by Jennifer Van Allen

Since Kyle Murdock opened Sea Hag Seafood in 2012, he’s battled the same issue many Maine businesses face: He needs to attract and hold on to good, reliable workers. "It’s tough finding people in the labor market, getting them into work, and getting them trained and maintaining them," said Murdock, whose plant in Tenants Harbor employs about 75 people. "It’s a huge concern for us.”

Murdock is one of many lobster processors who have built plants or made plans to expand in recent years but who say it’s a challenge to find people to run the cookers, inspect meat for shells and cartilage, oversee shipping and receiving, and do a variety of other tasks.

"Dealing with access to a good, reliable, skilled workforce is an issue," said Annie Tsolikis, executive director of the Maine Lobster Dealers Association. "It’s one thing to get your natural resource product and it’s another thing to get it to market. It’s just the reality of the industry. A lot of people are required to make this work.”

The processors aren’t the only ones who have to work hard to find and retain workers, Tsolikis said. Lobster-related businesses are struggling to find workers to fill jobs at the wharves, the tank rooms, storage trucking, shipping and packaging. "Having good workers is a big deal," she said. "When you have something that goes awry and someone doesn’t show up for work, everything is connected."

Since 2010, when a change in Maine law expanded the types of products

Continued on page 7

FINDING, KEEPING WORKERS DIFFICULT FOR COMPANIES

2014 LOBSTER CHEF OF THE YEAR FROM BOOTHBAY HARBOR

By Melissa Waterman

In October, Stephen Richards of The World is Mine Oyster in Boothbay Harbor won the Lobster Chef of the Year contest at the seventh annual Harvest on the Harbor at the Ocean Gateway in Portland.

From left to right, 2013 Lobster Chef of the Year Kerry Altiero, 2014 winner Stephen Richards, and Marianne Lacroix, Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative. Photo by Focus Photography.

In October, Stephen Richards of The World is Mine Oyster in Boothbay Harbor won the Lobster Chef of the Year contest at the seventh annual Harvest on the Harbor at the Ocean Gateway in Portland.

Continued on page 21

MURAL RAFFLE WINNER GIVES COMFORT THROUGH HIS DOGS

By Melissa Waterman

In September, Sorrento lobsterman Wade Sargent, 60, received the news that he was the winner of the Maine Lobstermen’s Association’s 60th anniversary raffle. Sargent won $1,954, a figure selected to commemorate the MLA’s founding in 1954. "And that was the year I was born," Sargent said with a chuckle.

Continued on page 19

MLA member Wade Sargent and his two Australian Shepherd therapy dogs, hard at work. Photo courtesy W. Sargent.
With November comes the delights of Thanksgiving and a change of season marked by shorter, darker days, increasing cold and the inevitable storms of autumn. Lobstermen are hauling traps whenever the weather permits in the last push to increase landings and profits before the end of the calendar year. While most will haul traps to shore before the winter sets in, many will fish throughout the cold season, steaming 40 miles or more to tend their offshore traps.

What would a newspaper about the coast of Maine be without an article on the weather? Landings provides insight into this month into how such venerable publications as The Farmer’s Almanac and the super-modern Climate Prediction Center forecast the winter season. Find out what may be in store for us this winter!

Despite the advent of winter, there’s still a lot of exciting things happening along Maine’s coast. As we note in this issue of Landings, the state has a new Lobster Chef of the Year, Stephen Richards of The World is Mine Oyster restaurant in Boothbay Harbor. Richards competed against nine other Maine chefs at the sold-out Harvest on the Harbor festival in October. Don’t miss his unusual award-winning recipe on page 21.

Opportunities continue to abound in the lobster industry. The growth in the number of seafood processors in the state is a good news story because it reflects the strength of the Maine lobster industry. But, as Landings notes in an in-depth story first published in the Portland Press Herald, many of those processors are having trouble finding and keeping enough workers. In places like Prospect Harbor and Tenants Harbor, the rural location and limited local population are causing headaches for the fledgling companies.

And a new company has opened its doors in Bucksport. Central Maine Cold Storage offers custom freezing services to fishermen and seafood companies alike, as well as a 15,000 square foot cold storage warehouse. Plus New Meadows Lobster, established in 1952, has a new owner, the DiMillo family of Portland, who run the namesake DiMillo’s On the Water restaurant. The family’s firm will keep the company the same, with former owner Pete McAleny and his son at the helm, while expanding its retail presence on Commercial Street.

We also feature another insightful column by Christina Lemieux, advertising executive and daughter of a Cutler lobsterman. This month Lemieux takes on the much-touted concept of “branding” in a column discussing the commonalities between Maine lobster and Intel microprocessors.

On November 15, the Affordable Care Act health insurance enrollment period starts up again. Last year more than 25,000 Maine residents enrolled through the Maine Marketplace to get health insurance for the first time or improve the insurance coverage they have. The Maine Lobstermen’s Association, in collaboration with Fishing Partnership Support Services, has been advising lobstermen throughout the state on the plans offered and how to enroll. Landings gives an overview of the route to follow as the three-month enrollment window opens once again.

One of the unique aspects of the Maine lobster fishery is that many of the lobster boats are small, fishing with only the captain aboard. For those who go it alone on the water, staying safe can be a challenge. Fishing is the second-most dangerous occupation in the country, after lumbering. Staying safe when you are by yourself at sea is something that must be thought of before you cast off a line, as Landings writer Nancy Griffin notes in her article.

Finally, Landings introduces us to two long-time MLA Members. We meet George Sewall of York who traces his Maine roots back to the 1600s. Sewall has been lobstering since he was a kid and has no plans to retire anytime soon. We also feature a short profile of the Maine Lobstermen’s Association 60th anniversary raffle winner, Wade Sargent. Sargent lobsters out of Sorrento and has been a member of the MLA for as long as he can remember. When notified that he had won the $1,954 raffle, Sargent immediately thought of his two therapy dogs, which he brings to local hospitals and nursing homes to comfort patients. The money would go toward a new old car with space enough for both himself, a 6 foot, 4 inch-tall lobsterman, and his two Australian Shepherd dogs. We salute Wade Sargent.

I hope you enjoy this issue. We welcome your feedback and contributions.

MLCAlliance is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, established in 2010, which achieves its charitable mission through programs in education, research and charity.

MLCA fosters thriving coastal communities and preserves Maine’s lobstering heritage

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NOTES

President’s Note

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The advertising deadline is the second Monday of each month. Please contact April Gilmore McNutt (april@mainelobstermen.org or 967-6221) for more information.

Coastal Outlook

Thoughts from MLCA President Patrice McCarron
Lobstermen may have heard rumors that the proposed Essential Fish Habitat Amendment under discussion by the New England Fisheries Management Council (NEFMC) would affect offshore lobstering. I hope the following column will put those fears to rest.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires that each of the eight regional fishery councils revise and update their habitat management measures periodically. This includes reviewing essential fish habitat (EFH) designations and any rules that minimize the adverse effects on EFH that result from fishing activities. The councils also must identify other actions to encourage the conservation and enhancement of fish habitat.

The NEFMC’s proposed amendment will reevaluate and integrate habitat management measures across all of the fisheries managed under its authority, and incorporate new scientific information about habitat distribution and fishing impacts.

Important to many fishermen, the action will include a review of and possible revisions to the rolling closures and year-round groundfish closed areas in the Gulf of Maine. This is needed to ensure that spatial management measures contribute to attaining optimum yield in the groundfish fishery. Overlaps between habitat and groundfish management areas make the EFH amendment an efficient mechanism to accomplish this.

In addition, a coordinated review of the NEFMC’s spatial management measures is timely given the major changes in groundfish management since the implementation of Amendment 16 to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Annual catch limits and expansion of the sector program were among the most significant changes.

Finally, groundfish-specific considerations have evolved into important elements of the draft habitat amendment. Proposed habitat management alternatives would increase protection for juvenile groundfish and the areas that are important to them during their early life stages.

Spawning management alternatives would identify seasonal closed areas in the Northeast Multispecies FMP that would reduce impacts on spawning groundfish and on the spawning activity of key groundfish species in order to further enhance stock rebuilding.

Although the following will be included in the public hearing document discussed in more detail below, lobstermen should be aware of the following:

Restrictions on lobster traps are not proposed in any of the habitat management, spawning management, or research areas because, in general, lobster traps are not expected to cause significant adverse effects on vulnerable habitat, similar to other fixed gears. In addition, lobster pots are not currently defined as gear capable of catching groundfish. Further, the Council may only regulate lobster pot fishing when the successful management of a Council resource requires it.

A draft document, referred to as a Draft Environmental Impact Statement or DEIS, has been published by NOAA’s National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in Gloucester. The agency has announced a 60-day comment period for the draft document, ending on December 9, 2014 (see all of the information, including the draft amendment, at www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/regs/2014/October/14habo2anoa.html).

The Council and NMFS are planning to extend this period to early January, so look for a follow up announcement!

The Council also will hold coast-wide public hearings from Maine to Virginia, with times, dates and locations to be announced very soon. And to make life a bit easier than looking through the entire Habitat Amendment DEIS, the Council is in the process of producing a condensed version of its management proposals in a public hearing document.

Once the hearings and comment period are over, the Council’s Habitat Committee will review the comments and recommend final alternatives to the full Council. Its eighteen voting members will take final action on the
To the Editor:

After reading the member profile of Harold Crowley in the September 2014 Landings, I felt the need to express my views.

Having lobstered in the mid-Long Island Sound area for 50 years, I have witnessed the boom and bust of the lobster resource here.

When my family started fishing the north shore of Long Island in the early sixties, the average size of lobsters caught was nearly two pounds. The brass 3-3/16" gauge sat on the dash and turned green from lack of use. Undersized berried females were non-existent.

As time went on and more fishermen with many more pots entered the fishery the average size and catch per pot decreased but landings skyrocketed with the increased effort. The number of short berried females increased dramatically as Mr. Crowley has observed (I have caught eggers as small as 55 mm carapace length).

In my opinion this phenomenon is simply Mother Nature telling us we're taking too much and these animals are trying to compensate by reproducing at a younger age.

Just as Mr. Crowley’s mother told him to save a penny for every two earned, my father who lobstered to age 85 told me to save during the good years so you can survive the bad ones.

Sincerely,

Jim King,
F/V Lobsta One
Mattituck, New York

By Melissa Waterman

It was a deal between neighbors. In October, the DiMillo family purchased New Meadows Lobster Company, which is located adjacent to its namesake restaurant on the waterfront. "I’m ready," said former New Meadows Lobster owner Pete McAleny. "Thirty-seven years is a long time." The company is now named New Meadows Lobster Supply LLC.

The DiMillo family is known for DiMillo’s On the Water, which is a magnet for tourists visiting Portland in search of a lobster dinner on the waterfront. The family also owns and operates DiMillo Yacht Services, which includes a marina and yacht brokerage. In a recent Portland Press Herald story, Chris DiMillo said that they plan to expand retail, consumer and wholesale sales at the company. DiMillo’s restaurant purchases approximately $500,000 worth of lobster each year. New Meadows Lobster has been its exclusive supplier since the restaurant opened in 1982.

"I think it makes sense," McAleny said, referring to the sale. "It’s picturesque, you know, to have lobster boats here on the water and wooden floats. Plus it’s security. There are always lobstermen here, during the day and at night." The property includes two large buildings and a 26,800-square-foot pier.

McAleny and his son Matt will continue to run New Meadows Lobster Supply for the DiMillos. McAleny is looking forward to a little time off during the slower winter months. "Sure, I’ll miss the camaraderie here. But I won’t miss working seven days a week," he laughed. "My wife and I are going to head south and look around this winter, see what we like down there." The new owners plan to retain all the current company employees.

NEW MEADOWS LOBSTER HAS NEW OWNER

Pete McAleny plans to relax after 37 years of handling lobsters. Photo courtesy of The Portland Press Herald.

...
By April Gilmore McNutt

Get ready! The open enrollment period to sign up for a health insurance plan through the Affordable Care Act begins again on November 15 and ends on February 15, 2015. Last year, approximately 9.5 million uninsured Americans purchased health insurance plans, for themselves and their families, according to the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The national uninsured rate dropped from 20% of all working-age adults to 15%. In Maine, the enrollment zoomed past an early estimate, topping out at more than 25,000 by March 31.

For people who did not sign up for health insurance last year this is the time to do so. If you want health insurance coverage to begin January 1, 2015, you must enroll before December 15. If you want health insurance coverage to begin in February, you must enroll by January 15, 2015.

The route to gaining health insurance for 2015 is the same as last year. Maine residents can go to the state’s Health Insurance Marketplace at www.healthcare.gov to shop for health insurance plans from Anthem, Maine Community Health Options and Harvard Pilgrim. A person visiting the online Marketplace can find out if he or she qualifies for tax subsidies which reduce the cost of the monthly premium based on income and household size. If you are unable to use the online Marketplace you can also enroll directly through the healthcare.gov call center, open 24 hours a day at 1-800-318-2596, or enroll in-person with a Navigator or certified application counselor.

For those already enrolled in a health insurance plan through healthcare.gov, that plan expires on December 15. But it’s easy to keep that plan if you like it: do nothing. Th ose who do nothing will automatically be re-enrolled, if all goes as planned, “ said Deb Shields, outreach and enrollment coordinator at the Center.

“Whether you are changing your health plan or not, it’s important to update your application if you’ve had any changes in your household size or income. For example, if you’ve had a baby or an older child has moved out; or you’ve had changes in household income that differ from your initial income estimate last year, this could affect your subsidy eligibility for the coming year. Your application needs to be updated before February 15, 2015, when open enrollment ends. If you’ve had no changes to your household or income status, it’s still best to reassess your plan and make sure it’s the best one out there for you. There are new plans available in the Marketplace this year, plus some plans may have made changes to benefits and costs. You should also keep an eye on your mail; you may be receiving notices from both your insurer and the Marketplace before November 15. These notices may be mailed or emailed, whichever method you chose in your healthcare.gov application. The healthcare.gov notice will state the status of your Marketplace account. The notice from your insurer should reflect any changes to your current plan, changes to benefits or costs and if new plans are available. It may also have information about paying your first premium to keep your plan. If you are re-enrolled automatically, you must still pay your January premium on time to avoid any interruption in coverage.

For those who may not be interested in purchasing health insurance, be advised that those who go without health insurance will pay a penalty. The Affordable Care Act has an escape

If you enrolled last year online, you will need to reset your healthcare.gov account password. This is something you can do before November 15; go to “Forgot your password?” on the healthcare.gov home page login screen and you can reset it for the coming year. You can also do this through the healthcare.gov call center.

Eastport Health Care will host a kickoff event for the new enrollment period at the Eastport Youth Center on Deep Cove Road in Eastport on November 15. There will be a brunch for all from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., provided by the health care center. Afterward, Ray Hurd, regional administrator of the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services will speak about health insurance options for Maine residents. “We want to welcome people, talk about the ACA, and showcase some success stories from the last enrollment period. People also can come in before the brunch to reenroll, if all goes as planned,” said Deb Shields, outreach and enrollment coordinator at the Center.

Continued on page 6
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Workers continued from page 1

Linda Bean’s Perfect Maine cares about the individuals sent to them through our employment services program.

To build a workforce at Sea Hag Seafood, Murdock has partnered with a work-release program at the Bolduc Correctional Facility in Warren. On a typical day at the plant, about two-thirds of the 75 jobs are done by workers from the program, each of whom has less than two years remaining on his sentence being served in the minimum-security prison. In October 2013, those efforts earned Murdock an award from the Hitachi Foundation that came with a $40,000 grant.

While this strategy has helped Murdock fill positions, it’s been a struggle to retain those workers for the long term. Often, if they are from away, they leave the area after they complete their sentences, “so we have to replace them on a fairly consistent basis,” he said.

Location is also an issue. The plant in Tenants Harbor is about 90 minutes from Portland. Murdock is considering building and renting housing for his workers, but that would create a whole new set of expenses and issues. In fact, child care and transportation tend to be the most common obstacles keeping workers from reporting for duty. Murdock has started a transportation service to pick up workers in Rockland. But it has been difficult to get all the workers in the same place at the same time to be picked up. “It’s tough to get a critical mass of people together to justify the expense of the program,” Murdock said.

Murdock has tried other things to solve his workforce challenge, such as return bonuses. Each person who returns for a second season gets a raise of 25 cents an hour. He also has posted ads on Craigslist and Maine Job Bank, discussed attending open houses and career fairs and surveyed employees to find out what they want. He’s also hoping to diversify by processing more Jonah crab and reprocessing lobster to extend the work season.

“We’re trying to figure out how to recruit more workers and retain the ones we have,” he said. “The retraining expenses are enormous for the turnover that we have. How do you come up with a solution? I don’t know.”

Outsourcing the labor

Like any businessmen with a startup, Bryan and Luke Holden were trying to be as thrifty as possible when they launched their lobster processing venture, Cape Seafood LLC, to supply Luke’s Lobster, their thriving chain of restaurants.

Early last year, as they were ramping up production at their 16,000-square-foot facility in Saco, they did much of the painting and carpentry themselves; when the plumbing or refrigeration

Continued on page 18
MAINE LOBSTERMEN’S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

STEAMING AHEAD
will return next month

MLA DIRECTORS’ MEETING

MLA Directors met with Scott Smithwick of Smithwick & Mariners Insurance in a closed session to review the rating structure and details of the MLA vessel insurance program. The goal of the vessel insurance program is to provide high-quality, affordable vessel insurance for MLA members. The MLA board believes that the program is doing a good job of serving the membership, but the program must continue to ensure competitive premiums along with excellent customer service and claims processing. The MLA vessel insurance program implemented a 10% reduction in base rates across the board for the 2014 renewal. Moving forward, the Board approved a change in the hull rating categories based on the age of the vessel and giving the insurance agent the discretion to amend the rate or rating bracket of any vessel based on the results of a recent survey.

Executive director Patrice McCarron reported that the recent round of meetings with candidates was very successful, attracting a diverse group running for office in the state Legislature. In the October issue of Landings, the MLA published a shortened transcript of the answers given by the three gubernatorial candidates to questions that affect Maine lobstermen. The full transcript is available on the MLA website (http://www.mainelobstermen.org/pdf/Candidates_2014.pdf).

With regard to the federal whale rules, due for implementation in June, 2015, Maine DMR submitted two requests to National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The first is a request to expand the ¼ mile buffer around offshore islands where singles would be allowed to be fished to additional islands, the second, to develop guidance for lobstermen who wish to request exemptions to the travel length requirements due to safety concerns. The MLA coordinated a letter from the lobster associations, signed by MLA, DELA and SMLA.

The Maine Lobstering Union expressed its desire to sue NMFS about the whale rules, including earlier spawning season closures, which could impact Maine’s lobstermen. DMR will be holding information sessions on this topic with the fishing industry. Secondly, as the NEFMC grapples with the management implications of the devastating cod assessment, there is strong interest among scientists, managers and other groundfish stakeholders to understand the level of cod bycatch in the lobster industry. MLA is monitoring these issues.

The EPA has announced new vessel discharge requirements for commercial vessels under 79 feet in length fishing in state waters. The EPA will issue a blanket permit for all vessels, and those meeting in December 2014. Maine lobstermen will be required to keep a one-page form aboard their boat and certify that annual inspections have been conducted.

The MLA is working with the Army Corps to get staff people out on a lobster boat this fall to tour the proposed disposal site in Penobscot Bay where spoils may be dumped if Searsport is dredged. MLA arranged for Corps staff to tour the site with lobstermen this summer, but lobstermen want officials to return when the area is actively being fished.

The Royal River is being dredged this fall and winter, with spoils to be dumped in the Portland Disposal Area, although the project has been approved since March 2014, there has been much confusion surrounding the details of the project including start date and dredge haul route. MLA has helped to get updates out to lobstermen.

The MLA directors from the area reported that the local meeting in Bristol to discuss the University of Maine’s offshore wind project was well attended. It resulted in a major vote to not allow the project to connect to the power grid in town. However, the board of selectman have stated that the vote is likely non-binding.

The MLA continues to pursue alternate options to repacking life rafts annually as required by the Coast Guard. The MLA will again approach Maine’s Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Council on this issue.

The MLA is helping lobstermen with questions about health insurance again this year. The Health Insurance Open Enrollment begins November 15. Amy Lent updated the board on Maine Maritime Museum’s progress in redesigning and relaunching its lobster exhibit, which will open in July 2015. Annie Tselikis announced that she is now the part-time director of the Maine Lobster Dealers Association.

The MLA Board meets again on November 12 and on December 3 at Darby’s in Belfast.

POLLUTION PERMIT REQUIRED IN MAINE WATERS

Effective December 19, 2014, Maine lobster boats operating in state waters are required to comply with new discharge permit regulations. To meet these new requirements, vessels must have a completed “Permit Authorization and Record of Inspection” (or PARI form) on board the vessel. This is a one-page form which requires you to fill in the vessel owner’s name, address, email and phone; the vessel name, type and identifier. The vessel owner must sign and date the form. The form must then be signed annually each year from 2014 through 2018, certifying that you have completed an annual vessel discharge inspection. It is unclear how these rules will be enforced, however, MLA has been informed that the Coast Guard will request a copy of the PARI form during vessel boardings and inspections. The PARI form is available online: http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/npsdves/vesselpdfs/vessel_user.htm

NMFS WHALE PLAN

The Take Reduction Team (TRT) met via webinar on October 1 to consider a request from the state of Massachusetts to alter the lobster closure to protect whales due to begin on January 1. The TRT supported beginning the closure on February 1, rather than January 1. However, the request to create wet storage areas for lobster gear to assist lobstermen in setting gear in the closed area in May was not supported.

MAINE LOBSTER MARKETING COLLABORATIVE (MLMC)

The MLMC held its first board meeting in October with new executive director Matt Jacobson at the helm. Following an executive session, the Board discussed the Collaborative’s strategy moving forward. Jacobson...
expressed a strong commitment to provide better financial account-
ability back to the industry, and will engage the board more closely in that 
process. Jacobson also stressed the need for the Collaborative to develop 
tools to measure the effectiveness of its work.

The Collaborative has opened a search to hire an ad agency to help 
launch its lobster marketing cam-
paign. MLMC staff and board will 
work to select top candidates from 
the pool of submissions and hold a 
public meeting in December where 
the finalists will make their pitch. 
Consultant John Stammel who has 
been working with the MLMC will 
also provide a summary of his work 
that meeting. The MLMC is col-
lecting data on where Maine lobster 
is currently consumed to inform its 
future marketing strategy. A more 
comprehensive marketing strategy 
will be unveiled in 2015.

LOBSTER LICENSE PLATE 
FUND

The RED Fund Board (the 
Lobster Research, Education and 
Development Fund) met in October 
to discuss the status of the fund and 
establish a strategy moving forward. The RED Board plans to meet quar-
terly, and will set funding priorities for each sector — research, education and development — for the upcom-
ing year. The RED Board also plans to 
market the sale of lobster license plates and educate the public about the 
work accomplished through the fund. The RED Fund raises approxi-
ately $250,000 annually through the 
sale of lobster license plates to 
support its work.

OUTREACH MEETINGS

The MLA participated in several outreach meetings during October. Patrice McCarron presented an overview of MLA's collaboration with Maine Sea Grant on the TAA program as part of the National Sea Grant Program's review of Maine Sea Grant. MLA member Genevieve McCarron participated in a local ra-
dio program on WERU to discuss her 
involve in the Maine Lobster Leadership Institute, as well as a 
range of issues facing Maine's lobster industry. McDonald was interviewed along with Bob Bayer of the Lobster Institute. Patrice McCarron and Rick 
Wahle from the University of Maine also joined the program. McCarron was a guest at a Marine 
Pollution class at the University of 
New England and discussed how the 
lobster industry responds to is-

sues surrounding point source pol-
lution in Maine. MLA also hosted a 
group of 13 students from Princeton 
University during their visit to Maine 
to learn more about fisheries policy, the challenges facing Maine's lobster 
industry and how MLA advocates for 
the industry. MLA included a meet-
ing with a local lobsterman to get 
students down to the dock to tour 
a lobster boat and discuss the fishery 
from a lobsterman's perspective.

HERRING FISHERY CLOSED

Both the Area 1A (inshore) and Area 3 (Georges Bank) herring fisheries 
are closed to directed fishing. Area 3 closed on September 23 and Area 1A closed on October 26 when each area 
was projected to have exceeded 92% 
of the total allowable catch (TAC). Area 3 is closed through December 
31, 2014; Area 1A is closed through 
May 31, 2015. 

During the directed fishery closures, 
vessels may transit through Area 1A 
with more than 2,000 pounds of her-
ning on board, provided the vessel 
did not catch those herring in Area 
1A and all fishing gear is properly 
stowed, making it unavailable for im-
mediate use.

LOBSTER ZONE COUNCIL 
MEETINGS

The Lobster Zone Councils met 
throughout September and October 
to elect new members and review 
events in their regions. 

At each zone council meeting, 
Department of Marine Resources 
(DMR) staff gave an overview of the 
New England Fisheries Management Council's Omnibus Habitat 
Amendment 2 which proposes fish-
closures in federal waters to protect undersea habitats. Staff also 
spoke about DMR's development of a 
Fishery Management Plan for lob-
ster, noting that the effort is taking 
place through the Lobster Advisory 
Council with input from the zone 
councils. The plan will provide an 
overview of the lobster fishery and 
its current management, and ar-

ticulate goals and objectives for the 
future. The plan will be a guidance 
statement and not have the force 
of law or rule. Staff also provided 
an update on the Maine Lobster 
Marketing Collaborative, noting that 
Matt Jacobson took over as executive 
director in August and that Cyrus 
Sleepcer of South Thomaston had re-

cently been appointed as a harvester 
representative to the MLMC board.

Marine Patrol staff spoke about new 
officers being added to the bureau 
and how the bureau's new Facebook page. 
It was also announced that Col. Joe 
Fessenden would be retiring at the 
end of this year.

Zone A met on September 18 when 
members nominated Sonny Beal 
to serve on the Maine Lobster 
Council Collaborative board. Beal's 
nomination was later reviewed and 
accepted by DMR. Members also dis-
cussed length the difficulties aris-
ing this summer in the 'grey zone' 
among Machias Seal Island. An in-
flux of Canadian lobster boats in the 
100-square-mile zone around the 
island has caused problems for Maine 
lobstermen fishing in the same area. 

Both Zone B (on September 17) and 
C (on September 25) council mem-
bers discussed their confusion about 
the federal vertical line rules that will 
come into place next year and the 
state's regulation regarding trawls. The vertical line rules for that area 
call for a minimum of three traps on a 
trawl; DMR states that the maximum 
shall be three traps on a trawl. DMR's 
position is that any Maine regula-
tion imposing trawl limits that does 
not comply with the whale rules will be 
amended through the rulemak-

ing process in the coming months. 
However, the state rule trawling-
up requirements will supersede and 
replace Maine's existing trawl limit 
regulations. Whale rule trawling 
requirements take effect in June 2015. 

Zone B members also talked about 
changing the closed periods during 
the fall months, either by moving the 
Nov. 1 date (allowing night hauling) 
back to Oct. 1 or changing the sun-
rise/sunset provision by an hour. A 
representative from Frenchboro 
approached the council to begin the 
process of getting that island into the 
island limited-entry program for lob-
ster licenses. 

Zone D met on October 2. DMR 
staff and Kim Tucker, attorney for 
the Maine Lobstering Union, spoke 
about the Searsport dredging pro-
ject. The council members also dis-
cussed Bristo's recent vote against 
allowing electrical cables from the proposed Monhegan wind turbines to 
pass through their town. They also 
spoke about the recent drop in the 
number of lobstermen fishing from 
Monhegan.

Zone E met on October 28. 
Information from the council was 
not available at press time.

Zone F met on September 22 when 
members heard from Bill Needelman, 
waterfront coordinator for the city 
of Portland, who spoke about non-
federal dredge activities going on in 
Portland. Members also discussed the 
Royal River dredging project. Matt 
Jacobson, executive director of the 
MLMC, introduced himself. A representa-

tive from Chebeague Island asked the council to ask DMR 
to conduct a referendum among 
zone members to remove Chebeague 
Island from the island limited-entry 
program for lobster licenses. Council 
members also renewed discussion of 
student license requirements. They 
tabled the discussion until the next 
meeting but asked DMR to provide 
them with information about stu-
dent licenses. Roger Allard reported that in his zone "everyone's happy."

Zone G met on September 30 when 
members also heard from 
Needelman about dredging in 
Portland. Matt Jacobson, executive 
director of the MLMC, introduced 
himself. DMR staff provided an up-
date on the shrimp fishery, not-
that the Atlantic States Marine 
Fisheries Commission section would 
be holding a meeting on shrimp on 
November 5. DMR would be meeting 
with fishermen before that time to 
discuss the shrimp situation. Marine 
Patrol Officer Rene Cloutier provided 
conference council with a selection of 
V-notch fins to illustrate what is a 
legal and illegal V-notch.

The Bait Report

2014 Herring Catch and Quota

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Quota (as of 10/22)</th>
<th>% of quota</th>
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<tr>
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<td>94.88%</td>
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<td>4,733</td>
<td>164.46%</td>
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<td>10,310</td>
<td>35.94%</td>
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<td>37,319</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83,702</td>
<td>80.41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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**PROGRESSIVE**
After 59 years of representing Maine lobstermen, the MLA knows the industry and understands the issues. So that’s why we are always staying one step ahead of the game, thinking about where you and your children and your grandchildren want to be in the years ahead.

**TRADITION**
It’s important to know where you come from. The MLA is part of the centuries-old traditions of Maine lobstermen: independent, self-sufficient stewards of the resource who share values of family, fairness and hard work. The MLA’s efforts reflect these traditions every day.

**GRASSROOTS**
The MLA is governed by a board of 23 commercial lobstermen who were elected by the membership to represent the industry. MLA Board members travel to monthly meetings and attend a variety of meetings around the state on their own time and on their own dime because they are deeply vested in our future.

**ACCOUNTABLE**
The door is always open; the phone is always answered. The MLA is accessible to all its members, through its monthly board meetings and annual meeting every March. All MLA meetings are open for members to attend.

**RELEVANT**
To make a difference in this constantly changing world, the MLA has to stay on top of the issues. The MLA facilitated a study on factors affecting the profitability of the industry and provided seminars on business training and lobster quality to give lobstermen the tools they need to remain profitable.

**EFFECTIVE**
MLA’s actions have positively affected every Maine lobsterman. Whether it’s passage of the law that made sternmen self-employed workers, a prohibition on oil and gas refineries off Maine’s coast, or crucial lobster conservation measures, the MLA has led the industry in getting things done. The MLA remains the “go to” source for reliable information on issues that affect Maine’s lobster industry.

**TRANSPARENT**
With the support of you, our members, the MLA makes things happen in Augusta, regionally and in Washington, D.C. The power of one lobsterman is limited; the power of many is tremendous.

**COLLABORATIVE**
It’s hard to make a difference if you work alone. So the MLA works with industry, science and other organizations to ensure that the needs and perspectives of Maine lobstermen inform our advocacy work. In addition, MLA started the non-profit Maine Lobstermen’s Community Alliance to further education, research and charitable work in Maine’s lobster industry.

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By Christina Lemieux

This autumn marks a special milestone in my life — the 15th year of my career in advertising. It’s inspired me to reflect on how I entered the profession and what I’ve learned along the way. When people ask what got me from a tiny fishing village like Cutler into the city-centric world of advertising, my answer is that Cutler got me there, literally.

One August morning in the summer of 1999, a pleasure craft passing through Cutler Harbor got caught up in a broken propeller nut and in some polypropylene rope, resulting in a broken propeller nut and missing cotter pin. The owner of the Dettling 51 wasn’t happy about the accident, but it created a chance meeting with my father which can only be described as serendipitous.

The yachtsman, Bob Schmetterer, was chairman of a very large global advertising agency. My father, a lobster fisherman and boat builder, was able to fashion a replacement pin for Bob’s prop. I was an unemployed college graduate, looking for an advertising job in San Francisco. A conversation led to a mention of my circumstances. My father was unaware of Bob’s profession at the time, but before motoring out of Cutler Harbor, Bob gave my father a business card to hand along to me. I have worked in advertising ever since.

I feel very fortunate not only to have been brought into the industry by a man who appreciates my lobstering heritage but also to have had his mentoring throughout my career. Bob is one of the great ad men of our era and an expert in branding. He helped transform Perdue Chicken into a household name and, in the process, changed the notion of branding commodities forever. I had the pleasure of working at his agency for many years where I worked on the branding of Intel. While there, I learned how turning a tiny computer chip into a brand can create billions in added value.

At first glance, it might seem that microprocessors and Maine lobster are worlds apart. Yet I believe there are parallels between the two industries and several lessons to be learned by studying Intel’s approach to branding.

Lesson One. No product need be a commodity if it can communicate a compelling element of difference to consumers.

Before the 1990s, a computer microprocessor was a commodity product. Few people knew or cared what processor was inside their machines. Intel, however, believed passionately that its processors were of better quality than the competition’s. It embarked on a major branding campaign to communicate this point of difference not only to Dell, IBM and the other companies who bought its chips but also to everyday consumers. Getting the word out that Intel technology is the best you can buy turned Intel into a household name and created disproportionate consumer demand for its products. That demand allowed Intel to sell its chips to computer manufacturers at a premium price ever since.

The consulting firm Interbrand estimates that as of 2014, brand recognition itself contributes about $34.2 billion annually to Intel’s market value. Because of branding, consumers don’t just want a computer, they want a computer with “Intel Inside.” Like Intel microprocessors, most Maine lobsters aren’t sold directly to consumers. Around 80% of our product is processed and becomes an element of another product, be it an entrée at a white tablecloth restaurant, a buffet item on a cruise ship or a can of lobster bisque in a supermarket. Educating everyday consumers on the goodness of Maine lobster will enable more people to understand our brand’s element of difference and prompt them to seek out our products in whatever form they find most accessible. A supermarket shopper, for example, might decide to pick up a slightly more expensive lobster sauce because she feels reassured it is made with Maine lobster. Pulling consumers to the brand not only helps build demand, but over time it should help justify increasing the price paid by the consumer as well.

Lesson Two. Make your brand “visible.”

Intel microprocessors are an ingredient inside another product, computers. Because most consumers never see it, Intel came up with a clever way to make the microprocessor “visible.” In 1991, the company created a co-op program which encouraged IBM, Dell and other manufacturers to put an “Intel Inside” sticker on their computers and in their advertising. In return for showing the “Intel Inside” logo in TV or print ads and on the PC’s, a computer maker could get a rebate on what it paid Intel for chips. The “Intel Inside” stickers and logo soon became a symbol of a high-quality PC and the program helped propel the growth of the entire computer industry during that period.

For decades, many restaurants have branded the lobster on their menus as “Maine lobster.” Even without significant advertising efforts, restaurateurs, chefs and consumers have been able to discern a difference between Maine lobster and lobsters from other states or provinces. As more Maine lobster is processed within our state, it doesn’t just mean more jobs and tax dollars, it means an opportunity to brand more products as “made with Maine lobster” and create thoughtful partnerships with restaurants and retailers.

Lesson Three. One brand. Different messages in different markets.

Intel advertises in all corners of the world with one brand voice. The company’s focus of its messaging however changes depending on the maturity of the market. One of my roles while working on the account was to help convince consumers to buy their first computer (with Intel Inside) in less developed markets like mainland China, India and Brazil. Intel knew it was useless to expend on its microprocessors if consumers weren’t interested in a computer in the first place. In more mature markets like the U.S., Intel focused more directly on telling the story of the Intel brand.

Similarly, in certain segments of America, including the Northeast, lobster is already a market staple. In other areas, lobster is a less established food item. How we talk about Maine lobster should vary in part based on how receptive consumers are to crustaceans in the first place. A live lobster and an inanimate microprocessor definitely are not the same item. But they do share one quality: they are both used in other products. Intel found a way to cast its microprocessor in the public mind as a high-quality, premium product in which a company or consumer could have complete confidence. The task for the Maine lobster industry is to do the same. While the Maine lobster industry is a disparate group of buyers, brokers, processors, and of course, lobstermen, each member of that industry knows that he or she is handling the highest quality lobster in the world. Now the task is to ensure the public knows that too.
Like most fishermen, lobstermen don’t like to be told what to do. Order them to carry safety equipment and they probably will—just to comply with the regulations. But if a lobsterman works alone and has a typical accident, some of that safety equipment really will not do much good.

What precautions, then, can a solo fisherman take to enhance the likelihood of survival? John McMillan, proprietor of McMillan Offshore Survival Training (MOST) in Belfast, teaches safety classes at the Maine Fishermen’s Forum in Rockport every year. He has a list of suggestions lobstermen who fish alone should follow.

“One of the first things I always recommend,” said McMillan, “is to always make a distress call early. Don’t wait until you discover you can’t fix the problem. Let someone, if not the Coast Guard, know where you are and that there’s a problem.”

Once the boat is on the water, however, there seems to be agreement that the single best piece of equipment a fisherman take to enhance the likelihood of survival is a sharp knife, the single best piece of equipment a fisherman can have is a sharp knife, attached to his person and easily accessible if he goes overboard.

Carl Schwab of Port Clyde is 82. He’s lobstered and fished most of his adult life and for most of it, he’s lobstered alone. “Lobstering isn’t boring, but it can be repetitive, so you can get a little lackadaisical,” said Schwab. “It’s happened to me a couple of times that I got caught in ropes when hauling a trap aboard. You get a rope around your feet. I was lucky the two times it happened, my boot came off.”

Back then, he kept his knife in a sheath in the stern. “Then I started wearing it, in case I went over, so I could get it out.” Schwab said he knew a fellow who had a thin nylon line he ran into the stern. “He attached it up front to the coil line. If he got hauled over, he could grab it and stop the engine.” Stopping the engine could be a lifesaver. Most solo fishermen who go overboard drown or die of hypothermia because the boat goes chugging away when they go over the side, said McMillan.

“I only went overboard once,” Schwab said. “And that was at the mooring. I was wearing boots and winter gear. Luckily the skiff was right there.”

As for the survival suits mandated by the government for many fishermen, Schwab explained what all experts agree is a problem for solo lobstermen. “If something happened to the boat, I could get the survival suit on, but if I go overboard, I can’t get it,” Schwab said.

McMillan Offshore Survival Training in Belfast, teaches safety classes at the Maine Fishermen’s Forum in Rockport every year. He has a list of suggestions lobstermen who fish alone should follow.

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By Nancy Griffin

“Always let someone know right away what’s happening in, ” said McMillan. “The man went down with the trawl but when the last trap hit bottom, the line relaxed and he was released. “Now he wears his knife. He learned his lesson.”

Fishermen are cynics, but they are also optimists. One fisherman told indicating radio beacons and life rafts have hydrostatic release. If the boat goes down, the life raft will inflate on its own and the EPIRB will begin emitting a signal,” said Normann. “The irony is, if the lobsterman goes over the side, the EPIRB and life raft will think everything is OK. Meanwhile, he’s in the water and the boat’s going away.”

Staying on or being able to get back on the boat therefore is of paramount importance. McMillan suggests coiling lines into plastic buckets on deck to “keep the rope off the deck. Most fishermen don’t fall overboard, they’re ‘drug’ overboard.” He also suggests lobstermen attach a ladder or some kind of climbing device to the boat, such as a rope which when pulled will deploy a ladder, so the boat can’t leave you behind and you will also have some means of getting over the side again.

McMillan also recommends an inflatable life jacket. Normann says those items are growing in popularity. The new inflatables and auto-inflatables are thin, don’t impede work and, in the summer, don’t add much body heat. Some are manually inflated and others inflate automatically if the wearer falls in the water. There are narrow vests that have only straps in the back, or there are jackets such as the Stormy Seas “Alaskan Sweatshirt” that are better for cold weather.

“Of the 815 people who died in U.S. boating accidents in 1998 ... most were not wearing life jackets. To address this problem, at least within the marine law enforcement community, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) in 1993 adopted a resolution recommending that officers wear PFDs (personal flotation devices) while on patrol boats,” according to a report on Boatsafe.com.

Life jackets of some sort are mandated for lobstermen to carry on the boat, but they often don’t wear them. At one time, the criticism of life vests was accurate: they were bulky and got in the way of work. The newer, thin inflatables are changing that perception. Some inflatables are quite small, just belts around the waist. The Norwegian company Regatta makes a set of sturdy oilskins with flotation. The bibs have flotation built into the chest and back, which means the wearer will float when he hits the water. There are also devices called personal locator beacons (PLBs). These are small, lightweight items a person can clip on a belt that give distress and location signals plus have a GPS unit built in. The only drawback is that they must be operated manually.

The knife attached to the body for easy access is the most accepted safety device aboard lobster boats. And the knife that is most popular in Maine is known as “Little Vicky” to the lobstermen. “It’s made by the Swiss Army knife people, Victorinox,” said Normann. “It’s razor sharp with a serrated edge and a sheath that clips on their chest, onto the suspenders that hold up the oilskin pants.”

“If something happens to the boat and you can’t get to the radio, but you can get to the EPIRB, toss it over, or send off a flare,” said McMillan. “Many fishermen know right away that there’s a problem. Fishermen may be bulletproof, but they’re not waterproof.”

“Had a friend in New Hampshire who got caught in a line, knew he was going in,” said McMillan. “The man went down with the trawl but when the last trap hit bottom, the line relaxed and he was released. “Now he wears his knife. He learned his lesson.”

Fishermen are cynics, but they are also optimists. One fisherman told
Seventy-seven-year-old George “Elly” Sewall, a York native, has roots in the area which can be traced as far back as the Puritan times. Sewall is one of the few working fishermen to still have a private dock behind his home near Sewall's Bridge in York. (Built in 1762, it is the first wooden pile draw-bridge in New England and is named after Sewall’s ancestors.) He houses his boat, gear, workshop and everything he needs to fish on his property, all within sight of the house he has lived in with his wife for the past 50 years. Their cozy home is also in the direct vicinity of where Sewall himself grew up and learned how to fish as a youngster. “My father used to row out to fish from Sewall’s Hill in York. I started going out with him when I was about 10 years old and I’ve been lobstering part-time almost every year since then,” he said. Sewall became a member of the Maine Lobstermen’s Association (MLA) as a young man and has remained a stalwart MLA member ever since.

After graduating from York High School in 1955, Sewall worked his way through college at the University of Maine, paying for his education with the money he earned lobstering. In 1959 he graduated with a degree in chemical engineering and took a job in that field down south (the only two years in his life that he did not lobster). It wasn’t long before he moved back home to take a job at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery as a nuclear engineer. He remained working at the shipyard but continued to lobster part-time until he reached retirement age.

He explained how he balanced the two for so many years. “When I was at the shipyard, I would get home from work at five and then go out [fishing] for two or three hours at night with one of my four kids,” he said. Today, Sewall continues to fish about 180 to 200 traps though these days he has some help from a friend. “I like that number of traps. I’m right in the middle between the little guy and the big guy,” he commented.

Sewall’s oldest son Mark is one of those “big guys.” Mark fishes 800 traps full-time. Two of Sewall’s three grandchildren have also picked up the lobstering bug as well. “But all of them have lobstered alongside me at one time or another,” Sewall said proudly.

Sewall has experienced first-hand the many changes that have taken place in lobstering over the last six decades. When he first started fish- ing in the 1950’s, he built all of his wooden lobster traps and knit all of his own heads. “It’s been a long time, but I could probably still knit a head today if I had to,” he said. Redfish was what he used as bait, and it sold for $3 a barrel. “Quite a difference from the 66 bucks a barrel it costs today,” Sewall said. “I’d have to say the two most significant changes I have seen over the years in this industry are the change-over from all wooden traps to all wire traps and the use of GPS. The GPS makes it so they can get out anywhere to set traps and get back to find them easily later. We never had any traps out as far as they do now.”

As he adjusted to the many major changes in lobstering since he was a boy, there is one thing that has not wavered at all for Sewall: his love of lobstering and all that it represents. He has no plans to retire from lobstering anytime in the near future. “I’ll do it until I can’t anymore,” Sewall said. “But it seems to me that I’ll always have at least a few traps out there.”

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they got out their toolboxes and fixed it. They also handled all the hiring, which turned out to require much more time and effort than they thought.

Because of the seasonal nature of the business, once they found the right people, W-4s, I-9s, and piles of other paperwork had to be completed. What’s more, workers had to be trained not just how to safely operate equipment and work within OSHA regulations, but also to comply with other federal regulations related to things like hand-washing, wearing the appropriate garb in a food area, cross-contamination, and important temperature thresholds for cooking and safely storing the lobster products. Workers needed to observe the work for a few days, then get on-the-job training. With those delays, Cape Seafood ramped up much more slowly than the Holdens wanted, processing 4,500 pounds of lobster a day the first week, then 9,000 the following week, then 13,500 the week after that.

“At the beginning, 4,500 pounds would completely stress us out,” Luke Holden said. “By November, 36,000 pounds a day was manageable.”

In 2014, while ramping up for its second season, Cape Seafood enlisted CoWorx Staffing Services to handle recruiting, hiring and training. CoWorx served as the employer and handled the paperwork, earning a fee on every labor hour generated. CoWorx “spent time getting to know our business, so they could speak articulately about who we are and what we do to attract the right associate,” Holden said.

“"The one thing about older workers is that there’s a growing supply of them.”

Bringing in a skilled temp agency to find qualified workers, conduct interviews and handle all the paperwork had a dramatic impact on the company. Cape Seafood was able to process 25,000 pounds of lobster a day when re-gearing up for the 2014 summer lobster season. Being able to ramp up so quickly will be critical as Luke Holden looks to expand his company. Cape Seafood was able to process 25,000 pounds of lobster a day when re-gearing up for the (2014) summer lobster season. Being able to ramp up so quickly will be critical as Luke Holden looks to expand his restaurant business. “It was a better strategy,” Holden said. “It really enabled us to go from slow to extremely busy in a couple of weeks, rather than months. If you have the resources, paying for someone’s help that has a specific expertise in a specific need of the business, whatever that may be, is worth it in the end.”

Providing better benefits

Last year, Maine Fair Trade Lobster, a partnership between East Coast Seafood and Garbo Lobster, opened a 100,000-square-foot plant at a site in Prospect Harbor that used to house the nation’s last sardine cannery. During the peak of the season, it has nearly 200 positions. Roughly half the staff - 105 workers - returned for a second season in 2014, said Ann-Marie Carver, personnel manager for the plant.

The company offers bonuses for perfect attendance and referrals for other workers who are hired for full-time positions. After 90 days, all workers are eligible for medical and dental benefits and paid holidays. “We try to bring that concept of fairness to the employees,” Carver said.

They’ve also tried to tackle the transportation issue. Earlier this year, Maine Fair Trade got a grant from the Washington Hancock Community Agency to provide vans and small buses to bring workers from Washington and Hancock counties. The company provides vans that pick up workers from Ellsworth to Columbia, about 40 minutes away from the plant.

“That has filled a gap for us, and provided a labor pool for us that we seem to lack in the immediate area for seasonal work,” Carver said. “We’ve been able to employ people who otherwise wouldn’t be able to come work for us because they lacked reliable transportation.”

The company has tried to keep shifts steady and consistent enough to give most workers at least five days a week of work, so that if they’re done early on the weekday or aren’t called in, they have a chance to make it up over the weekend. The company also is reaching out to a part of the workforce that is steadily growing: older workers.

The median age of the workforce is the mid-30s, Carver said. Maine Fair Trade hired many of the 140 people who worked at the Prospect Harbor plant when it was owned by Bumble Bee, which operated the plant until 2010. “We’ve tried to employ as many of those people who wanted to and were able to come back and work for us,” Carver said.

Recruiting older workers by offering part-time shifts and other benefits to those who want to supplement their Social Security income could be a key to getting a more stable and reliable workforce, according to Dorrer, the Jobs for the Future program director. “The one thing about older workers is that there’s a growing supply of them,” he said.

Safety continued from page 16

Normann the only safety gear he needed was “weighted boots.” It’s true that in the cold North Atlantic Ocean a human being won’t last long unless someone comes along to pluck him from the water.

But Schwab expresses the optimistic view: “The rope’s down by your feet. You’re concentrating on different things. You’re not on guard all the time. But think of the amount of time lobstermen are out, the hours they put in. There are very few deaths. We have a pretty damn good record. There really are few accidents and the really serious ones are minuscule in number.

“I probably have more close calls in the truck than on the boat,” said Schwab. “On the draggers, we had men aboard to help. One fellow went overboard and we didn’t hear him. We happened to notice him and we got him aboard, though.”

Normann wishes lobstermen would consider another item they can attach to their body, a really good, totally waterproof, submersible radio. “Especially for someone fishing alone,” he said. “There’s always another lobsterman in the vicinity, they could call a Mayday, because usually it’s not their boat that’s sinking. Usually they’re caught in the pot warp,” he said.

Schwab takes a common sense approach to safety, “Think ahead,” he said. “If it’s too rough, stop fishing and go in. You develop a strong sense of when not to go out.”

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Sargent has been a member of the MLA almost from the time he got his lobster license, when he was 16. He started lobstering with his father, Jack, who served in the military during World War II. Jack Sargent was wounded badly during the invasion of Normandy. “He went back to lobstering when he got better. Eventually I took over his boat,” Sargent explained. His father was also a member of the MLA. He and his son felt the focus of the MLA matched their own concerns for the lobster fishery. “We talked it over back then, you know, the measure, V-notch, all those conservation things... Thank God they did it then.”

Sargent and his two dogs now live in Winthrop. He usually travels to the coast for the lobstering season and drives back to Winthrop in the winter. He always check out the woolly bear bands before the upcoming winter. “The wider the stripe, the harsher the winter. Thus the width of a woolly bear’s or-tiger moth. An old wives’ tale says the width of a woolly bear’s orange section indicate the severity of the upcoming winter. The wider the stripe, the harsher the winter. Thus far no research scientist has undertaken the definitive study of this link but who knows? Caleb Weatherbee might be using the woolly bear bands in his carefully guarded prediction formula!

Weatherbee is a fictional person, a character created by the venerable Farmer’s Almanac. Throughout the Almanac’s 196-year history the non-existent Mr. Weatherbee has been credited with using “a top-secret mathematical and astronomical formula, taking sunspot activity, tidal action, the position of the planet, and many other factors into consideration” to make predictions for the next year’s weather.

And what does the Almanac say about the upcoming winter season? “The winter of 2014–2015 will see below-normal temperatures for about three-quarters of the nation, with the most frigid areas occurring in and around the Northern Plains into the Great Lakes...” [T]he eastern third of the country will see copious amounts of snow and rain, especially during the first ten days of January and the first week in February near the Atlantic Coast.”

Predicting the winter weather remains important not only to Maine fishermen but also to many other industries, such as construction, air travel, auto sales, and shipping. Some economic analysts estimate that last year’s deep cold and severe snow-storms cost the U.S. economy approximately $15 billion. So reliable weather predictions are of high value to a great many businesses.

Benjamin Franklin was one of the first Americans of note to take an interest in the weather. Back in 1743, he planned to observe an eclipse of the moon in Philadelphia. Unfortunately a storm moved in and blocked his view. Later he learned that people in Boston were able to see the lunar eclipse because the storm arrived there several hours after the eclipse took place. Franklin became intrigued. At that time people thought that a storm happened in one location and then just disappeared. Franklin was the first person to note that storms moved in regular patterns and that they could move opposite to the direction of the wind. For example, the winds in a nor’easter blow from the northeast, but the storm is actually moving from the southwest. Franklin deduced the existence of high and low pressure cells and accurately explained how storms move across the northern hemisphere.

President Thomas Jefferson was also an avid weather observer. He kept careful records of the weather at Monticello, his estate in Virginia, for more than fifty years. Jefferson tracked temperature, prevailing winds, precipitation, and events such as when plants flowered or birds migrated. He knew that he needed a lot more data over time to be able to understand the weather patterns of the United States. So he began to recruit volunteer weather observers throughout Virginia, and then slowly expanded that network. By 1800, there were weather observers in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, New York and North Carolina. By the late 1800s, the weather observer program covered the entire country and was supervised by the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

Today we have the Climate Prediction Center (CPC) within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. It uses short and long-term data sets to formulate predictions for future weather throughout the country by region. Unlike the Farmer’s Almanac, the CPC predicts a fairly mild 2014-2015 winter for New England, with above-average temperatures. It might be a wet season, however, like the Almanac, the CPC predicts above-average precipitation throughout the eastern seaboard.

But if you really want to know what the winter holds in store, you can always check out the woolly bear caterpillars that are crawling across the roads and driveways this time of year. The orange and black woolly bear is the larval form of the Isabella tiger moth. An old wives’ tale says that the width of a woolly bear’s orange section indicate the severity of the upcoming winter. The wider the stripe, the harsher the winter. Thus far no research scientist has undertaken the definitive study of this link but who knows? Caleb Weatherbee might be using the woolly bear bands in his carefully guarded prediction formula!

By Melissa Waterman

You might not be aware of it but in a modest office in Lewiston, Maine, a prognosticator is predicting the future. Before you go placing large wagers in the stock market, however, be aware that this talent only applies to the weather. A gentleman named Caleb Weatherbee knows what the winter of 2014-2015 holds and it’s not a pretty picture.

You should also be aware that Caleb Weatherbee is a fictional person, a character created by the venerable Farmer’s Almanac. Throughout the Almanac’s 196-year history the non-existent Mr. Weatherbee has been credited with using “a top-secret mathematical and astronomical formula, taking sunspot activity, tidal action, the position of the planet, and many other factors into consideration” to make predictions for the next year’s weather.

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If you have a question about the upcoming winter season, you can contact Caleb Weatherbee at his modest office in Lewiston, Maine.

Thank you!
DEER ISLE-STONINGTON STUDENTS RESEARCH GREEN CRABS

Eastern Maine Skippers Program press release

On September 28th and 29th, forty-one students from six coastal and island high schools (Deer Isle-Stonington, George Stevens Academy, Vinalhaven, North Haven, Narraguagus and Mount Desert Island) gathered on Hurricane Island in Penobscot Bay to kick-off the second year of the Eastern Maine Skippers Program (EMSP). Their collaborative, year-long project addresses the question, “How can the impact of the green crab population be controlled in a way that conserves the marine ecosystem and encourages new industry?”

The day-and-a-half program was organized and hosted by the Hurricane Island Foundation with additional staff support from Penobscot East Resource Center and the Maine Department of Marine Resources. The event introduced students to the green crab issue in Maine and was packed with hands-on activities, from learning about field sampling techniques and developing a marketable product made from green crabs to discussing elements underlying effective group work and communication.

“Students are given an opportunity to connect in person, fostering a generation of fishermen who know how to collaborate and communicate with each other despite being from different homeports,” said Alice Anderson, Hurricane Island Science Educator. The students worked with Anderson, Noah Oppenheim, a graduate student at the University of Maine, School of Marine Sciences, Carla Guenther, lead scientist at Penobscot East Resource Center and Les White from the Maine Department of Marine Resources to identify different sampling techniques that could be used in assessing green crab abundance in the intertidal zone. Each group of students generated a scientific question about green crabs and identified an appropriate sampling method to test their question during low tide. After collecting data in the intertidal zone, students discussed the pros and cons of their approach, analyzed data collected, and presented their findings to the larger group.

“I liked that we could go in the field and gather data for a project we designed instead of using somebody else’s data from a textbook. Doing hands-on learning makes you want to do the work more,” said Elliot Nevels, a 9th grade student at Deer Isle-Stonington High School and EMSP participant.

The students also worked together to create an edible dish from green crabs. Prior to the taste-testing contest, each group delivered a pitch describing their product, how it was made, who they were marketing it to, and the price. A panel of judges made up of teachers voted on their favorite dish. The Hurricane Island Chowder dish won “Best Taste” while the Green Crab Mac & Cheese dish won “Best Pitch” and the Fried Green Crab & Dip was awarded “Most Creative Dish.” Throughout the remainder of the school year, the students will continue their investigation of green crabs in their own schools. The project has further application beyond their high school education, however, as students are conducting “real-world” research that regulators can use.

“Events like this that bring students and future fishermen together from six coastal high schools are a great way to leverage the traditional knowledge and expertise that exist in our fishing communities in a way that will help our students learn the skills needed for any option they choose after high school — both college and career,” said Todd West, Deer Isle-Stonington High School principal.

By Melissa Waterman

They say that the key to success in business is meeting a need that is yet unmet. That seems to be working for Central Maine Cold Storage in Bucksport. The company, which offers custom, on-demand freezing and storage services for seafood producers, recently opened a $2 million freezing facility in that town. Anthony Kelley, who has worked in the world of frozen foods for thirty years, is the company’s president; Tina Kelley is vice-president of quality control and assurance, and Brian McCarthy is chief executive officer.

The name of the game at Central Maine Cold Storage is IQF: Individually Quick Frozen seafood. Seafood such as lobster or fresh fish is brought to the facility, loaded onto a conveyor belt and then sent into the freezing machine, also known as “the tunnel.” In the tunnel the temperature is -30°F. The product is blasted with 60 mph winds and freezes within two minutes, maintaining high quality and texture when thawed. The tunnel can freeze 2,000 pounds of lobster an hour, according to McCarthy.

“We are freezing on demand,” he said. “So many producers in the state send their seafood to Canada and then have to wait because those companies are doing their own products. Here you can just make a reservation.” The cost to the producer to have seafood, such as lobster, quick frozen runs between 50 cents to $1.00 per unit, depending on final packaging.

“We work with packaging companies directly to do whatever the customer needs,” McCarthy added. Central Maine Cold Storage presently has two large seafood producers as clients. McCarthy hopes to persuade small-scale fishermen to band together as a group and bring their catch, whatever it might be, to the facility. “To turn on the tunnel, we need 8,000 to 10,000 pounds of seafood at a minimum. Three or four guys together can get to that,” he said.

In addition the company offers blast freezing services as well. The blast freezer is another method of freezing smaller quantities of seafood over a longer period, McCarthy explained. “It’s more economical for some customers,” he said.

Central Maine Cold Storage also has a 15,000 square-foot cold storage warehouse that can hold 2 million pounds of frozen seafood. “We will store seafood products that we don’t freeze here, sure. But we definitely want to show you around so that you can see what we are capable of,” McCarthy said.

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From Department of Marine Resources: Congratulations to the newly elected and re-elected district representatives. The future of the lobster fishery is dependent upon harvesters who are willing to give their time as council members in order to help manage this important fishery. For more information about the lobster zone councils, please contact Angie Hopkins at 624-6670.

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**Lobster chef continued from page 1**

The self-taught chef prepared a lobster dish with a multitude of ingredients: Pumpkin-powdered lobster, mascarpone and chestnut crispy polenta bar with roasted fig gastrique, brown butter froth, peppered pancetta chip and 24-hour cold smoked lobster claw. Richards, 38, has been chef at Mine Oyster for two years.

The lobster competition expanded in number this year from four competitors to ten. Richards faced off against the 2013 Lobster Chef of the Year, Chris Long of Natalie’s at the Camden Harbour Inn, as well as Isaac Aldrich, Sebasco Harbor Resort; Brandon Blethen, Robert’s Maine Grill; Lindsay Braden, The Phat Boys Cafe; Luke Cordes, The Porthole Restaurant; Abby Freethy, Northwoods Gourmet Girl; Brandon Hicks, Chebeague Island Inn; Dwayne Whitelocke of Rocktide Inn; Abby Freethy, Phat Boys Cafe; Luke Cordes, The Maine Grill; Lindsay Braden, The Phat Boys Cafe; Luke Cordes, The Porthole Restaurant; Abby Freethy, Northwoods Gourmet Girl; Brandon Hicks, Chebeague Island Inn; Dwayne Whitelocke of Rocktide Inn; and Margaret McLellan, Sheepscot Harbour Village and Resort.

Competition judges were Shannon Bard, Harding Lee Smith, Dick Griston, and Ginny Wright. Richards was presented a check for $1,000.

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**THE WINNING RECIPE**

Pumpkin-powdered lobster, mascarpone and chestnut crispy polenta bar with roasted fig gastrique, brown butter froth, peppered pancetta chip and 24-hour cold smoked lobster claw.

**INGREDIENTS**

- ½ oz. pumpkin-powdered lobster
- ½ cup mascarpone
- 1½ cups roasted chestnuts
- 4 ounces cooked lobster meat
- 4 roasted figs, small diced
- 1 shallot, finely diced
- 1 sprig rosemary
- 1 pinch gelatin
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons brown butter
- 2 tablespoons cream
- 1 pinch salt
- 2 teaspoons pepper
- 2 cups lobster stock
- ½ cup cornmeal
- ½ oz. pumpkin powder

**POLENTA BAR**

In a heavy bottom pot, bring lobster stock to a rapid boil. Turn heat to low and slowly whisk in cornmeal. Continue whisking for 10 minutes, or until polenta pulls away from sides. Stir in ¼ cup cream, 2 tablespoons butter, mascarpone, and ½ teaspoon black pepper. Whisk and cook for another 10 minutes. Fold in lobster meat and chestnuts. Pour polenta onto non-stick 9-by-9-inch cake pan. Allow to cool and set.

**FIG GASTRIQUE**

Heat sugar in heavy bottom sauce pan until golden brown; pour in port and vinegar and bring to a boil. Add finely diced shallot, rosemary, figs and salt and cracked pepper to taste. Reduce until syrupy and break up figs with a spoon to help create jam-like substance.

**PEPPERED PANCETTA CHIP**

Slice pancetta thin on a slicer; place on parchment paper-lined sheet tray. Drizzle with pumpkin seed oil and cracked black pepper. Cook at 300 degrees Fahrenheit until crisp; transfer to paper towel to drain fat.

**BROWN BUTTER FROTH**

Heat ¼ pound salted butter in heavy bottom pan at medium heat until butter turns brown and is nutty in flavor. Let cool. In an isi foam, add room temperature brown butter, one pinch of gelatin and two tablespoons warm cream, Shake well. Charge once and froth is ready for use.

**SMOKED LOBSTER CLAWS**

Poach lobster for three minutes in boiling water just until red. Detach claws and smoke in shell for 24 hours at 84 degrees Fahrenheit. Let cool. Gingerly break shell and remove smoked claws.

**ASSEMBLY**

- Cut 3- by 1-inch rectangle out of polenta; deep-fry polenta bar at 350 degrees Fahrenheit until crispy. Drain grease off onto paper towel.
- Season with lava salt and dust with pumpkin powder. Place polenta bar on plate top with fig gastrique (room temp), pancetta chip, smoked lobster claw and brown butter froth. Garnish with pumpkin seed oil, lava salt and petite pumpkin greens.
TRAPS TURN INTO GLASSES

A 25-year-old Harpswell man thinks there’s money to be made in old lobster traps. When John Turner took a walk on Willard Beach in South Portland, he found a 15-year-old lobster trap washed up on shore. “I thought it was deserving of a new life,” said Turner. He started to dream up things that he could make from the trap, finally settling on sunglasses. He used a 3-D printer to design a selection of frames, then took those designs and the wood from the lobster trap to East Coast Woodworking in Bath. There, wood workers helped create custom templates for the sunglasses which are made of lobster trap wood and Italian acetate. Turner and his business partner, Daniel Dougherty, of Camden, launched two styles — “Ulysses” and “Jack” — in October. Some versions of the frames will cost $300.

SEAFOOD OWNER SENTENCED IN OCTOBER

John Price, 58, of Kittery, who owns J.P. Shellfish of Eliot, was scheduled in January to those charges. Price pleaded guilty turing and one count of violation of the Lacey Act. Price was found guilty in a federal and state case against Robert Thompson of St. George, the former manager of the Spruce Head Fishermen’s Cooperative. Thompson was arrested in 2012 and accused of stealing more than $1 million worth of lobsters from co-op members and selling them to Price’s business. Price’s seafood business was the primary buyer of lobsters from the Spruce Head Fishermen’s Cooperative, which has about 56 lobstermen as members.

CHINESE TAKE OVER NOVA SCOTIA BUSINESS

Zoneco Group Corp. Ltd., of Dalian, China acquired TH&H Fisheries Ltd., an Nova Scotian seafood processing company. The new owners have changed the firm’s name to Capital Seafood International Inc. and plan to operate as a year-round rather than a seasonal operation.

Zoneco Group also plans to create a large lobster storage facility in the southwestern part of Nova Scotia. "We’re looking for six to seven million pounds per year of [lobster], at least in the immediate term,” Jack Liu, president of North American operations for ZF Max International Inc., a subsidiary of Zoneco Group, said. "We believe we will be looking for 10 million pounds per year in the near future,” he said. The company will hire an additional 50 employees. Officials with Zoneco Group said that Capital Seafood International’s facility will also be used to process and export other products, including sea urchin, haddock, cod, halibut and sea cucumber.

SOUTH KOREA SHOWS APPETITE FOR MAINE LOBSTERS

The volume of lobsters exported to South Korea has skyrocketed thanks to the South Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. According to the United States Department of Commerce, lobster sales to Korea accounted for $18.1 million last year, up by 639.5 percent compared with $2.4 million in sales which took place in 2011, prior to implementation of the Free Trade Agreement. South Korea is now one of the six largest lobster importing countries in the world, following Canada, Italy, Spain, China and France. Export figures for lobster specifically from Maine hit a record $5.0 million, up dramatically compared with $480,000 in export sales in 2011.

Part of the Maine State Pier may become a marine industries incubator on Portland’s waterfront. Thor Sigfusson, an entrepreneur from Iceland, and Patrick Arnold, the owner of Soil DG Inc., a management and consulting firm in South Portland, are in talks with city officials about leasing the top floor of the former municipal transit shed on the pier. The two companies plan to model the new business incubator, called New England Ocean Cluster, after the Iceland Ocean Cluster, a privately owned business in Reykjavik. That company works in collaboration with 40 other companies, many of them start-ups, in a converted warehouse on Reykjavik’s waterfront to explore ways to bring marine-related products to market. Beyond setting up a similar complex in Maine for ocean-related businesses to share space and ideas, the effort could make Portland the preferred location for other North Atlantic nations that are seeking capital, partners and markets in the United States. Backers of the New England Ocean Cluster plan to start the enterprise with 20 marine-related businesses that would lease private offices and shared space.

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NURSERY PROPOSED FOR MARINE BUSINESSES

Part of the Maine State Pier may become a marine industries incubator on Portland’s waterfront. Thor Sigfusson, an entrepreneur from Iceland, and Patrick Arnold, the owner of Soil DG Inc., a management and consulting firm in South Portland, are in talks with city officials about leasing the top floor of the former municipal transit shed on the pier. The two companies plan to model the new business incubator, called New England Ocean Cluster, after the Iceland Ocean Cluster, a privately owned business in Reykjavik. That company works in collaboration with 40 other companies, many of them start-ups, in a converted warehouse on Reykjavik’s waterfront to explore ways to bring marine-related products to market. Beyond setting up a similar complex in Maine for ocean-related businesses to share space and ideas, the effort could make Portland the preferred location for other North Atlantic nations that are seeking capital, partners and markets in the United States. Backers of the New England Ocean Cluster plan to start the enterprise with 20 marine-related businesses that would lease private offices and shared space.
Lobster Facts

Lobsters live in the Atlantic Ocean from Labrador, Canada to North Carolina in waters ranging from 164 to 2,296 feet. Lobsters like to live alone in small rocky shelters and crevices on the ocean floor where they are safe from predators.

November 4-5
ASMFC Northern Shrimp Advisory Panel and Section meetings, Holiday Inn by the Bay, Portland. FMI: 703-842-0740.

November 5
Marine-based Job Fair/Trade Show featuring employment opportunities in Maine's marine industries. Rockland Career Center, 9am to 11am. FMI: 322-1434

November 5-6

November 8
Working on the Water: songs, stories and poetry about the water hosted by Gordon Bok, 1-3:30 p.m., Steam, Sail and Power Museum, Rockland. FMI: 236-2707.

November 12
MLA directors’ meeting, 5 p.m., Darby’s Restaurant, Belfast. FMI: 967-4555.

November 20
Health insurance enrollment assistance, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Rockland Public Library. FMI: 967-4555.

November 25
Health insurance enrollment assistance, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Patten Free Library, Bath. FMI: 967-4555.

November 20
Health insurance enrollment assistance, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Rockland Public Library. FMI: 967-4555.

November 25
Health insurance enrollment assistance, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Patten Free Library, Bath. FMI: 967-4555.

Upcoming
December 3
MLA directors’ meeting, 5 p.m., Darby’s Restaurant, Belfast. FMI: 967-4555.

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

Marine-based Job Fair/Trade Show featuring employment opportunities in Maine's marine industries. Knights of Columbus Hall, Brunswick, 11 am to 2 pm. FMI:207-322-1434.

November 13
'Shifts Happen! How Climate Change Affects Fish and Fisheries,” 7-8 p.m., Gulf of Maine Research Institute, Portland. FMI: 228-1699.

November 15
Health Insurance Marketplace Opens! You can shop and enroll in a health insurance plan at www.healthcare.gov. FMI: 967-4555

November 18-20
New England Fisheries Management Council meeting, Newport, RI.

November 19
Health insurance enrollment assistance, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., University of Southern Maine Glickman Library, Portland. FMI: 967-4555.

Winter Scallop Season Regulations

The regulations for the 2014-2015 scallop season have been set by the Department of Marine Resources and the state Scallop Advisory Council. Here is a summary of those regulations prepared by the DMR. For additional information and charts, visit www.maine.gov/dmr.

Daily Limit
- Zone 1 & 2: 15 Gallons
- Zone 3: 10 Gallons

Season Length: December 1 start, Zone 1 & 2: 70 days. Zone 3: 50 days.

- 1 day/week: Dive Mondays. Drag Wednesdays.

Targeted Closures
- Eastern Casco Bay (spat production)
- Damariscotta River, above LAA (depleted)
- Muscle Ridge (limited harvest Mon/Tues for draggers & Wed/Thurs for divers, rebuilding)
- Lower Muscle Ridge (rebuilding)
- Inner Blue Hill Harbor, Bartlett Landing, Seal Harbor, Northeast Harbor, Somes Sound Harbor, Western Blue Hill Bay (Blue Hill) Harbor (mooring fields)

Trigger Mechanism
Extended to the entire state scallop fishery, whereby if the DMR receives information indicating that a likelihood of 30-40% of the harvestable biomass has been removed, the Commissioner will close harvesting for the remainder of the season through emergency action.

Zone 2 Rotational Management
Fully phases in this season. The seven areas shaded that have been closed the past two seasons will rotate open for harvest, whereas areas that have been open the past two seasons will rotate closed for rebuilding. The seven OPEN areas in Zone 2 are: The Bold Coast, Little Kennebec/Englishman Bay, Addison, Frenchman's Bay, Swan's Island, Isle Au Haut Bay and Upper Pen Bay.

In-Season Emergency Actions
While the DMR sought a reduction in the upcoming season's length, it moved forward with a Zone 1 & 2 70 day and a Zone 3 50 day season rulemaking proposal at the request of the Scallop Advisory Council and industry. However, it will not be likely that the season run this long and emergency closures will be implemented in-season to prevent areas from being overfished.
YOUNG WOMAN PENNS SONGS OF LOBSTERING WORLD

By Melissa Waterman

Daughter of a Georgetown lobsterman, Lauren Crosby, 20, is an accomplished musician. Her self-titled debut album, which she funded through a Kickstarter campaign, was released this fall to a very favorable reception. Crosby composes and performs her own songs which are drawn from her life and the lives she’s observed around her. “I’m really fortunate to come from a really tight-knit island community,” said Crosby. “I grew up with a bunch of fishermen. Nothing scares me. I don’t get intimidated. I’ll talk about whatever.”

While none of her immediate family is a musician, Crosby’s family loved to listen to music, whether it was Johnny Cash or Bob Marley. When Crosby was a youngster, she wrote poetry. Then in middle-school she began to sing with a former boyfriend who played the guitar. The two performed together locally for several years. But in high school Crosby began to play the guitar and write for herself.

The words flowed and the songs came easily. Crosby also found that she was a natural performer. “I’ve always felt comfortable performing. I’ve been playing in bars and coffee shops since I was a kid. It’s all I want to do.” She had her television premiere on WCSH Channel 6’s “207” program this summer.

In 2013 Crosby won a songwriting competition held by Bob Weir of the Grateful Dead band. She flew to San Rafael, California, to record her own songs there, some of which are featured on her debut album. Currently she is a sophomore at the University of Maine in Farmington studying to be a teacher but plans to spend a semester in New Mexico next year.

Crosby has a broad range as a songwriter, from sad songs like “Sell It to the Sea” to a funny non-love song, “If I Married a Musician, I’d Kill Him.” Her style has been compared to everything from Joni Mitchell to an old-fashioned blues singer. Crosby will be playing on November 15 at the Montsweag Road House in Woolwich, on November 28 at Blue in Portland, and at Rock City Coffee in Rockland on December 5. The album is available at http://laurencrosby.bandcamp.com.