pool maintenance dredging projects with the Cape Porpoise project.

Beals Island and Pig Island Gut

The ACOE is in the early planning stages for these shallow-draft projects which serve ports that do not handle a large amount of cargo. When funding finally becomes available the environmental approvals for the Beals Island and Pig Island Gut projects may need to be renewed. The ACOE is considering options for coordinating the Saco River channel and Biddeford Pool maintenance dredging projects with the Cape Porpoise project.


dated November 111 restoration project. The Cape Porpoise project would generate more than 80,000 cubic yards of dredged material, which is the per project limit for use of the Cape Arundel Disposal Site.
YOU’VE BEEN SLIMED! THE STRANGE AND SLIPPERY HAGFISH

By Sarah Paquette

Hagfish, sometimes called slime eels, are strange creatures. As their name suggests, these eels produce slime, which they use to defend themselves from predators. When threatened, a hagfish produces a sticky mucus from numerous glands that run along its snake-like body to clog the gills of its attacker.

When the mucus mixes with salt water, it expands to form a gelatinous glob of clear slime. The slime is made up of very small but strong fibers. Scientists are just starting to understand the qualities of this slime and have been looking into using it for various applications. When dried, the slime fibers become silky. Scientists think these fibers may be a good alternative to fabrics like Lycra or nylon, which are made from oil. However, a large supply of hagfish slime would be needed to produce fabric in marketable quantities and scientists have yet to find a way to maximize slime production. "We know very little about hagfish reproduction, and no one has ever gotten hagfish to breed in captivity, amazing as that sounds," Douglas Fudge, head of a Guelph University research project on hagfish, said in a 2013 BBC article.

Hagfish are found in deep, cold waters worldwide. In the Atlantic Ocean, they range from Greenland to Florida. They prefer muddy ocean bottom where they spend time in burrows. These eel-like fish have no bones, no fins, and no real jaw, though they do have two rows of teeth in their mouth. They are considered the most primitive vertebrate species living or dead. In fact, hagfish fossils can be dated back 300 million years and appear almost identical to a hagfish today.

Hagfish are scavengers and prey mostly on shrimp, worms, and crabs, as well as dead and decaying fish and mammals. Though hagfish are nearly blind, they have four pairs of tentacles around their mouth that they use to locate food through touch and smell.

A fishery for hagfish has been present in the Gulf of Maine since the late 1980s. Hagfish are used as a food product and their skin (which has no scales) is used for products that typically are made of leather, like wallets. According to NOAA, "Hagfish are caught using modified 55-gallon plastic barrels, called hagfish pots, attached to sinking line and buoys. Typically 20 to 40 traps are deployed in a string for a small commercial vessel and 80 to 200 traps for larger vessels (NEFSC 2003). A series of funnelled holes in the side of the barrel allow hagfish to enter the baited pot but doesn’t allows them to escape. Several rows of 3/8” holes allow smaller animals to escape the traps." All hagfish are exported whole to Korea.

Annual hagfish landings are unknown as reporting is not required, but a data collection program has been proposed by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to assist in future management of the species.
**DMR LOBSTER VIOLATION REPORT**

**SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER, 2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Viol Description</th>
<th>Adj Date</th>
<th>Adjud Fine</th>
<th>S/M</th>
<th>Adjud Decision Code</th>
<th>Suspension Flag</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BURKE</td>
<td>BRET</td>
<td>ADDISON</td>
<td>UNMARKED LOBSTER BUOYS</td>
<td>02-Sep-2014</td>
<td>100.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BURGESS</td>
<td>KEVIN</td>
<td>HARBORSIDE</td>
<td>POSSESSION OF ONE MUTLITAGTED V-NOTCH LOBSTER</td>
<td>07-Oct-2014</td>
<td>400.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOY</td>
<td>KYLE</td>
<td>BIRCH HARBOR</td>
<td>LOBSTER AND CRAB FISHING WITHOUT A CLASS II LICENSE</td>
<td>07-Oct-2014</td>
<td>500.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EATON</td>
<td>BRIAN</td>
<td>DEER ISLE</td>
<td>VIOLATION OF ZONE B/C LOBSTER TAG REQUIREMENTS (20 UNTAGGED TRAPS)</td>
<td>07-Oct-2014</td>
<td>1250.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOWLER</td>
<td>RALPH</td>
<td>FRANKLIN</td>
<td>HAULING LOBSTER GEAR WITHOUT A LICENSE</td>
<td>06-Oct-2014</td>
<td>500.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENTHNER</td>
<td>RODNEY</td>
<td>FRIENDSHIP</td>
<td>CLASS II LICENSE HOLDER OPERATING WITH A STEERMAN</td>
<td>06-Oct-2014</td>
<td>500.00 DEF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCKINIRE</td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER</td>
<td>HARPSWELL</td>
<td>EXCEEDING LOBSTER CRAB CLASS II LICENSE LIMITATIONS</td>
<td>01-Nov-2014</td>
<td>500.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAY</td>
<td>THEODORE</td>
<td>ORLAND</td>
<td>SELLING POSSESSION OF 269 SHORT LOBSTERS</td>
<td>17-Oct-2014</td>
<td>30200.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOUGHTY</td>
<td>BRUCE</td>
<td>PERRY</td>
<td>POSSESSION OF THREE OVERSIZED LOBSTERS</td>
<td>08-Oct-2014</td>
<td>800.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILLER</td>
<td>ZACHARY</td>
<td>TENANTS HARBOR</td>
<td>POSSESSION OF 19 SHORT LOBSTERS</td>
<td>27-Oct-2014</td>
<td>3800.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRONE</td>
<td>ERNEST</td>
<td>ADDISON</td>
<td>LOBSTER FISHING METHODS - UNMARKED BUOYS</td>
<td>02-Sep-2014</td>
<td>100.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAY</td>
<td>THEODORE</td>
<td>ORLAND</td>
<td>SELLING POSSESSION OF 125 V-NOTCH / MUTILATED LOBSTERS</td>
<td>17-Oct-2014</td>
<td>29420.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILQUIST</td>
<td>ERIC</td>
<td>TENANTS HARBOR</td>
<td>EXCEEDING CLASS I LOBSTER AND CRAB LICENSE</td>
<td>10-Nov-2014</td>
<td>500.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMahan</td>
<td>MICHAEL</td>
<td>GEORGETOWN</td>
<td>FISHING NINE UNTAGGED LOBSTER TRAPS</td>
<td>08-Sep-2014</td>
<td>850.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRUNDY</td>
<td>SCOTT</td>
<td>HANCOCK</td>
<td>HAULING GEAR WITHOUT A LICENSE</td>
<td>06-Oct-2014</td>
<td>500.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALLEY</td>
<td>SHIRLEY</td>
<td>JONESPORT</td>
<td>MOLESTING LOBSTER FISHING GEAR</td>
<td>28-Oct-2014</td>
<td>100.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAY</td>
<td>THEODORE</td>
<td>ORLAND</td>
<td>MOLESTING LOBSTER GEAR</td>
<td>17-Oct-2014</td>
<td>500.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMES</td>
<td>WESTON</td>
<td>SPRUCE HEAD</td>
<td>FISHING 6 UNTAGGED LOBSTER TRAPS</td>
<td>18-Nov-2014</td>
<td>550.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUSHMAN</td>
<td>LEWIS</td>
<td>STEUBEN</td>
<td>POSSESSION OF FIVE SHORT LOBSTERS</td>
<td>29-Sep-2014</td>
<td>1221.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MURDOCK</td>
<td>BEN</td>
<td>MONHEGAN ISLAND</td>
<td>FISHING LOBSTER GEAR INSIDE THE MONHEGAN CONSERVATION AREA DURING A CLOSED PERIOD</td>
<td>06-Nov-2014</td>
<td>100.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEAUREGARD</td>
<td>MICHAEL</td>
<td>MOODY</td>
<td>MOLESTING LOBSTER GEAR</td>
<td>17-Sep-2014</td>
<td>500.00 FILE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUDECIK</td>
<td>ROBERT</td>
<td>SOUTH THOMASTON</td>
<td>TAKE / SELL TWO (2) FEMALE V-NOTCH / MUTLITED LOBSTERS</td>
<td>04-Nov-2014</td>
<td>700.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOH</td>
<td>PATRICK</td>
<td>STOCKTON SPRINGS</td>
<td>POSSESSION OF 4 SHORT LOBSTERS</td>
<td>30-Sep-2014</td>
<td>900.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LABRABEE</td>
<td>ABRON</td>
<td>BLUE HILL</td>
<td>POSSESSION OF 7 V-NOTCH MUTILATED LOBSTERS</td>
<td>17-Sep-2014</td>
<td>1400.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUBBAIRD</td>
<td>LUKE</td>
<td>CAPE NEDDICK</td>
<td>MOLESTING LOBSTER GEAR</td>
<td>17-Sep-2014</td>
<td>100.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POOBS</td>
<td>JACOB</td>
<td>HANCOCK</td>
<td>HAULING LOBSTER GEAR NOT REGISTERED TO VESSEL</td>
<td>06-Oct-2014</td>
<td>250.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOOTHAKER</td>
<td>QUINTEN</td>
<td>HARPSWELL</td>
<td>FISHING 5 UNTAGGED LOBSTER TRAPS</td>
<td>09-Sep-2014</td>
<td>500.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LYONS</td>
<td>DEREK</td>
<td>LUBEC</td>
<td>HAULING LOBSTER GEAR IN A CLOSED PERIOD</td>
<td>07-Oct-2014</td>
<td>250.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILLER</td>
<td>ZACHARY</td>
<td>TENANTS HARBOR</td>
<td>FISHING 6 UNTAGGED LOBSTER TRAPS</td>
<td>02-Oct-2014</td>
<td>670.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REDMARKER</td>
<td>JASON</td>
<td>ADDISON</td>
<td>POSSESSION OF TWO SHORT LOBSTERS</td>
<td>07-Oct-2014</td>
<td>800.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEAVET</td>
<td>KENNETH</td>
<td>SEAL COVE</td>
<td>FISHING 8 UNTAGGED LOBSTER TRAPS</td>
<td>07-Oct-2014</td>
<td>630.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUDECIK</td>
<td>ROBERT</td>
<td>SOUTH THOMASTON</td>
<td>TAKE / SELL FIVE (5) FEMALE LOBSTERS FROM WHICH EGGS WERE ARTIFICIALLY REMOVED</td>
<td>04-Nov-2014</td>
<td>2250.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUBAR</td>
<td>RICHARD</td>
<td>STONNINGTON</td>
<td>VIOLATION OF ZONE B/C LOBSTER TRAP TAG REQUIREMENTS (9 UNTAGGED TRAPS)</td>
<td>07-Oct-2014</td>
<td>750.00 DEF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEED</td>
<td>RONALD</td>
<td>STONNINGTON</td>
<td>FISHING 6 LOBSTER TRAPS WITHOUT 2014 TAGS</td>
<td>07-Oct-2014</td>
<td>950.00 DEF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EATON</td>
<td>JEFFREY</td>
<td>DEER ISLE</td>
<td>VIOLATION OF ZONE B/C LOBSTER TRAP TAG REQUIREMENTS (9 UNTAGGED TRAPS)</td>
<td>07-Oct-2014</td>
<td>750.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INGRISH</td>
<td>GEORGE</td>
<td>MACHASIAPORT</td>
<td>POSSESSION OF 4 SHORT LOBSTERS</td>
<td>07-Oct-2014</td>
<td>900.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITTEN</td>
<td>MATTHEW</td>
<td>SOUTH PORTLAND</td>
<td>THREE UNTAGGED TRAPS</td>
<td>23-Sep-2014</td>
<td>150.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHNSON</td>
<td>RUSSELL</td>
<td>TENANTS HARBOR</td>
<td>HAULING LOBSTER GEAR FROM AN UNDECLARED VESSEL</td>
<td>30-Oct-2014</td>
<td>250.00 G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ADMINISTRATIVE SUSPENSIONS - SUSPENSIONS WITH ADJUDICATION AND OR CONVICTIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Viol Description</th>
<th>Admin susp.</th>
<th>Suspension Flag</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JOHNSON</td>
<td>ANDREW</td>
<td>HARPSWELL</td>
<td>FISHING 50 UNTAGGED LOBSTER TRAPS</td>
<td>Admin susp.</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DYSON</td>
<td>EVAN</td>
<td>BOOTHBAY</td>
<td>MOLESTING LOBSTER GEAR</td>
<td>Admin susp.</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PINKHAM</td>
<td>IRA</td>
<td>GEORGETOWN</td>
<td>POSSESSION OF 218 SHORT LOBSTERS</td>
<td>Admin susp.</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DMR has the authority to suspend a lobster license administratively. These license holders have not yet been convicted of a violation in court.**
After a long season fishing for lobster, many of Maine’s lobstermen head inland with friends and family to try their hand at ice fishing. Photo by Karen Zimmermann.

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

Thank you!

127 Pound Rd • PO Box 334 • Hancock, Maine 04640
207-422-3217 • peted@garbolobster.com
by Wanda Curtis

Maine scientists and entrepreneurs are continuing to explore potential markets for the invasive green crabs that are harming Maine’s $175 million dollar softshell clam industry. The Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) reported that between 2012 and 2013, Maine’s softshell clam landings decreased from 11.1 million pounds to 10.6 million pounds. DMR attributed at least part of that decrease to destruction by proliferating green crabs.

As the result of license changes made by DMR in 2014, commercial fishermen no longer need a special license to harvest and sell green crabs; they also are no longer required to report green crab harvests. Lobstermen are able to harvest the crabs as a bycatch. Also, when the Sheepscot, Damariscotta, and Medomak rivers are closed for fishing other crab species—December 1 to April 30—fishermen can continue harvesting green crabs from those areas. The rule changes are part of the growing effort in both the public and private sectors to decrease the population of green crabs in Maine waters.

Owner and chief scientist of Access International (a Maine marine bio-toxin monitoring company), Darcie Couture said earlier this year, “We’d be killing two birds with one stone if we could remove the destructive species from the environment and find a useful purpose for those as well.”

Arundel researcher and businessman John der Kinderen has been working under a Maine Technology Institute (MTI) cluster grant to explore potential markets for the crabs. Green crab meat is very sweet and the shells are valuable for chitin (a simple sugar found in the shells of crabs, lobsters, and other crustaceans). Chitin is currently used as an ingredient in soil fertilizers and wound dressings to control bleeding among soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq.

“We’ve started out working with the [basic] and hope to work our way up the ladder to higher end pharmaceutical uses in the future, such as scaffolding in plastic surgery, which would be even more profitable,” he said.

According to der Kinderen, the green crabs’ very small size (2-5 inches) makes it extremely difficult to extract the meat. So he’s spent the last year searching for the appropriate equipment to do that job. In November, der Kinderen invited Chinese entrepreneur Zhou Peng Fei to Bangor to demonstrate a model of a machine which Zhou invented to extract meat from all types of crabs and other crustaceans. A group of Maine seafood processors viewed the small-scale model of the room-size machine extracting meat not only from green crabs but also lobster.

The New Brunswick company Can Chine Global Ltd. is partnering with Zhou to market the equipment in North America. Company president Tom Boulet operated a nozzle-type device to extract meat from green crabs. Boulet then quickly added an attachment which was used to extract meat from lobster.

Maine processors were told that in the near future they may be able to lease an extracting machine for a fee which will be based upon the amount of production. “That would decrease the risk for processors,” Zhou said through his interpreter. “My company will also assume responsibility for all maintenance, servicing, and upgrades of the equipment.”

Next spring, der Kinderen said that he will be applying for the implementation phase of the MTI cluster grant. Spencer Fuller, from Cozy Harbor Seafood, said after the meeting that he’s skeptical about a business model which promotes the marketing of green crabs when the goal in Maine is to eradicate the green crab population. However, he didn’t rule out the possibility that the machine might one day be used to extract lobster meat if more research is done.

Der Kinderen, on the other hand, doesn’t think the green crab population in Maine will ever be eradicated because of the cost and constant monitoring involved. “Even if the green crab were eradicated, there are other invasive species (such as Asian Shore Crabs) waiting in the wings to take advantage of such an opening,” he said. “A much more realistic approach is to find an attractive enough market so that the crabs will be fished heavily, keeping their numbers and consequent damage in check.”

---

ARUNDEL RESEARCHER EXPLORES MACHINE FOR GREEN CRABS

By Wanda Curtis

Lifeflight continued from page 17

island to conduct a training with the local fire department and emergency medical technicians (EMTs). They had just finished up when a 911 call came in. “First the EMTs left, then another call came in and the fire department people left. Then we got a call,” Judge recalled. A young woman in the final month of pregnancy had been found in her home. She had “bled out,” as Judge described it. The EMTs could find no fetal heartbeat.

Lifeflight medics stabilized the woman and bundled her into the helicopter. Then they made a critical decision. “From Vinalhaven to Bangor is 22 minutes. To Portland is 27 minutes. To Penbay [Medical Center] is five minutes. She only had five minutes,” Judge said. Doctors were standing by at the Penbay helipad to treat the woman once the helicopter landed. The story ended well: both mother and daughter survived. The mother sends Judge a card each year on her daughter’s birthday.

“Emergency medicine is universal health care,” Judge argued. “Think about it: if you call 911, someone will come. We trust the system.” Just because Maine is a relatively poor, largely rural state is no reason that a person should have to die, “I call it the geography of time. Time can be as dangerous as the disease or injury itself. For people living in Jackman or on the islands, Lifeflight is their exit strategy and they know it.”

---

BessyBait LLC

All Natural Salted Hairless Cowhide
LONG-LASTING and AFFORDABLE
LOBSTER BAIT

Available in 30 gal. drums or 5 gal. pails

www.bessybait.com

Email: info@bessybait.com

Bessy Bait is sold at our warehouse located at
155 rear Batchelder Rd., Seabrook NH 03874

Please call for HOURS and PRICING!
Bessy Bait is also sold at all Brooks Top MV locations.

---

Refrigerate Me!

Sales, Service, Maintenance and Installation of:

Bait Coolers/Freezeers • Lobster Chillers & Tanks
Ice Machines & Equipment • Process Refrigeration

(207) 893-0145

www.appliedrefrigeration.com
DEADLINE SET FOR RIGHT WHALE CRITICAL HABITAT EXPANSION

Only a portion of the range of the North Atlantic right whale is protected as “critical habitat” under the Endangered Species Act. That may change as the result of a lawsuit against the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

In 2009, a coalition of environmental and animal protection groups formally petitioned the NMFS to significantly expand habitat protection to include all of the whales’ nursery, breeding and feeding grounds. The petition pushed to expand the protection for the whale’s calving grounds off Georgia and northern Florida, critical feeding habitat off the Northeast coast and the mid-Atlantic migratory route between calving and feeding grounds. In areas designated as critical habitat, the federal government must ensure that activities, including commercial fishing, vessel traffic and oil drilling, will not diminish the value of the habitat or reduce the whale’s chance for recovery.

CLIMATE CHANGE AFFECTING SEASONS

Spring is arriving earlier than it used to in the Gulf of Maine, increasing average water temperatures and affecting the migratory patterns of fish species that are key to Maine’s marine ecosystem and coastal economy, according to a federal report. Over the past eight years, the date that scientists use to mark the transition to spring based on water temperature has gotten earlier by roughly two weeks for waters off the northeastern and mid-Atlantic states. Likewise, the date for the transition to fall is falling later in the year, according to the report by NOAA’s Northeast Fisheries Science Center.

A similar trend is playing out in the Gulf of Maine. “The spring transition date, currently identified as mid-May, is likely to shift to early April, and the fall transition, currently identified as mid-November, will likely shift well into December,” NOAA oceanographer Kevin Friedland said.

The non-profit Downeast Institute (www.downeast.org) announced the addition of its new-100-foot pier was completed at the site. Research at the Institute has expanded from soft shell clams to include cultivation and management programs for blue mussels, arctic surf clams, hard-shell clams, green crabs, scallops and lobster.

Where else will you find this kind of local fisheries news coverage? You won’t. The region’s biggest and best news team, providing unbiased, accurate, region-wide coverage and analysis.

SUBSCRIBING IS EASY

Special MLA member rates apply:

$19.78 / 1 year Print
$15.77 / 1 year Online

$24 / 1 year Print + Online (unattended)

Call Today!

800-989-5253

be sure to say you are a current MLA member or SUBSCRIBE ONLINE at:
http://fish-news.com/cfn/MLA

In December Maine Department of Marine Resources Commissioner Patrick Keliher was named a Distinguished Maine Policy Fellow by the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center. Distinguished Maine Policy Fellows are individuals with a past or current career as a policy maker in Maine and are recognized as people of distinguished status and extensive experience.

“I was very pleased to be chosen for this honor, and extremely grateful for the opportunity to spend some time learning more about the impressive, world class science that is being conducted at the University of Maine,” said Commissioner Keliher. The purpose of the Distinguished Maine Policy Fellows program is to connect distinguished Maine policy leaders with University of Maine faculty, students and administration, to improve educational experiences of students, and to expand University and Policy Center contacts.

Superior Blocks, for the LONG HAUL.

SUPERIOR BLOCK (Superior Marine Products, Inc.) announces the addition of its NEW ALL-STAINLESS BLOCKS in 4” and 5” sizes

VIRTUALLY UNBREAKABLE

Made in-house from 3/8 S/S Plate, and our Stock S/S Sheave (or choose alum or UHMW) with sealed bearings and double-wipe seals.

RETAIL CUSTOMERS:
Ask at your marine supply store, or buy with PayPal by calling 207-655-4492, or email superior@fairpoint.net.
Events Calendar

December 9
DMR informational meetings on NEFMC Habitat Amendment 2, 5 p.m. Casco Bay Lines, Portland. Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative meeting, Portland.

December 10
DMR informational meetings on NEFMC Habitat Amendment 2, 5 p.m. at the Ellsworth City Hall Auditorium.
MLA Health insurance enrollment assistance, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Wiscasset Library, Wiscasset. FMI: 967-4555.

December 15
DMR informational meetings on NEFMC Habitat Amendment 2, at 5 p.m. at the University of Maine Machias, Room 102 in the Science Building. MLA Health insurance enrollment assistance, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Brunswick Library, Brunswick. FMI: 967-4555.

January 1, 2015
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

January 5

January 6
NEFMC Habitat Amendment 2 public hearing, 6 p.m., Jeff’s Catering and Event Center, Brewer.

January 7
NEFMC Habitat Amendment 2 public hearing, 6 p.m. at the Holiday Inn by the Bay, Portland. MLA directors’ meeting, noon, Darby’s Restaurant, Belfast.

January 12-14
Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team meeting, Providence, RI.

January 22-24
Massachusetts Lobstermen’s Association Annual Weekend, Sea Crest Resort, Falmouth, MA.

January 26-29
NEFMC meeting, Portsmouth, NH.

UPCOMING

February 4
MLA directors’ meeting, noon, Darby’s Restaurant, Belfast.

March 5, 6, 7
40th Annual Maine Fishermen’s Forum, Samoset Resort, Rockport.

Right Whale Report Card 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Best Estimate</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New calves</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First time mothers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg calving interval</td>
<td>4.4 years</td>
<td>3.3 years</td>
<td>3.2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortalities</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1 male, 3 unk)</td>
<td>(2 male, 3 unk)</td>
<td>(2 female, 1 male, 1 unk)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vessel strikes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entanglements</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7 new; 2 deaths)</td>
<td>(4 new)</td>
<td>(4 new)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each year the North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium, a coalition of more than 100 organizations and government agencies in the United States and Canada, releases a Report Card on the status of North Atlantic right whales. The Report Card provides an update on the status of the catalogued population including births, deaths and injuries among documented right whales along the East Coast and a summary of research and management activities during the prior year. This year’s report card covers activities from November 1, 2013 to October 31, 2014.

The 2014 Report Card noted that a dramatic shift in the distribution of right whales during the last several years continues. Right whales are moving into different areas throughout the extent of their range. Because of the shift, the Consortium notes that more research needs to be directed to finding the right whales’ new habitat and developing different survey methods to keep track of these new movement patterns.

Right Whale Sightings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southeastern U.S.</td>
<td>222</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Atlantic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great South Channel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass/Cape Cod Bay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffreys Ledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gulf of Maine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bay of Fundy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roseway Basin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance (MLCA), the non-profit sister organization of the Maine Lobstermen's Association, kicked off 2014 with the first Maine Lobster Leadership Institute, held in May. The Institute was created to inform young lobstermen of lobster management and science issues. As the Maine lobstermen cope with a rapidly changing fishery, encouraging new leaders who are well versed in the fishery’s complexities is important for the future.

The twelve lobstermen first spent two days in class. Carl Wilson, chief lobster biologist at the Department of Marine Resources (DMR), provided an overview of the state of the lobster fishery both in Maine and in Canada, emphasizing the benefits that Maine's many conservation measures have brought to the fishery. He also reviewed the state's lobster monitoring programs and the health of lobster stocks. Deirdre Gilbert, policy director for DMR, spoke about the state, regional and federal management framework in which lobstermen must operate. Young lobstermen today have no memory of the time when fishery was under the purview of the New England Fisheries Management Council rather than the Atlantic States Fisheries Commission nor of the benefits that came to Maine when the switch was made in the late 1990s. They were not yet on the water when the state made the historic decision to cede control of lobster regulations to local Lobster Zone Councils in 1996 and created the Lobster Advisory Council. The lobstermen also learned about the impact that the federal Endangered Species Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act have had on lobstering in Maine during the past ten years with the introduction of sinking line and vertical line reductions, due for implementation in 2015.

The highpoint of the Institute was a six-day trip to Prince Edward Island to meet Canadian lobstermen. The trip gave the participants a first-hand look at how Maine's lobster fishery differs from that of the Canadians. The P.E.I. lobstermen were unfailingly hospitable, opening their homes to the visitors, taking them out on their boats, even packing lunches for the Maine lobstermen. The participants also visited two processing plants, Royal Star in Tignish, which is a fisherman-owned business, and the smaller Acadian Fishermen’s Cooperative. The Canadian system was eye-opening to the lobstermen. Justin Papkee of Long Island was struck by the pressure the short season places on P.E.I. lobstermen. “They have a two-month season so they have to go every day [except Sunday]. You can’t miss a day for weather or boat trouble,” he said. Chris Welch of Kennebunk, who fished with the Jollimore family of French River (on the north shore of P.E.I.) was surprised by the limited season too. “I didn’t know it was just a two-month season. I wouldn’t like that sort of pressure at all, forced to go every day even if the weather’s bad,” Welch said.

The 2015 Lobster Institute participants included Kristan Porter of Cutler, Travis Otis of Searsport, Herman Coombs of Orrs Island, Justin Papkee of Long Island, Genevieve McDonald of Stonington, Isaac Lash of Friendship, Patrice McCarron, MLA director, Sam Hyler of Bar Harbor, Abe Philbrook of NE Harbor, Cyrus Sleeper of Spruce Head, David Cousins of S Thomaston, Dustin Delano of Monhegan, John Tripp of Spruce Head and Chris Welch of Kennebunk. MLCA photo.

First Maine Lobstermen’s Community Alliance Lobster Leadership Institute Held in 2014

by Melissa Waterman