By Melissa Waterman

We live in a world of insurance: car insurance, health insurance, homeowner's insurance. It's a common practice to protect ourselves in case of disaster. For those who live and work on the coast of Maine, one type of insurance almost surpasses all the others in importance: flood insurance.

The federal government recognized back in the 1960s that businesses and homeowners along the nation's extensive coasts could not afford to pay the full cost to insure their properties against the damages caused by floods. In fact, in some states no private insurance was available at all for coastal properties. So in 1968 Congress passed the National Flood Insurance Act to provide flood insurance to floodprone property owners. The Act created the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), currently housed within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

"The NFIP was born out of the desire to reduce the cost of disaster assistance from flooding events," explained Sue Baker, NFIP state coordinator within the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. "Communities opt to participate in the NFIP by adopting a land use ordinance that contains standards for building and improving buildings and real property in mapped floodplains. In exchange for the community adopting and enforcing standards in these areas, the government makes federally backed flood insurance available anywhere within that community."

The NFIP contracts with private insurance companies to underwrite coastal properties' insurance policies. "Right now we have about 9,300 policies in the state [insured under

Continued on page 21

By Nancy Griffin

Lobstermen have been racing their boats since they have had boats, starting with Maine's early sail-powered lobster boats such as the Friendship sloop. The speed and the competition among lobstermen only increased as the vessels began sporting fuel-driven motors.

Continued on page 11
Most of us don’t remember the Great Hurricane of 1938. The September hurricane devastated the coast of New England and caused more than 600 deaths, primarily from the storm surge. Most recently, Maine was hit by Hurricane Bob in 1991. Hurricane Bob is ranked as one of the most costly hurricanes in New England history, totaling around $1.5 billion in damages. Three people died in Maine. But hurricanes aren’t the state’s worst weather problem. According to the Maine Emergency Management Agency, winter storms cause far more damage far more frequently than do these tropical storms. But whatever the source, Maine, like so many other states that border the ocean and are full of rivers, is prone to flooding. The federal government’s National Flood Insurance Program is designed to help property owners minimize the cost of flooding. But the program itself is causing some serious concerns among lobster wharf owners and others, as we show in this month’s Landings.

Flood insurance is one thing. Health insurance is an entirely different issue. Taking care of one’s health is paramount for many fishermen, yet without affordable health insurance many neglect basic procedures that could keep them well (and out of pain!). Landings takes a look at the positive impact the Affordable Care Act has had on a few fishing families along the coast.

We hear from several readers this month in Landings. Lisa Pohlmann, executive director of the Natural Resources Council of Maine, reveals the link between carbon pollution and our valuable commercial fisheries. Michael Ames, a Matinicus lobsterman, responds to our June article on the proposed dredging in Searsport to share his thoughts on the costs and potential benefits of the project. And Christina Lemieux, a Cutler native, offers a picture of thought on the costs and potential benefits of the project.

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By Lisa Pohlmann

Pulling traps, digging clams, and shucking oysters is a way of life along the coast of Maine. Working in the flats or on a lobster boat in one of our quiet bays may seem far away from the power plants that generate electricity for our homes and businesses, but those power plants are wreaking havoc on our delicious seafood.

Power plants are by far the biggest polluters and even when they are far away, they are hurting us here. On clear, quiet days on the Gulf of Maine, coal-fired power plants in places like Ohio are spewing carbon into the air. Prevailing winds make Maine the “end of the tailpipe” for this pollution, creating some of the worst “bad air days” in the country, hurting our lungs and our economy, too.

Furthermore, new data from the National Climatic Data Center show that Maine and Vermont have warmed faster than any other state in the last 30 years, due largely to the melting of the Arctic Sea. Maine’s average annual temperature is 2.5 degrees Fahrenheit warmer than it was 30 years ago, nearly double the average warming nationwide. And those 2.5 degrees are already making things tough for us.

Fishermen see what is happening first-hand. Warmer waters are forcing lobster populations to go further north and settle further offshore. Green crabs are invading our waters, thriving with the reduced winter snow ice, and decimating our clam supplies.

There is almost nothing more iconic of Maine than the lobster and yet our lobster fishery and the livelihoods that go with it may also be threatened by warming waters. The stakes are high. In 2012, Maine’s lobster industry alone created $338 million in economic activity here, with more than 3,000 full-time and 2,500 part-time harvesters employed. And don’t forget the docks, processing, restaurants, hotels, transportation and everyone else connected to lobster and fishing.

Here in Maine, we have worked to address this problem head-on. Back in 2007 our state joined the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). RGGI sets limits on carbon pollution from large power plants in nine participating Northeastern states from Maryland to Maine. As a result, over the last decade our power plants have been reducing carbon pollution. Our economy has not suffered as a result and, in fact, has grown during that time, even despite a major recession. Furthermore, RGGI has raised significant funds for Efficiency Maine to help homeowners and businesses invest in cleaner, more efficient energy improvements that save families and companies money and cut even more carbon pollution simply by reducing the amount of energy used.

Building on our success in the Northeast, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has just announced new greenhouse gas emission limits on large power plants in all 50 states.

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London is a long way from the village of Cutler, where I was born and raised. At times the two communities can feel worlds apart - both geographically and culturally. Not only is London home to almost eight and a half million more people than Cutler, the British city is also at the cutting-edge of the latest trends in food, fashion and beyond.

London has now overtaken Paris as Europe's dining capital. More than 150 new restaurants open in the city each year and the food served at those restaurants influences dining trends around the world. Along with the Brits, millions of international travellers passing through London are exposed to the U.K.'s leading-edge cuisine. In 2013 alone, around 180,000 Chinese visited London, spending on luxury goods and dining at the latest and greatest restaurants. The U.K. capital is also a popular destination for big spenders from the Middle East. These travellers return home inspired by what they have seen and consumed. London's global cultural influence is just one reason I am both excited and slightly worried about the recent rise in the popularity of lobster in the city.

When I moved to London for business in 2011 with the opening of a restaurant called Burger and Lobster, the restaurant, owned by Russian entrepreneur Mikhail Zelman, has completely changed the lobster scene in London. Zelman brought lobster to the masses through a simplified, casual restaurant concept. His restaurant serves only two items - burgers and lobster - at one set price of £20 (approximately $34 USD). London diners loved it. While not cheap, the price of Zelman’s lobster (served grilled or as a lobster roll) was about half that of most other restaurants. The restaurant’s set price of £20 no matter what was ordered made lobster feel more affordable and accessible. It was no longer the expensive item on the menu. In fact, it was the same price as a hamburger. A very expensive hamburger, yes, but context influences perception and in that context lobster felt like a bargain.

Zelman’s pared-down menu allowed him to turn over a high volume of lobster quickly, which in turn allowed him to have more control over his lobster supply. Instead of buying his lobster from Billingsgate Market, Zelman was able to purchase his lobsters in bulk directly from dealers in Canada and fly them into London himself. These lobsters are stored in huge holding tanks in his restaurants. The tanks themselves provide a bit of theatre to enthusiastic diners. Just how successful has Burger and Lobster become in London? The statistics speak for themselves. In less than two years, Zelman has expanded from one to five locations, with more locations rumored to open.

Each restaurant serves more than 1,000 customers on a Saturday night. And perhaps the most impressive statistic of all is that, within two months of opening the first restaurant, Burger & Lobster became the world’s largest buyer of Canadian lobster. It now sells more than 2,000 lobsters in its five London restaurants daily, making the chain the U.K.’s main vendor of the delicacy.

Not only has Zelman’s Burger and Lobster chain been able to sell over 700,000 individual lobsters to London diners annually, it has also paved the way for more lobster-themed eateries in and around the U.K. capital. Restaurants such as The Lobster Pot, The Lobster House and The Lobster Roll Deli all opened their doors in 2014. A ‘Steak and Lobster’ dining establishment has popped up in London and Manchester. B.O.B.'s lobster food truck is roaming the city streets dishing out lobster rolls as I write this article.

I am delighted that Londoners can finally experience the simple indulgence of a lobster roll and that our beloved crustacean has become more popular and accessible within this global urban hub. I am excited at how thestrategic rise of lobster in London will potentially influence dining trends in the Middle East, Far East and beyond. I am glad I can finally get a lobster roll in London.

At the same time I worry that, to date, the London lobster boom has no links to the Maine lobster brand. Zelman’s lobster comes from Canada; his restaurants do little to promote the provenance of his product (he has now bought a share in a lobster company to get rid of dealers and trade with himself directly). B.O.B.'s food truck reportedly sources its lobster roll meat from Cornish lobsters. While there is room for many players in this market and, as the old saying goes, a rising tide lifts all boats, I worry Maine lobster could get left behind if we don’t strike while the iron is hot.

As most Maine residents will agree, there are differences among lobsters based on where they are caught and how they are treated during and after harvest. I would love to see some effort to educate the multi-cultural consumers of London on the Maine lobster brand. Otherwise, to paraphrase Gertrude Stein, they will be left thinking a lobster is just a lobster.
To the editor:

Trust is the issue among Sprague Energy, Irving Oil, Maine DOT-DMR-DEP, Penobscot Bay & River Pilots, fishermen, etc. The commercial viability of Searsport as a deep water port must remain whole. The same can be said for the fishing industry. Both are extremely important to the overall sustainability of our state, sustainability meaning the social, economic and environmental elements. This dredging project will allow the commercial stakeholder an opportunity to provide the goods and services that in many ways addresses the economic element of sustainability. The capital wealth gained should also have a positive effect on the social element for this town, county and state.

So far all good but at what negative impact to the environmental element? Might there be a positive environmental need for this natural material? The represented government stakeholders seem quite aware of the issues with certain proposals and processes in place, also with respect for environmental regulation regarding contamination levels and proper disposal of the dredged material. Furthermore, the disruption of the sea floor is mitigated by the proposed project timeline and historic location of the disposal sites.

Concerns (without emotion): The Department of Environmental Protection has indicated that the Sprague ship berth areas contain elevated amounts of toxic material. Furthermore, the disruption of the sea floor is mitigated by the proposed project timeline and historic location of the disposal sites.

The Fishermen point out that the smothering effect to the disposal site sea-floor, although non-toxic, will result in an immediate environmental degradation of that area. The Fishermen are concerned with increased gear losses due to the dredging activity. The toxic ship berth dredging slated for upland disposal cannot be commingled with the ship channel and turning basin dredging. The continued silting of the area requires dredging to maintain safe under-keel clearances as required by regulation. At the May MLA-sponsored meeting, attendees heard Mr. Gelina (Penobscot Bay & River Pilots Association) reference clearances as required by regulation. At the May MLA-sponsored meeting, attendees heard Mr. Gelina (Penobscot Bay & River Pilots Association) reference clearances as required by regulation. At the May MLA-sponsored meeting, attendees heard Mr. Gelina (Penobscot Bay & River Pilots Association) reference clearances as required by regulation.

Solutions: Ensure that the toxic dredge material remains segregated from the designated bay dredgings (DEP). Ensure that the disposal footprint is minimized and well monitored (DMR). Ensure the timeline such that the fishermen will not be affected by seasonal interference to their harvesting (DMR). Conduct random, third-party testing of the dredged material prior to disposing (DEP).

The principle operator (Sprague Energy) should assure all stakeholders that its present and future operations include best practices and standards of care that honor and respect the needs of the community. This can be achieved through vetting and inspection processes to assure the community that Sprague Energy or any other owner is operating as a fully compliant HRO (high reliability organization).

Final thoughts: The MLA should be commended for taking a responsible lead to bridge these important developments to its membership and the general public. The DMR, DEP and DOT must work together to assure our citizens that the business owners are compliant. This means safe operations to the industry minimum standards and in some cases, beyond the minimum which includes alertness to changes in business practice (as happened recently with transportation of crude oil by rail).

Planting fear is cheap and a win/lose proposal. Pragmatic, balanced decision-making is required for the long-term sustainability of our community and state. Best regards,

Michael J. Ames, Matinicus Island

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From the Dock: Balanced decision making needed for Searsport

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medical care has risen each year for skyrocketing year by year, hanging did not have health insurance at the Approximate 45 million Americans their monthly premiums and annual
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stated the wife of a Stonington lob-
"We had some insurance before, " explained health insurance options as she went. "We have a policy now that costs two-thirds less than the previous one and much better coverage than before," the woman said. "We haven't really had to use it yet and that's OK."

"A friend told me that the Maine Lobstermen’s Association (MLA) could help," the woman said. She placed a call to April Gilmore McNutt, MLA’s health insurance Navigator. "Oh, she was very helpful," Gilmore assisted the two to thread their way through the on-line application process, explaining health insurance options as she went. "We have a policy now that costs two-thirds less than the previous one and much better coverage than before," the woman said. "We haven't really had to use it yet and that's OK."

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Her husband had a few health scares in recent years, one of which landed him in the emergency room. Their old insurance left them paying for that and other expenses on their own. "Self-employment, it's for the birds," she laughed. "Everything is on your shoulders. So what do you do? You go and pay for it. This is much better."

For the past thirty plus years, John Drouin has lobstered out of the small Downeast town of Cutler. He paid for his own insurance in the early 1980s, when he was newly married and had a child on the way. "Oh, I was very discouraged with that. It didn't cover much at all," he recalled. "When I got the bill [for the birth of his child] I realized that if I hadn't paid the insurance premium I could have covered the cost and had some money left over!

Drouin decided to do what so many fishing families do: pay his medical bills as he went. For years he either paid up, as when he incurred $12,000 in charges for a urologic disorder, or skipped treatment altogether. "I had a lot of pain in my heels," he said. "It was just something I dealt with. You come home and your feet hurt like hell and then the next morning you go out again. I didn't attend to it and now the pain is permanent."

In 2003 Governor John Baldacci over-saw creation of Maine’s Dirigo health insurance program. The program provided the opportunity for the many Maine residents not covered through their jobs to enroll in subsidized private health insurance. Drouin signed up. "I was in it for about three years," he said. "The insurance was through Harvard Pilgrim and they were very good." But in 2013, Maine Republicans discontinued the state program. Drouin once again was uninsured. "I signed up [for the ACA health insurance program] because I'm getting older," he explained. "It has good coverage, low premiums, and a lower deductible." With help from insurance agent Rick Williams and April Gilmore, Drouin managed to complete the enrollment application by December 18, 2013. "I've already met my yearly deductible and out-of-pocket expenses," he said cheerfully. Drouin suffers from severe arthritis in his hands, particu-larly his thumbs. In February he had surgery on one thumb. In a second operation planned for later this year he will have a graft put in a tendon to relieve the constant pain. "Yes, I'm going to use it instead of sitting around in pain and uncomfortable," he said referring to his new insurance. "I decided this time I am going to find someone and get it fixed."

A Boothbay lobsterman, who also asked that his name not be used, explained his experience signing up for ACA health insurance for himself and his young children deeply frustrat-ing. "At first they told me that my kids would qualify for MaineCare [the state Medicaid-funded health insurance program for children]. And then the [ACA] health care people said that none of us would qualify. Finally they told me to take part in a three-way call. I was an hour or so waiting and then the healthcare.gov person hung up!" he said. He turned to April Gilmore to help him complete an application. "April spent hours and hours with me on the phone," he said. "She was great."

For a parent like David Cousens, presi-dent of the MLA, the ACA health insur-ance made perfect sense. Cousens pushed his three sons, all of whom lobster, to enroll in the program. "My two oldest hadn't had any insurance for ten years or so, after they went off mine," Cousens explained. He im-pressed on his sons the need to have health insurance in case of injury or sickness, "I said if you've got a boat or a house, you need insurance. That's in 2010, according to a report by the Kaiser Family Foundation. One of the key elements of the ACA is coverage of preventive services, diagnostic medical procedures that many people pay as they go of-ten avoid. Basic tests such as those for Type 2 diabetes or colorectal cancer and vaccines for common ill-nesses are covered through the ACA. "I am glad to have this now," said the Stonington lobsterman’s wife, refer-ring to the new health insurance for herself and her husband. "We’ve already gone in for a check-up!"

The next health insur-ance enrollment period will be in November of this year. Some individu-als may still qualify to par-icipate during the Special Enrollment Period. For more information go to www.healthcare.gov.
Maine Lobstermen’s Association

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS’ MEETING SCHEDULE
All meetings take place at Darby’s Restaurant, Belfast.
July 9, 5 p.m.
Sept. 3, 5 p.m.

STEAMING AHEAD

It’s summertime in Maine! Time for fun in the sun, for making room for the tourists and, of course, for eating lots of Maine lobster! So many people travel to Maine to enjoy the many assets that our state has to offer. And a huge part of that experience is taking in the sights along the Maine coast, watching lobster boats, and eating Maine lobster.

To our visitor friends, our story is truly one of celebration. Since I don’t fish, I tend to eat most of my lobster when family is visiting. Lobster is a food that is bringing people together. It is steeped in tradition and, frankly, is something to get excited about.

As members of the lobster industry who are busy hauling traps every day and working toward your next paycheck, it is easy to forget that all that is celebratory about Maine lobster. Often lobstermen’s attitudes are tainted and complaints about all that is wrong in the world of lobster rule the airways. Generally those complaints are about money. Lobster is an amazing product, and every lobsterman should get paid well for landing such a high-quality, delicious food. When that is not the reality, naturally, we get upset.

I am a huge proponent of the need to have two different conversations when it comes to talking about lobster prices – one with the media, tourists and the outside world in general, and another internally among ourselves. Sounds simple, but it is not. When we feel that we are not being treated fairly, we want to let the world know. But the letting the world know has consequences.

We have to remember that public perception is everything. If lobstermen complain to the world that lobster prices are low, then the world starts to demand low-priced lobster. As those stories circulate through newspapers, on Facebook and through endless Internet blogs, large buyers and distributors put off buying when prices are strong so that they can take advantage of those “cheap” lobsters they’ve been reading about. And consumers, who want to feel that they are getting a good deal, also start scouting around for low-priced lobster.

This may sound a bit simplistic, but I can assure you that this does happen and, unfortunately, it happens a lot! We regularly receive dozens of calls at the MLA office from people looking to connect with a source of cheap lobster.

Regardless of our day-to-day frustrations, as an industry we have to keep the message positive! We need to learn to “talk the talk” if we want to help improve our own situation. If a reporter interviews you about the state of the lobster industry, it is important to focus on all the positives that lobstermen have to celebrate, not your own woes. If a reporter or even a tourist asks you what you are being paid for your product, tell them that is proprietary information. And we all know that change does not come easy in the lobster industry.

So, if you do want to vent, that conversation is better suited for the coffee shop, or Lobster Advisory Council, MLA or other lobster industry meeting. Because, let’s face it, complaining to the press or tourists is not going to do a damn thing to improve your bottom line – in fact, it’s more likely to do the opposite.

Making the necessary changes to the Maine lobster industry that could translate into higher pay at the dock is not a trivial task. These changes will require rethinking who we are, what we produce, and conveying our story of pride and independence to consumers. And we all know that change does not come easy in the lobster industry.

If the industry is ready to have those conversations, then let’s do it. If we are not, let’s all at least agree to stop airing our dirty laundry in public.

As always, stay safe on the water.

MLA COMMENTS ON VERTICAL LINE RULES

The final whale rule to reduce the risk of whale entanglement in vertical lines was published on June 27. The final rule is identical to measures proposed in the FEIS (Final Environmental Impact Statement) 1.

For Maine, the final whale rule includes minimum trawling up requirements by zone and distance from shore and increased gear marking (three 12” marks on the buoy line) in waters outside the exemption line. There are no new rules in exempted state waters, and no seasonal fishing area closures.

The whale rules go into effect on June 1, 2015.

NMFs published the FEIS in May 2014, which outlined the agency’s “preferred alternative” for new whale rules to reduce vertical line risk. The MLA promptly submitted comments noting that lobstermen consistently say that right whales are a rarity off the Maine coast and that they continue to struggle with the existing sinking groundline requirement which poses significant ongoing safety, operational and economic challenges. With regard to whale rules, the MLA’s comments were in support of the trawling up proposal and treating Maine’s pocket waters as state waters. The MLA also supported the additional trawling up measures for Zones F and G in offshore waters beyond 12 miles during the winter rather than a seasonal closure of these important fishing grounds. The MLA supported the 1/4 mile exemption around islands outside the exemption line to allow singles to be fished in these rocky, shallow bottom areas. In addition to the three islands included by NMFS (Monhegan, Matinicus, Criehaven), the MLA requested that Penobscot Bay islands of Metinic, Seal, and Wooden Ball Island, and the Maine portion of the Isles of Shoals be added.

Unfortunately, these additional islands were not granted a buffer in the final rule.

Continued on page 8
The MLA requested a "safe trawl equivalency" to establish a process for vessels challenged to safely fish the required trawl minimums that begin at the 12-mile line to request an exemption to fish 10 trap trawls. The MLA is concerned that some vessels will be unable to deal with the weight of these large trawls in deep waters due to the vessel's length, width, or hauling system. This provision was not included in the final rule. The MLA did not support the additional gear marking outside the exemption zone included in the final rule, but pushed hard for the June 2015 implementation date. The MLA coordinated its comments with DMR and the Maine Congressional delegation; MLA comments are posted on the MLA website. The MLA will continue to pursue the adding the other islands identified in our comments to the island buffer, as well as the safe trawl equivalency.

GEAR CONFLICTS

Nova Star

The MLA has received numerous complaints from MLA members over the loss due to operations of the passenger vessel Nova Star transiting between Portland and Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. DMR's Marine Patrol has taken the lead in discussions with the Nova Star to identify the coordinates of the vessel's route in order to avoid gear conflict. The Nova Star has assured Marine Patrol that the vessel will not stray more than 25 meters from the vessel. The daily vessel track can be monitored through AIS at www.marinetraffic.com, searching for the vessel NOVA STAR [RS].

Ferdinand Hassler

MLA's resident gear marking outside the exemption zone included in the final rule, but pushed hard for the June 2015 implementation date. The MLA coordinated its comments with DMR and the Maine Congressional delegation; MLA comments are posted on the MLA website. The MLA will continue to pursue the adding the other islands identified in our comments to the island buffer, as well as the safe trawl equivalency.

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Ferdinand Hassler

MLA received word in late June that the Ferdinand Hassler is working in Rhode Island Sound. The vessel is never attempted to conduct hydrographic survey operations in winter, but in response to correspondence from the lobster industry, the agency hopes to make the attempt since trap density will be at a minimum this time of year.

If you have lost gear due to interactions with the NOAA research vessel, you may apply for reimbursement of the lost traps. Claims will be considered to reimburse for lost gear, but not considered for loss of catch or fishing time associated with the lost gear. Note: claims submitted previously have taken a year or more to be paid. Questions or concerns can be addressed to the ship's Field Operations Officer via phone at: (603) 812-9748 or via email at: ops.ferdinand.hassler@noaa.gov.

Submit a claim: Notify your local Marine Patrol Officer if you believe you have lost gear due to conflict with the survey vessel. Prepare a written statement describing lost gear, the quantity and value of gear and coordinates of where the gear was lost and on what date. Your written statement should include a detailed description of the gear, including a photo when possible. You will have to sign an affidavit swearing to this information. Marine Patrol will submit your claim to a NOAA enforcement agent. Ultimately, NOAA will plot the location of when and where you claimed gear was lost against the actual operations of the vessel. This process is very lengthy.

MLA DIRECTORS MEETING

The MLA Directors met on June 4 in Belfast. Aaron Dority, the Downeast Groundfish Initiative director at Penobscot East Resource Center (PERC), discussed a federal regulation proposed by the New England Fishery Management Council to protect bottom habitat for groundfish by closing two areas in eastern Maine to federally permitted vessels using mobile bottom gear (groundfish trawl and scallop dredge, but not lobster gear). One of these closures may also exclude gillnet and hook gear. MLA Directors raised several issues and concerns over the proposal. Dority also discussed a proposed regulation that would cap accumulation of groundfish quotas to preserve fleet diversity and prevent excessive consolidation. PERC has been a strong supporter of fleet diversity, building support for this proposed federal regulation during the last four years.

Carla Guenther updated the MLA Board on PERC's work to review the commercial fishing licensing structure. A few years ago PERC held 18 meetings statewide and received input from 200 fishermen. The project sought to re-envision the commercial licensing system in a way that would support thriving fishing communities in the future.

MLA Directors carefully reviewed the Preferred Alternative identified by NMFS in the Final Environmental Impact Assessment (FEIS) to implement vertical line regulations. The directors tasked Patrice with submitting comments from MLA (see above). The directors also supported reiterating MLA's request for a safe trawl equivalency for vessels fishing beyond 12 miles from shore which cannot safely handle the proposed large trawls.

MLA directors expressed frustration over the current lobster market conditions which are the result of strong Canadian catches. Many Canadian lobstermen were put on quotas or were not able to land the catch daily. While Maine's lobster landings have been light, the Canadian supply is affecting the Maine boat price. MLA will continue to closely monitor the market conditions, communicate with our Canadian counterparts, and attend Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative meetings to monitor progress of the new marketing efforts. It was stressed that despite the difficult market conditions, Maine lobstermen must keep an upbeat message in dealing with the media.

Seven members of the Maine Lobster Leadership Institute attended the MLA meeting to update the Board on the PEI trip. During the PEI trip, young Maine lobstermen were able to learn about lobstering, tour processing plants and holding infrastructure. The group cited the relationships created between their counterparts in Maine, as well as with lobstermen in PEI, as the greatest reward from the experience. The leadership program has already sparked many participants to become more involved in the Maine lobster industry. Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance (MLCA), which organized the trip, will seek funding to continue to offer future leadership programs.

The MLA Board reviewed the status of the proposed Searsport dredge project and the University of Maine offshore wind project. The Area 1A herring fishery opened on June 1. The MLA is monitoring the Area 3 herring fishery haddock bycatch limit which could result in an early closure of Area 3 fishery this fall.

The MLA is celebrating its 60th anniversary, which will serve as the theme for the upcoming membership renewal. All new and renewing MLA members will receive a 60th anniversary hat and be entered into a drawing to win $1954 as part of the celebration (the year the MLA was founded).

MLA will hold candidates meetings again this fall to provide an opportunity for candidates running for state legislature to learn about the lobster industry. The MLA will also coordinate an event with the gubernatorial candidates and the MLA Board. The next MLA meeting is July 9 at Darby's at 5 p.m.

HOW TO OBTAIN REPLACEMENT TAGS

A lobsterman can receive a maximum of 10% replacement tags. If you need more than 10%, it is considered a catastrophic loss and all tags will need to be reissued. Replacement tags are issued in lots of 20, up to the 10% maximum.

To obtain your replacement tags:

You must complete and sign "Trap Tag Exchange/Replacement Certification" form stating that you have lost trap tags. The form is available on the DMR website: http://www.maine.gov/dmr/license/tagreplacet.pdf or at any DMR office, or through local Marine Patrol Officers. Marine Patrol Officers DO NOT need to sign off on this form. Bring the completed "Trap Tag Exchange/Replacement Certification" to a Maine DMR Enforcement office to receive your tags on the spot.


Some Marine Patrol Officers carry replacement tags with them. You can complete the "Trap Tag Exchange/Replacement Certification" form and receive your replacement tags. If your local MPO does not have replacement tags on hand, mail the form to DMR in Hallowell (Maine DMR, 21 State House Station, Augusta, ME).
M.L.A. HOSTS AUSTRALIAN WHALE SCIENTIST

The MLA hosted Jason How, a biologist with the Western Australian Fisheries and Marine Research Laboratories, in June. How is conducting research on whale entanglements in lobster gear which has seen a sharp rise in Western Australia in recent years. His trip to New England and visits with Maine lobstermen was to learn about fishing gear modifications that have been put in place to reduce entanglement. The MLA arranged for How to visit with Kristen Porter in Cutler, David Cousens in Spruce Head, Steve Train on Long Island and MLA staff, to learn about the changes which have been implemented in Maine’s lobster fishery.

WHAT’S IN A NAME?

The MLA represented Maine lobstermen at a conference sponsored by the American Origin Products Research Foundation to discuss the importance of protecting origin-based products. The AOP Research Foundation was created to document U.S. origin-based products and contribute to a national system of recognition and protection for them. Regionally identified foods, such as Idaho potato, Napa Valley wine, or Maine lobster, are among the best known and highest valued products of the U.S. They enjoy a strong reputation for quality and have a large impact on rural economies. These products offer variety of choice to consumers while preserving local traditions and culture. In addition they are thriving as export trade items, with ever increasing demand abroad. This conference provided a producer’s perspective on how important origin products are for harvesters and local communities.

POTENTIAL OFFSHORE HERRING FISHERY CLOSURE

During its June meeting in Portland, the New England Fishery Management Council considered a proposal from the herring midwater trawl fleet to raise the bycatch allowance on haddock. This request was soundly defeated in a 10-0 vote. The midwater trawl fleet fishing in Area 3 around Georges Bank is reported on track to exceed its bycatch of haddock in September. If the fleet reaches its haddock bycatch allowance, the Area 3 fishery will be limited to 2,000 pounds of herring per trip, effectively closing the Area 3 herring fishery. This will not affect the seine fleet working on the Area 1A quota. Midwater trawl vessels do not gain access to Area 1A until October 1. The MLA has supported increased observer coverage and adherence to bycatch limits to protect the groundfish fleet.

LOBSTER PROCESSING BOND

The Associated Press published an article in June referencing a $7 million lobster processing bond. The so-called lobster processing bond passed the legislature as LD 1709: An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Support the Growth of and To Build Infrastructure for the Marine Sector of the State’s Economy. This $7 million bond proposal will appear on the November ballot and does not specifically address lobster processing.

If this bond is approved in November, bond money must be awarded on a competitive basis, after a proposal review process, for a single award of $7,000,000, requiring one-to-one matching funds. The Legislation states that a successful applicant must include the following entities:

A marine-based research program at a private or public university or a nonprofit research institution;
Commercial fishing or aquaculture interests;
Community-based organizations committed to the growth of the local economy; and Private sector businesses.

Furthermore, a successful application must also include proposals for growth in each of the following areas:
Traditional commercial fishing interests; aquaculture industry; value-added seafood processing; and market development for Maine-based products.

ASMFC NORTHERN SHRIMP SECTION

The ASMFC Northern Shrimp Section met in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in early June. The Section approved development of Draft Amendment 3 to consider establishing a limited entry program for the northern shrimp fishery. While the fishery is managed through a total allowable catch and defined season, it remains an open access fishery and has experienced significant fluctuations in participation over the last 30 years. This open access, coupled with continued concern about the health of the stock, led the Section to move forward on a limited entry program to further control effort in the fishery.

The Section had previously considered limited entry in Amendment 2 (2011) and Addendum I (2012). Based on submitted comments, the Section established a control date of July 7, 2011 but did not implement a limited entry program. As the first step in the Draft Amendment 3 development process, a Public Information Document (PID) will be developed to gather information concerning the northern shrimp fishery and provide an opportunity for the public to identify and comment on major issues.

Northern shrimp underwent a benchmark stock assessment in 2013. The panel recommended that the Technical Committee continue to develop the models and incorporate environmental variables and estimates of fishing effort. However, the Panel agreed that all the data examined indicated that the northern shrimp stock is at very low levels. There is significant uncertainty about when the stock might recover. The Northern Shrimp Section will meet in the fall to review the results of the 2014 stock assessment update, consider measures for the 2015 fishery, and consider approval of the PID for public comment.

The Maine Lobstermen’s Association Update

Many thanks to these fine businesses, the MLA’s Keeper members!

Allen Insurance & Financial
Atlantic Edge Lobster Beals-Jonesport Cooperative Bell Power Systems Inc.
Buoysticks.com Calendar Islands Maine Lobster LLC Cape Porpoise Lobster Co. Inc.
Coastal Documentation Conary Cove Lobster Co.
Cooks Lobster House Cousins Maine Lobster Cushing Diesel, LLC Damariscotta Bank & Trust Co.
Grundens USA Ltd Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation Guy Cotten, Inc.
HR Beal & Sons Inc. Hidden Seafood Corp.
Kips Seafood Co. Lake Permaquid Inc. Linda Bean’s Maine Lobster Lobster ME Lobster Products Inc.
Lonnie’s Hydraulic Inc. Maine Financial Group Maine Port Authority Maine Sea Grant Marine Hydraulic Engineering Co. Inc.
Midcoast Marine Electronics Midcoast Marine Supply Mills Wharf Lobster Mount Desert Oceanarium Northern Maine Fabrication Inc.
Newcastle Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep

New England Marine & Industrial
Novatec Brads LTD Penobscot Bay & River Pilot Assn.
Rockland Savings Bank South Bristol Fishermen’s Cooperative Superior Bait and Salt Superior Marine Products Inc.
The Compass Insurance Group The First NA WD Matthews Machinery Co.
Weirs Motor Sales Inc. Williams CPA Group MLCC Workes Lobster Bait

The Bait Report

2014 Herring Catch and Quota

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<th>Area</th>
<th>Quota (as of 6/19)</th>
<th>% of quota</th>
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</table>

Data from the NMFS Weekly Atlantic Herring report.
Framework 2 imposed seasonal restrictions on Areas 1A and 1B. As a result, Area 1A opened on June 1, and Area 1B opened on May 1 and was closed on May 24. Area 1A percent of quota includes current ME state-only vessel landings.
Racing fishing vessels is a time-honored tradition, and not just limited to lobstermen. The 1937 film Captains Courageous memorializes what had been happening all along: Gloucester fishing schooners racing each other to port en route home from the Grand Banks.

It’s no surprise that the casual racing which happened spontaneously when two lobster boats found themselves headed for the same place was formalized around 1964.

“In the early 1900s, perhaps as far back as 1901, Willis Beal’s grandfather raced another lobsterman in his Friendship sloop. The loser said if he’d had Beal’s boat, he would have won. So they swapped boats. ‘The guy still lost,’ said Jon Johansen, owner of Maine Coastal News and president of the Maine Lobster Boat Racing Association for nine years.

In the 1920s, the races became a bit more organized, but it wasn’t until 1964 that the first of the truly official races took place. Those races included some interesting characters, according to Johansen. “There was Otto Backman, a boatbuilder from Prospect Harbor; Calvin Beal Jr., Merle Beal, and Barna Norton, who according to Johansen. “There was Otto Backman, a boatbuilder from Prospect Harbor; Calvin Beal Jr., Merle Beal, and Barna Norton, who gave the Canadians a hard time for 40 miles. Merle Beal, and Barna Norton, who gave the Canadians a hard time for 40 miles.”

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In the 1960s in his Will Frost-built lobster boat. Frost was generally considered to be the designer of the Maine lobster boat, “said Johansen. “Frost designed most of the Young brothers boats.

Things have changed since the early days of racing, especially the technology. Speed and noise dominate the races now. Rumor has it that many lobstermen choose their engines based on the ability to compete in the races rather than out of any need for speed when hauling traps.

Many names stand out in Maine’s history of racing. Current record-holders include Alfred Osgood of Vinalhaven who set a 2010 record in his diesel-powered Starlight Express, reaching 58.9 miles per hour. Lorna R’s 2006 record of 53.6 miles per hour remains the fastest speed for a wooden boat. Galen Alley of Beals Island set the record for gasoline engines when his Foolish Pleasure was clocked at 72.8 mph.

“When we know he (Alley) has gone faster than that. We think he might break 80 mph this year,” Johansen said. He explained that gasoline-powered boats are “faster out of the hole” because it takes longer for the turbos in diesel engines to heat up.

Colorful stories from the races abound. Several of the more famous involve the Red Baron, Corliss Holland’s fabled red Holland 32 from the family’s boatbuilding shop. Holland, a Stonington native who had moved to Belfast, was racing the Red Baron in a Stonington race with his son-in-law Mike Dassatt aboard as “pit crew.” They were nearing the finish line when the wakes from the other vessels sent their speeding boat into a spin.

“Mike dove for the kill switch to avoid hitting a scow and landed on my father’s lap,” said Marguerite Gove, winner of the 2013 Stonington race, as well as taking first in his other three races that year. The categories of races are determined by vessel length and engine power. There are five gasoline classes and 14 diesel classes, a wooden boat class, a “diesel free for all” and a “gasoline free for all.” Individual harbors that sponsor races may add categories, such as Stonington’s Fastest Lobster Boat Allot category.

Generally between 35 to 100 vessels take part in the races in one harbor. Stonington is usually the biggest race “by a lot,” said Johansen, with up to 100 boats participating. The number of races held during the course of a summer is typically 13. “It’s a lot of work to put on a race,” said Johansen.

Some of the racing vessels are what lobstermen call “toy boats,” Johansen explained, boats that are not working lobster fishing boats. There’s some contention about having non-working boats compete against working boats, so some harbors allow only work boats.

In the non-working category, Stevie Johnson has been known to race a blue Pontiac convertible attached to the deck of a cabin cruiser, without...
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Linda Bean’s Perfect Maine Lobster opened another restaurant in May. The Lobster Boat Cafe is a custom-built lobster boat located in the middle of the Maine Mall in South Portland. Restaurant staff work on the “deck” of the boat preparing light meals featuring Maine seafood. Surrounding the boat’s gunnel are stools where diners can watch the action. On the nearby “dock” are café-style tables for additional diners.

The Lobster Boat café menu features Linda Bean’s Perfect Maine Lobster Roll, a grilled cheese and lobster sandwich, the Lobstickler (split lobster tail on a stick), and simple steamed lobster as well as other sandwiches and salads. Bean, a sponsor of the Maine Red Claws basketball farm team to the Boston Celtics, has paired up with Gritty’s Brewery to bring Red Claws Ale to the Lobster Boat cafe.

Governor Paul LePage and Senator Susan Collins helped cut the official ribbon at the opening of Linda Bean’s Lobster Boat Cafe at the Maine Mall on May 31. All photos courtesy of Linda Bean’s Perfect Maine Lobster.

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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.

**Aikido Bay, Inc.**
Portland, ME -- No annual fees for 2014. 10% off annual fees in 2015.

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

**Bessy Bait, LLC**
Seabrook, NH -- $5 off each barrel on multiple barrel purchases at the Seabrook NH location with proof of MLA membership.

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

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

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

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

**Hews Company**
South Portland, ME -- 10% off all hydraulic components and Cable Craft cables in 2014.

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

**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.

**Mount Desert Oceanarium**
Southwest Harbor, ME -- Free admission for commercial fishermen and their families.

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

**Nicholas H Walsh, PA**
Portland, ME -- 25% off legal services.

**North Atlantic Power Products**
Exeter, NH -- 10% off service repairs of twin disc transmissions.

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

**Sawyer & Whitten Marine**
Portland & Rockland, ME -- 10% discount from regular MSRP pricing (doesn’t apply to sale items)

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

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

**SW Boatworks**
Lamont, ME -- Show MLA card to receive $500.00 discount on a new hull or top.

**Weatherwane Seafood Inc.**
Kittery, ME -- 10% off retail and mail order purchases. Just mention you are an MLA member.

**Winter Harbor Fishermen’s Coop**
Winter Harbor, ME -- 10% off fresh picked lobster meat.
Bob Williams has lived in Stonington for all but four days of his 72 years. The four days were those he spent at the Castine hospital, being born.

One grandfather was a stonemason, who moved from Clark Island in St. George to Stonington to work the quarries there. Bob’s father was a stonemason as well. But on his mother’s side, the Fifield’s were all Stonington fishermen.

“When I got out of high school, I started fishing as a sternman with other people,” said Williams, beginning with his first wife’s family, the Eatons.

In 1959, he went on his own with a $1,000, 27-ft. boat and 125 traps. In 1964, he moved up to a new, 34-ft. Jonesport boat built on Beals Island. He called it the J&$ for his six children, whose names all started with either J or S. John, James, Shelly, Sheila, Serena and Sherry.

Nine years later, he bought a 36-ft. Arnold Day boat built on Deer Isle. He named it J&$ as well, and went lobstering, then shrimp and scalloping in the winter. In the late 1970’s, he had a 46-ft. boat built in Southwest Harbor by Jarvis Newman. “I helped build it.” Williams recalled. “I was going to give up lobstering and go scalloping, shrimp and gig netting. I had the boat for a year, then I turned the boat over to my son, John.”

Williams returned to lobstering full-time, John, who is now a Maine Lobstermen’s Association (MLA) board member, went gignetting until the 1990s, then sold that boat and returned to lobstering as well.

The elder Williams is happy about his choice to return to lobstering. He named, Jamie Klemenz, goes fishing with him. “I was married at 17 and had six kids by the time I was 27,” explained Williams. “I enjoy spending winters not being on the water.”

He met his second wife, Diane, at the Fishermen’s Forum. “That’s where we spend our anniversary, at the Forum,” he said.

“In the 1990s, when I built the Jamie K, the catch started increasing,” said Williams. “Since 1990, we’ve had some great years. It’s been 24 years of good catches. We went from 20 million pounds to 126 million.” That’s the high point Williams has seen in his long career in the industry. The low points include the ever-increasing cost of everything needed to go lobstering, and the low prices paid for lobster in recent years.

Williams is forthright about his feelings for the Maine Lobstermen’s Association. “I think I’ve been in the MLA since the start,” Williams explained. “I was a director. Now my son (John) is a director. Someone has to represent you in Augusta and D.C. Regulations change fast and you have to keep up or you could be regulated out of something.”

He believes the health of the stocks can be attributed to the conservation measures implemented by Maine fishermen, such as the V-notch, and the increases in the minimum measurement. “We had a hatchery in Stonington for years. Now we don’t need one. There are a lot of small lobster around,” said Williams. “It guarantees our future.”

“I have a lot of hours in fishing and I’ve done well. All my sons and grandsons have been involved in it in one way or the other. My older grandson is fishing offshore. They like fishing. They might work on shore for a while, but they go back,” Williams said. “Lobstering has been good to me.”

The MLA Member Profile:

Bob Williams, Stonington

By Nancy Griffin

Pohlmann continued from page 3

nounced a new proposal that asks the rest of the nation’s power plants to adopt carbon limits like we have. Maine has everything to gain from these new limits because they will stand with Maine fishermen and support the EPA’s plan that will help to keep our oceans healthy and vibrant.

I was grateful for the opportunity to meet with the MLA board in May to discuss the importance of the EPA rules. The EPA is seeking public comments on the new rules through this summer. You can be part of this critical step for Maine by contacting Maine’s senators and sending your comments to the EPA through the NRCA website at www.nrca.org.

Table mission through programs in education, research and charity. The MLCA grew out of the desire by lobster community stakeholders to educate the public about Maine’s lobstering heritage, support scientific research to further the industry’s conservation ethic and stewardship of ocean resources, and provide charity to distressed fishing families.

MLCA is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization which achieves its charitable mission through programs in education, research and charity.

Maine Lobster Leadership Program

By Nancy Griffin

Pohlmann continued from page 3

nounced a new proposal that asks the rest of the nation’s power plants to adopt carbon limits like we have. Maine has everything to gain from these new limits because they will stand with Maine fishermen and support the EPA’s plan that will help to keep our oceans healthy and vibrant.

I was grateful for the opportunity to meet with the MLA board in May to discuss the importance of the EPA rules. The EPA is seeking public comments on the new rules through this summer. You can be part of this critical step for Maine by contacting Maine’s senators and sending your comments to the EPA through the NRCA website at www.nrca.org.
THE HEALTH OF LOBSTERMEN: Fishing Safety Council hosts Rutgers students

by Ann Backus
Harvard University School of Public Health

Suppose you were asked to plan a week-long trip to New England with a focus on health and safety from a historical perspective. What industries or workplaces would you choose to visit? Tough call. New England is the locus of many basic enterprises that are the backbone of our everyday life, just as they were in the 17th and 18th centuries. For students at Rutgers University in New Jersey, one choice stood out: the Maine fishing industry.

In April Kevin Rousseau of the Maine Department of Marine Resources received a call from Dr. Mitchell Rosen of the Rutgers University Office of Public Health Practice. Dr. Rosen asked if it would be possible for a group of students and faculty from the Rutgers Education and Research Center (ERC) to visit commercial fishing operations in Portland in June. Kevin called me, knowing that I am a staff person in the Harvard Education and Research Center, and we agreed that this would be a good project for the Maine Commercial Fishing Safety Council to undertake. Kevin proposed the project at the next Council meeting, and we immediately had a flood of great ideas for a day in Portland.

The council’s responsibility is to provide the Department of Marine Resources commissioner information and advice concerning fishing safety issues, including such issues as the minimum safety equipment, training and operational standards necessary for safe fishing, and to devise community-based education programs that provide practical safety training and fisheries-specific safety training. The council meets regularly throughout the year.

The Rutgers group arrived on June 10. After a brief orientation, Kevin took half the group on a walking tour of the Portland waterfront. They visited Marine Services Inc., a life-raft re-packaging business, a fish processing plant, and as the highlight of the tour a fish auction. Colonel Joe Fessenden, Chief of Marine Maine Patrol, took the other half of the group on the P/V Challenger II, piloted by specialist Michael Neelon. This group came alongside a lobster boat off Diamond Island and watched the lobstering operation, including hauling, baiting, and banding. The students and faculty asked the lobsterman about various fishing practices and observed the risks of entanglement in rope, repetitive motion injuries from banding, and the man-overboard risk of an open stern boat. In addition, we were pleased to have Elliott Thomas, a Maine Lobstermen’s Association board member, on hand throughout the day to expand on topics and answer questions.

The P/V Challenger II, like all other Maine marine patrol boats, serves as a model for lobstersmen because it has a rope locker. The rope locker keeps the trap rope away from a fisherman’s feet and reduces the risk of entanglement and of being pulled overboard. Outfitting marine patrol boats with rope lockers was a direct outcome of research myself and other researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health had done in 1999 and 2000. At that time we were studying how to reduce the risk of lobstersmen getting entangled in trap rope. In the field of public health the application of research to practice is known as “R2P.” After these outings, we gathered for lunch at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute on Commercial Street in Portland. John McMillan of McMillan Offshore/Water Survival Training described the training objectives for the U.S. Coast Guard Drill Conductor Course. Maine has the unique requirement that all lobster apprentices pass the Drill Conductor Course and log 1000 hours of fishing and gear repair prior to being eligible for a license. I provided a summary of the research we have done through the Harvard ERC to help make gear maintenance and fishing safer and healthier. In terms of gear maintenance we covered the importance of using low Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) paint, reducing dust and fumes during buoy sanding and heat branding, and cleaning trap rope with hot water and bleach to reduce endotoxin exposure. On-deck threats included hazards such as rope entanglement and drum winch injuries (on trawlers) as well as the hazards of confined space entry on larger fishing vessels. One Rutgers student volunteered to get into an immersion suit for the first time. She managed the feat in less than one minute, which prompted the other students to try to match her time.

The day concluded with a meeting of the Commercial Fishing Safety Council. You might say, “we covered the waterfront.” This quick snapshot of the fishing industry covered fishing practice, land-based support services for the fishing industry, regulations, enforcement, safety training, safety and health research, and the proposal of intervention strategies by a multi-agency council advisory to the Department of Marine Resources. Dr. Rosen told us later that the day in Maine was quite possibly the highlight of the week.

He generally has nothing to do with it. He’s stuffing dead fish in a bag.”

Recently major violations have made front page headlines in Maine newspapers. In 2013, a midcoast lobsterman and his son were charged with bringing in to Rockland more than 400 v-notched lobsters. The two men had faced fines of more than $190,000 but a plea agreement reduced the number of illegal lobsters to 120 and the fine to $25,000. In May this year an Orland lobsterman was charged with possession of 123 short lobsters and 12 v-notch lobsters. He faces possible fines of more than $100,000. Most lobstersmen, however, take the prohibitions against landing under- or over-sized lobsters, egg-bearing female lobsters, and v-notched lobsters very seriously. One Owls Head lobsterman, who asked not to be named, said in mid-June that he had just let his sternman go because the man had allowed too many shorts in the crates too many times. “Three times and you’re out,” the lobsterman declared.

Cloutier emphasized that many of the violations found by Marine Patrol officers are not dramatic in size or frequency. “But if it’s serious enough, the sternman will have his right to obtain a license suspended. That means that he can’t engage in any activity under the captain’s license,” he explained. The sternman thus is out of a job.
**COMMUNICATION IS A CHALLENGE FOR MAINE LOBSTER MARKETING COLLABORATIVE**

By Melissa Waterman

The Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative (MLMC) is charged with improving recognition and demand for Maine lobster in the national and international markets in order to ultimately raise the price paid to lobstermen. Since its inception in October, 2013, the MLMC board has taken a crash course in the field of marketing and promotion, explained Frank Gotwals, a Stonington lobsterman and MLMC chair. "What is marketing?" he asked rhetorically. "The board needed to know what it is for in order to do its work."

Although it sounds a bit counter-intuitive, marketing lobster is not the same as selling lobster. Marketing professionals promote the product — in this case, lobster — in the mind of the public, specifically targeting those whose jobs involve delivering the item to consumers. Lobstermen often think of lobster being sold at local seafood markets and grocery stores, but more than 80% of seafood is consumed in restaurants and other food service outlets. "That's why our new program with the Culinary Institute of America is so important," Gotwals said.

The MLMC has begun a three-year promotional partnership with the Culinary Institute of America (CIA) to get up-and-coming chefs excited about cooking with Maine lobster. The CIA is a renowned culinary college, which trains chefs at campuses in California, New York, Texas and Singapore. The campaign will develop digital marketing content for students and professional chefs. The CIA will develop lobster recipes and produce tutorial videos on how to prepare and serve lobster. It will offer a full online course on cooking with lobster including how to handle and prepare lobster, wines to serve with specific dishes, and background on Maine's lobster fishery.

Gotwals traveled to California this spring to meet with major restaurant and hotel food buyers and chefs at a Greystone Flavor Summit hosted by the CIA. "I talked to the people who are important for us to reach and market Maine lobster to," he said. In addition, in June Gotwals hosted a CIA film crew on his fishing boat who filmed lobstermen at work and their fishing communities for the online course which is scheduled to be launched this September.

But there is another audience for the MLMC’s marketing efforts: the Maine industry itself. The MLMC is funded through a fee levied on licenses not only of lobstermen but of seafood buyers and processors as well. As the MLMC board members have come to realize, marketing a live animal to the public is not as simple as it may seem. It takes money and it takes time.

"I understand the skepticism fishermen have about marketing and its potential benefit to them. I agreed to serve on the board in part because I believe there is unrealized value in our product," Gotwals said. "We have a compelling story about our lobstering communities and the sustainable fishery we’ve worked to build. The MLMC has to gradually get the industry interested in marketing in such a way that they realize what marketing can do for them. It won’t happen overnight." The Collaborative’s job is to educate buyers, distributors and the public about all of the great attributes of Maine lobster. Gaining recognition for a high-quality product will build demand. Then it is up to individual businesses to actually sell Maine lobster.

Lobsterman Peter Miller of Tenants Harbor sits on the board and is part of its communications committee. He knows that getting a message out to lobstermen on any topic is an uphill battle. "We are letting people know what we are doing via email, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, all those things," he said. "We might have a press release in the Bangor Daily News but no one seems to read it." He also cautions lobstermen and processors not to think that in this first year of operation the MLMC will be making a big splash. "We are in the process of building a foundation so you are not going to see a whole lot of change immediately, like a major price increase. You have to take the long view. We want to build demand for years to come, not just make a house of cards."

There’s a lot for the MLMC to work with, Gotwals added. "We already have a brand. Everyone recognizes the name ‘Maine.’ We have to support that," he said. The analysis conducted by Future Shift in 2013 indicated that the public associates the name "Maine" with unpolluted water and high-quality seafood. The trick now is to make those who use lobster, such as major chefs and restaurant chains, request Maine lobster by name, rather than simply "lobster."

The investment in the MLMC ($750,000 in 2014; $1.5 million in 2015; $2.26 million in 2016 and 2017) is sizable. However, Gotwals argues, those figures, when contrasted with the number of pounds that are expected to be landed over those years, are modest. "Think of it this way: when you make an investment in a new boat, you don’t expect to get all that money back in one year. It’s a long-term investment."

The MLMC suffered a setback in May when the Louisiana man selected to become the new organization’s executive director declined the position due to personal reasons. The board immediately set about reinstituting the search; interim director Marianne Lacroix said that a new director should in place by August.

What impact will the MLMC license surcharge have on a lobsterman’s profit?

For a Class 2 license holder (a lobsterman who is licensed to take one sternman), the MLMC surcharge over a five-year period will be $110.50 the first year, $220.50 the second year, and $330.50 for each of the last three years. The total cost would be $1322.00 or 13 lobster traps.

The lobsterman’s average catch over the five-year period is 20,000 pounds per year (a conservative figure). So in five years time, the lobsterman landed 100,000 pounds. The MLMC surcharge is equivalent to just over a penny (1.3 cents) per pound.

Perhaps the lobsterman caught 40,000 pounds each year. That would bring the MLMC surcharge down to a little more than a half a cent (.0065) per pound. "I believe a strong marketing program will be able to easily add that much extra value to the fishery over five years," said Frank Gotwals, chair of the MLMC board.


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**COMMUNICATION IS A CHALLENGE FOR MAINE LOBSTER MARKETING COLLABORATIVE**

**Helping Maine lobstermen understand the meaning of marketing is an ongoing, and challenging task of the MLMC. MLA photo.**
In 2012, Deer Isle Stonington High School (DISHS) and Penobscot East Resource Center (PERC) worked together to create the Eastern Maine Skippers Program. Our goal [with this program] is for students who intend to pursue a fishing career to gain skills that will allow them to successfully participate in the industry," explained Todd West, principal at DISHS.

The Skippers Program was developed when DISHS re-vamped its marine trades program. At that time teacher Tom Domyn expressed an interest in finding a way to better benefit students and add value to school. "It didn't make sense to teach the students interested in fishing to fish," said West. "That's something that gets passed on from family members. Tom recognized that and wanted a way for students to stay involved in school."

The 2013/2014 school year marked the first year of the program. "This pilot year helped us convince ourselves we could pull it off," West said with a laugh. Students from seven schools were involved in the program during the pilot year. Teachers from North Haven, Vinalhaven, George Stevens Academy, Ellsworth, Mount Desert Island, Narraguagus, and DISHS, together with PERC worked together to create a curriculum for the school year. "We recognized that our area relies heavily on lobster and if anything were to happen to that fishery, a lot of people would be in trouble," West explained. Thus students in the Eastern Maine Skippers Program this first year were assigned with the task of researching a supplemental fishery suitable for the region.

From left to right, Deer Isle-Stonington High School Marine Trades teacher Tom Domyn and Ellsworth High School 9th grade students Jillian Dow, Jack McKechnie, and Hayden Sattler cross Penobscot Bay on a lobster boat. Photos courtesy of Todd West.

Students from the seven coastal high schools met with fishermen, teachers, and the Department of Marine Resources (DMR) Commissioner Patrick Keliher in Stonington in September. "The commissioner assigned homework to the students. He asked them to develop a trap-based fishery for winter flounder. It's something that no one knew the answer to yet," West explained. "He told the students that this is really important to the state, the DMR, and to their future."

Since that meeting, students have learned what it takes to begin a supplemental fishery. "The students have learned the life history and science of winter flounder, how to apply for a special fishing license, how to collect data, and have gained public speaking skills," West noted.

"This program provides great opportunities for students who don't necessarily do well within the formal walls of a school," said Narraguagus life science teacher Helen Sprague. "I had four senior boys in the program here. They completed the program as an independent study," she said. "All four students either worked on or owned their own boat. We had one boat registered to fish our traps and that student plans to continue to fish the traps and collect data throughout the summer. Students from all seven schools have been fishing the winter flounder traps since May.

"We looked at the trawl survey data from the DMR to figure out where to set traps," Sprague continued. Before the students could set traps, though, they had to design and build them and be granted a special license from the state. "The students worked with Kevin Rousseau of DMR on the license application process and presented their application to the DMR Council," West said. His role in the program has been to get people together who know what they are talking about when it comes to fishing. This spring that included taking students to the Maine Fishermen's Forum in Rockland. "It was really neat to see the students showing fishermen their trap ideas and getting some feedback," West said with pride. Sprague said the program was a bigger success than she expected it to be. "There are a lot of volunteer hours that have been put into this program. It's amazing that all seven schools that started this program stayed with it all year," she said.

Carla Guenther, lead fisheries scientist at PERC, was also impressed with the participation from students, teachers, and local fishermen. "One fisherman I talked to me 'this is the first meeting of any sort I've been to where people get along and were hopeful'," she recalled.

Many of the teachers aren't originally from the communities they teach in, so PERC helped connect them with local fishermen. "There was a complete lack of resistance [from the fishermen]," Guenther said. "We had people pouring into the students' final presentation to the Commissioners." The students who took part in the program made a formal presentation on their preliminary findings for a new winter flounder fishery to Commissioner Keliher in June. They plan to continue experimenting with the winter flounder traps through the summer and into next fall. Commissioner Keliher commented, "I think it is amazing that students who are graduating are going to see the project through the summer. That tells you how invested they are in the program."

Guenther, Sprague, and West said support from the local fishermen added tremendous value to the project. "It was really great for the students to see the older fishermen get excited about this. It gives them a sense of pride [in the project]," said Guenther. "We saw a lot of interactions through the program, both cross-harbor and cross-generational interactions," added West. "This program acknowledges what fishermen men learn on the water every day," Guenther said. West agreed, saying that while fishermen don't necessarily call their knowledge science, the program validates that knowledge.

The students hadn't caught many flounder by the close of the school year, but will continue to collect data on where the fish are located in the winter.

The Eastern Maine Skippers Program

By Sarah Paquette

A formal presentation on their preliminary findings for a new winter flounder fishery to Commissioner Keliher in June. They plan to continue experimenting with the winter flounder traps through the summer and into next fall. Commissioner Keliher commented, "I think it is amazing that students who are graduating are going to see the project through the summer. That tells you how invested they are in the program."

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By Melissa Waterman

In order to increase the demand for Maine lobster, more value-added products that use lobster must be developed and marketed to the consumer. Consumers do appear to be developing a taste for items such as lobster pot pie or lobster macaroni and cheese. But what of the other uses of lobster and Maine’s diverse marine species? Landings continue its series looking at some of the less-publicized ways our state’s ocean resources are put to commercial use.

The value in Maine’s lobster and other seafood is not solely from its tastiness as a food. Although diving into a plate of fresh Maine shrimp or a perfectly steamed lobster is an experience for which many diners are willing to pay a high price, that lobster or plate of shrimp retains value even after the dining experience is over.

In Newfoundland, for example, one seafood company is exploring the possibility of finding value in the shells and other waste left from its shrimp processing operations. Canada exports more cold water shrimp and snow crab. Quinlan Brothers is a large processor of shrimp and snow crab. The company found that oil, highly valued as a premium nutritional supplement, can be derived from shell waste. And as almost everyone knows, Omega-3 oils are a valued commodity in the world of nutrition.

Another company, a spin-off of Auburn University in Alabama, is also adding value to seafood waste. Falcon Protein Products processes animal byproducts to value-added meals, oils and other commercial products. It has developed a method for processing shrimp and crab waste into a product that is sold as an animal feed supplement. The process involves drying the waste at a very high heat for a very short time. The shrimp and crab shells are reduced to a small-grained meal with very little loss of nutritional value, making it a low-cost protein supplement.

Closer to home, the Lobster Institute at the University of Maine has come up with an innovative way to use left-over lobster shells. A University of Maine graduate student came up with the idea of using lobster shells to make biodegradable golf balls. It seems that dedicated golfers often drove balls off the deck of cruise ships while underway. The balls were ingested by sea turtles and other marine species which caused them to die. The practice was banned in the late 1980s by international treaty. However, golfers still book cruises; those on coastal golf courses often shank a ball into the briny deep. A bio-degradable golf ball might just find a lucrative place in the market.

Using ground lobster shell, a natural binding agent, and a golf ball mold purchased on eBay, bioengineering major Alex Caddell and engineering professor David Nevard spent nine months to develop a golf ball that looks, weighs and acts like a regular ball. The major difference: If the ball ends up in the water, it dissolves in about one week, much more quickly than other biodegradable balls.

While the ball has been patented, it has not yet made it into sporting goods stores. The main component of lobster shells, as well as crab and shrimp shells, is a material called chitin. Chitin is a derivative of glucose, akin to the cellulose found in plants. It has a number of commercial uses but perhaps the most innovative is one discovered recently.

Scientists Biswajit Ghosh and Marek Urban at the University of Southern Mississippi developed a polyeurethane coating that heals its own scratches when exposed to sunlight. The coating uses chitosan, which is derived from chitin. The chitosan is chemically blended into a traditional polymer material, such as the one used to protect the paint on cars. When a scratch occurs on the coating, the chemical structure of the polymer is damaged; sunlight enters the scratch. The chitosan responds to the ultraviolet wavelength of sunlight by making chemical chains with other materials in the coating, eventually filling the scratch. This process can take less than an hour and will work in any climate, explained the scientists.

Once upon a time, people tossed their garbage bithely in the local dump. Now we live in a world where even the lowest items, such as the shells of northern shrimp or lobster, might hide a secret value. Our job is to find it.
CREATURE FROM THE PALEOZOIC HELPS HUMANS STAY HEALTHY

By Melissa Waterman

Maine is home to many valuable marine creatures. We all know about Northern shrimp, scallops, and the ever-popular lobster. What many might not know is that Maine is the northeasternmost home to a remarkable marine creature little changed since the Paleozoic Era: the horseshoe crab.

Like lobster, horseshoe crabs belong to the phylum of Arthropods, animals that have an articulated body and limbs. The horseshoe belongs to its own class called Merostomata, which means “legs attached to the mouth.” Though they are called crabs, they actually aren’t related to crabs or any other crustacean. In fact, they seem more like a creature invented for the movie Alien than a benign animal much valued in medicine.

The first thing you notice about a horseshoe crab is the hard carapace around its body and its long rigid tail. If the animal is turned over, it will use that tail to right itself to keep from drying out. It has five legs with claws at the tips which it uses for walking, swimming and getting food to its mouth. Reflecting its class name, a horseshoe crab’s mouth is located at the center of the body, where the legs attach. It eats worms and shellfish on the seafloor or occasionally a crab or tiny lobster. Perhaps the most unusual feature of a horseshoe crab is its eyes. The animal has a total of five pairs of eyes distributed throughout its body. With these eyes it can perceive both visible light and ultraviolet light.

But it’s a horseshoe crab’s blood that has attracted the attention of the medical community. That blood is not red like ours but rather bright blue. Why? Because copper forms the base of the blood cells just as iron forms the base of human blood. Within that blue blood are amoebocytes. An amoebocyte is a cell that can move on its own. Within those mobile amoebocytes is a chemical that has proved critical for the safety of medical patients.

Horseshoe crabs, unlike us, do not have an immune system. So when its carapace is injured and bacteria or other pathogens enter the body, the animal’s amoebocytes get to work, just as the white blood cells in our blood would. The amoebocytes will track down the invading bacteria and use coagulogen contained within them to envelope the invaders in inescapable clots.

That coagulogen goes by the name of Limulus amebocyte lysate or LAL. It is extremely sensitive to endotoxins (a toxin within a bacterial cell that is released when the cell disintegrates). Back in 1956, it was discovered that the LAL could be used to identify endotoxins left in intravenous drugs, vaccines, and medical devices implanted in the human body. If there is the merest trace of an endotoxin in a medicine, so small as to be in the parts per trillion, the LAL will find it. And when it finds it, it turns what was liquid into a gel. No other test works as easily or reliably.

Currently every drug certified by the FDA must be tested using LAL as do surgical implants such as pacemakers and prosthetic devices.

Five companies harvest horseshoe crabs to bleed them for their all-important blood, one of which, Lonza, has operations in Maine. The LAL extracted from the blood is worth about $15,000 per quart. Approximately 30% of the animal’s blood is removed at one time and then the horseshoe crab is released back into the water. Mortality rates among bled horseshoe crabs vary from 10% to 15%, according to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

Maine has done intermittent assessments of horseshoe crab populations in the state since 2001. Middle Bay in Harpswell, Thomas Point Beach in Brunswick, the Damariscotta River, the Bag disguise River and Taunton Bay still have resident horseshoe crabs. However, the ASMFC noted in its 2013 Horseshoe Crab Stock Assessment that horseshoe crabs have been steadily declining in abundance in the New York and New England regions since 2004.

They are peculiar to look at, certainly, but for patients around the world the horseshoe crab is vital to protecting human health.

NEW REGULATIONS PROPOSED FOR FOR JONAH CRABS

Gulf of Maine Research Institute press release

A New England collaborative proposed new regulations and emergency protective measures for Jonah crab at the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) meeting in May.

“Landings of Jonah crab have more than quadrupled over the last 20 years, but we still lack a management plan that would monitor the species and create limits to protect it from overfishing,” said Jen Levin, seafood program manager at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute. “We are helping to facilitate an industry-led effort to sustainably manage this resources and safeguard the long-term health of the fishery.”

The working group – consisting of New England fishermen, scientists, retailers, regulators, and processors – proposed that the ASMFC incorporate Jonah crab into the management plan that governs the lobster fishery. The recommendations also include reporting requirements, minimum catch size, and an emergency ban on harvesting females.

Jonah crab has long been considered a bycatch of the lobster industry, but fast-growing market demand has increased the targeted fishing pressure on the species in recent years. In 2012, about 11.5 million pounds of Jonah crab were landed in the United States, with a total pre-processed value of more than $8 million.

“The Jonah crab fishery is an important source of income for local fishermen and seafood processors,” said David Spencer, commercial fisherman, F/V Nathaniel Lee. “We want to be sure that we are putting measures in place that will allow us to harvest this valuable resource today and long into the future.”

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in Maine, for instance, date from the 1980s and early 1990s. As Baker noted, mapping methodology has become much more sophisticated and accurate since then. There are a lot of zones on a FIRM; what most people look for is to see if their property lies within a Special Flood Hazard Area. Those are areas that have a 1% risk of suffering damage from a 100-year flood. Over the life of a 30-year mortgage, Baker noted, a building in a hazard area has a 26% statistical probability of being flooded. The chance of a fire over that same period is only 5 to 10%. Those zones are called the A, AE, A1-30, AO, AH, V1-30 and VE zones.

Currently preliminary maps have been completed for York, Cumberland, Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, Hancock and Waldo counties; Washington County’s maps are in draft stage. None of the coastal county maps will go effective until at least July 2015. In some cases, the preliminary FIRM maps indicate that a property formerly outside of a Special Flood Hazard Area is now in one. In other cases, additional data may correct a property’s standing and place it outside of a Hazard Area. Some communities, such as York and Kennebunk, are contesting the methodology used by FEMA to create the maps. “It will be July, 2015, before these maps go into effect,” Baker said.

Schwab is concerned about the impact the increased insurance costs will have on the Port Clyde Fishermen’s Co-op’s long-term health. “We went to a high deductible, something like $50,000,” he explained. “And the premium, well, that cuts right into whatever profit the co-op makes. It’s hard.” Baker cautions property owners who, after reviewing the preliminary FIRM maps, find themselves in a Special Flood Hazard Area not to despair. “For any building that is newly mapped into a flood zone for the first time and they have a mortgage or are considering other federally backed financing, the property owner should get a flood insurance policy as soon as he can, before the maps become effective [in 2015],” she said. “That will lock in the lowest rate for as long as possible. Once you get it, don’t let it lapse.”

While Maine coastal property owners haven’t experienced the repeated damages suffered by the southern states or the devastation wrought by a Superstorm Sandy, major storms do occur in the state, as demonstrated by the No Name Storm of October, 1991. “It has been a long time since this state has been hit with a widespread flooding event. We’ve just been lucky,” Baker said. “It can happen. It’s really only a matter of time.”

The ultimate goal for the Eastern Maine Skippers Program is to have every high school from lobster zone A through C participate (from the Canadian border to the eastern side of Penobscot Bay). Teachers from the seven schools will meet this summer to outline a curriculum for the upcoming school year. “We already have a few ideas for a new project,” Sprague said. “It would be great to get more teachers and students involved [next year].”
HERRING FISHERMEN

The New England Fishery Management Council voted 10-0 in June against an emergency request to increase the amount of haddock that herring fishermen can catch incidentally on Georges Bank (in Area 3). The council said haddock is too valuable to New England’s struggling groundfishermen to allow herring trawlers to catch more than the 179 metric tons they will be allowed in the year from May 1 to April 30, 2015. Herring fishermen have already caught about 5 percent of that quota, and with the heavy summer fishing season ahead, representatives of the industry said most of the region’s herring fleet fishing in Area 3 could be sidelined as early as September. Herring is the primary bait for Maine’s $364 million lobster fishery. Georges Bank is the source of the vast majority of the herring used by Maine’s 6,000 licensed lobster fishermen in late summer, accounting for 38% of the total herring quota allocation. Herring is forage food for many marine mammals, birds, and larger fish like tuna and striped bass. Conservation groups have sought for years to limit the catch of herring, the largest fishing vessels in New England.

The population of Georges Bank haddock has increased in size, a good thing for groundfishermen but problematic for the herring vessels. Herring fishermen exceeded their limit of 273 metric tons of haddock last year and 286 metric tons in the previous year.

RIGHT WHALES LOOKING UP

A Canadian whale expert says the future of the North Atlantic right whale is looking up, with the highest population since scientists started tracking it 30 years ago. Moira Brown, a senior scientist with the Canadian Whale Institute, said it’s been a long road to rebuild the right whale population but there are now more than 500 documented animals.

North Atlantic right whale sightings have been recorded on the entire East Coast of North America, with the majority from Florida up to the Bay of Fundy and the Roseway Basin. Brown said there have also been recent sightings around other parts of the Maritimes and the Gulf of St. Lawrence. More than 300 calves have been born in the last 15 years and fewer of them are being killed by ships passing through their habitats.

In 2003, the federal government, environmental groups, oil companies and several other groups worked to reroute shipping lanes that went through whale habitat areas. The goal was to prevent ships from hitting whales as they passed through. US fixed gear fishermen have been subject to regulations to reduce entanglement risk since 1997.

FUNDING LIMITS SHELLFISH TESTING IN MAINE

In an effort to prioritize the state’s red tide testing program, Maine fishery officials have prohibited harvesting mussels and European oysters along most of the coast between New Hampshire and Canada. The widespread closure does not reflect a large outbreak of red tide, also known as paralytic shellfish poison, according to Kohl Kanwit, director of public health for Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR). The state has closed most of the coast to mussel and European oyster harvesting so it can focus its efforts on testing clams. Kanwit said there were several reasons for the change in the testing program, widespread outbreaks of red tide along Maine’s coast in 2008 resulted in the state receiving federal relief funds to test for the toxin. That money ran out last year which has forced DMR to reconsider how to allocate its red tide testing funds. Maine’s annual softshell clam harvest is several times more valuable than its mussel landings — $16.9 million versus $2.3 million in 2013 — so DMR decided it would be more cost effective to focus the department’s limited testing resources on clams.

West of Stonington, areas that are closed to mussel and European oyster harvesting also are closed to harvesting surf or hen clams and carnivorous snails. All the cloures for mussels, European oysters, surf or hen clams and carnivorous snails are expected to remain in effect through the end of August. There is no ban on the harvesting of American oysters, which are the predominant species cultivated by oyster aquaculture growers in Maine, Kanwit said.

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Photo by Loren Pavington
In 2012, the MLBRA instituted the Maine Lobster Boat Racing Hall of Fame and inducted ten people:

Gus Alley, a racer and organizer;
Benny Beal, who raced Benny’s Bitch and then the Stella Ann, a 50-mph-plus boat, 30 years ago;
Isaac Beal, who had the Christopher, a dominant boat in the gasoline class;
Merle Beal, for nearly three decades a constant presence in the 38-foot wooden Silver Dollar;
Richard Duffy, of the boatbuilding shop Duffy & Duffy and an avid racer;
Jerry Farrin, who organized the Merritt Bracket Lobster Boat Races in Pemaquid;
Will Frost, a major influence on lobster-boat design and whose torpedo-sterned lobster boats, the Red Wing and Thorobred, were known for their speed in the 1920s and ’30s;
Corliss Holland of Holland’s Boat Shop and a constant threat in the 32-foot Red Baron;
Ernest Libby Jr., who designed and built the Margareta G, which won the World’s Fastest Lobster Boat title four years in a row in the 1970s;
Arvid and Alvin Young, of the Young Brothers Wives Association;
Ernest Libby Jr., who designed and built the Margareta G, which won the World’s Fastest Lobster Boat title four years in a row in the 1970s;
Arvid and Alvin Young, of the Young Brothers Wives Association.


July 27
Harpowell Lobster Boat Race.

July 30 – August 3

UPCOMING
August 1-2
Deer Isle Jazz Festival, Stonington Opera House, Stonington. FMI: http://operahousearts.org or 367-2788.

August 9
Winter Harbor Lobster Boat Race, 10 a.m.

August 10
Pemaquid Lobster Boat Race, 10 a.m.

August 14-23

August 16
Long Island Lobster Boat Race.

August 17
Portland Lobster Boat Race, 10 a.m.

September 13
Noel Paul Stookey concert, Stonington Opera House. FMI: http://operahousearts.org or 367-2788

Stonington Lobster Boat Race 10 a.m.

Lobster Advisory Council, 2 p.m., Natural Resources Service Center, Hallowell.

The cabin. Then there's Louis Stewart, racing a Duffy hull with a “huge engine”, said Johansen. “He gets up to 70 miles per hour, but it’s illegal.”

Add to the non-working category the two retired teachers in the gasoline-powered Class A, 25-foot, Cry Baby they built themselves, in what they shamelessly announce is the “boatbuilding capital of Maine,” land-locked Lewiston. They’ve been consistent winners in their class for 10 years.

Some of the big names and winners in present-day racing are Vance Bunker of Owls Head in Sari Ann, Andy Johnson in Whistlin’ Dixie, and Glenn Crawford in Wild, Wild West.

“Genn’s out there to put on a show” in his ‘play boat’, Johansen said with a laugh. “He often blows up.” In 2001 in Searsport, Crawford’s vessel rolled over in the middle of a race. “The Coast Guard shut down the races then. The lobstermen weren’t happy,” Johansen added.

Shawn Alley of Jonesboro didn’t intend to blow up in his 30-foot Little Girls at the Rockland race in June this year, especially after winning all his races in Boothbay the day before. But he lost by 10 feet that day when he threw a rod through the engine just before the finish line. Bruce Engert in Thunderbolt had been running second to Alley. He lost a gear but managed to get across the finish line before Alley. “That’s racing,” said Johansen.

Last year, a naval architect at Maine Maritime Academy in Castine unveiled a design for a more efficient lobster boat with a trimaran hull that could cut fuel costs by 25 percent. Johansen said lobstermen were told they “could save $40 in fuel a day if they just go half as fast. But they don’t care. They want to go fast.”
Salt magazine was published from 1974 until 1996. The magazine was part of the Salt Institute for Documentary Studies in Portland, founded by Pamela Wood, a former English teacher at Kennebunk High School. The stories contained within Salt, of Maine residents’ lives and work, were compiled into several books by Wood in the late 1970s. The following edited interview with Wilmer Ames of Matinicus Island was taken from The Salt Book, published in 1977.

"Well, I’ll have to see if I remember something to tell you. Oh, I must have started lobstering when I was twelve (1928). I had what they called a peapod, a row boat picketed at both ends. I used to have a hundred traps, and I'd go in the summertime. We'd take that peapod, that double ender, down to the other end of the island and work right out of there. And I used to row over to Criehaven, 'cause it was nearer than our harbor. It was a mile across there to Criehaven and about a mile and half to the other harbor on Matinicus."

Ames attended high school on the mainland.

"My mother was a school teacher, my mother’s people come up from Albion way, and I was born up in there. That's an awful place to send a boy that was brought on the ocean, to that country. Oh, didn’t I hate it. I wouldn’t try and learn anything. Mother said I was going to go until I graduated."

When Ames first started to lobster he used round, rather than square wooden traps. The traps had four heads in them. "In 1934, I guess, my uncle bought some from a man on Criehaven. They started using them down there first. An old French fella from Shag Harbour made them. Nova Scotia ... The Criehaven people used them first, quite a number of years. My father used them some too. And my uncle bought a whole string of John Anderson's, and he liked them so well, I built ten ... They were four feel long. They weighed a lot."

After graduating high school, Ames became a full-time lobsterman. He carefully built his gang of traps up over the years. "I have three hundred traps out now. It's the first time in my life I've ever had that many out. I usually fish two hundred and seventy."

Ames often took his 36-foot boat out to Cash’s Ledge, staying out for several days to fill his crates. He and other Matinicus Island lobstermen would bring their catch in to Rockland to sell, earning a few extra cents for their labors. "Right after they closed the banks in 1933, they [lobster] were ten cents a pound. They worked them up to maybe twelve, fourteen cents the next year. I had just one season that they went for ten cents. We hauled them over to Rockland for three cents a pound. You'd get the freight, three or four cents extra. That’s when they were ten, twelve cents a pound. And we'd get fifteen, sixteen cents. And we thought we were really doing something when we had three or four hundred pounds to take over. You thought you were doing something if you were getting three or four cents a pound then. It was a trip to Rockland, anyhow. But those days went out. If you got ten dollars worth of lobsters, you thought you'd earned a good day’s pay. Twenty dollars, and that’s cookin’, if you got twenty dollars worth of lobsters in a day. You thought you were pretty prosperous."