By Bridget Thornton

Cameron Murphy, 26, started lobstering on Long Island when he was 13. He had five traps and was sponsored by local lobsterman Tommy Marr. His father is a merchant seaman and food processing engineer and his mother is a legal aid worker. Lobstering was not part of his family tradition, although living on Long Island, where his maternal grandmother’s family has resided for four generations, is.

Murphy soon got his student license and expanded his gang of traps. His first boat was an old punt that he and his father bought from a neighbor who was using it in her yard as a flower planter. “I gave her 100 bucks for that thing and it needed a lot of work. She was happy for the 100 bucks,” Murphy laughed.

Murphy and his father spent the winter making the old boat seaworthy. A few years later, Murphy bought another punt with his savings. This boat had an outboard, a real upgrade, or so Murphy thought. “The outboard lasted

By MLA staff

Can the Maine lobster industry survive a 70% reduction in herring? Lobstermen will find out next year as a result of sweeping changes to the herring management plan adopted by the New England Fishery Management Council in late September. The lobster industry will be put to the test when it faces a quota of only 14,558 metric tons in 2019. This is about half the quota allocated to inshore Area 1A in recent years.

“It’s hard to wrap your head around exactly what these changes will mean for Maine lobstermen. Eighty million pounds is a lot of fish to lose.”

On September 25, the Council adopted Amendment 8 to the herring management plan. Specifically, the Council adopted a long-term Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) Control Rule, which results in significant quota reduction for the commercial herring fishery. The Council took this action to avert a herring collapse, based on the fact that recent studies show that the stock biomass is very low. The Amendment supports the health of the ecosystem and the long-term health of the herring resource by leaving a greater proportion of herring unharvested. The Council also adopted measures to reduce localized depletion and user conflicts by prohibiting the use of midwater gear within a coast-wide

By MLA staff

Combine sunshine, a great view over the water on Bailey’s Island, and good food and drink, and you have a recipe for success. Add overwhelming support for lobstermen in need and you have the third annual Maine Lobstermen’s Relief Fund benefit, hosted by Cook’s Lobster and Ale House on September 14.

The benefit was organized by Cook’s Lobster and Ale House owners Jennifer and Nick Charboneau and business manager

Continued on page 19
If you happen to be visiting any of Maine’s hundreds of commercial wharves this month you are bound to notice how hard everyone on the dock is working. October is a busy month for Maine’s lobstermen and for the men and women on land who help to make the industry successful. Data from the Department of Marine Resources show just how frantic the pace is in October. More than 22 million pounds of lobster came across the docks during the month in 2016 (the last year for which monthly data is available). Come November the season starts to slow down, but right now, it’s all hands on deck!

As we hear from Maine Coast Fishermen’s Association director of marine programs Monique Coombs this month, ensuring that lobstermen and other fisherman continue to have access to the water from which they make their livings is not something to ignore. Many coastal towns are vulnerable to the inexorable demands that often lead to the loss of vital working waterfront infrastructure, such as commercial docks. In her column, Coombs reflects on the fact that for some people, being in a real working waterfront community outweighs the pleasures of fancy restaurants and high-priced hotels.

Also this month in Landings, we update you on the evolving story on what Maine’s lobster bait supply will look like next year and beyond. The New England Fishery Management Council voted on changes to the herring management plan on September 25 which brings a new era of more conservative management of the herring resource, and corresponding reductions in the commercial herring quota.

Downeast in the town of Lamoine, Maine’s newest lobster cooperative began operating in 2017. This cooperative arose from a local group of lobstermen but instead from the Maine Lobstering Union, a local of the International Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM). The Union was organized in 2013 and purchased the Trenton Bridge Lobster Pound last year. The hallmark of Lobster 207, as the cooperative is called, is that all parts of the business are unionized — lobstermen, processing employees, and truck drivers. As Rocky Alley, president of the Maine Lobstering Union, said about the co-op’s second year of operations, “We’re growing by leaps and bounds.”

Last month the University of Maine announced that a new director had been selected for the University’s Lobster Institute. Rick Wahle will take over from Bob Bayer, who has overseen the Institute’s many projects since 1995. Bayer, the subject of this month’s “People of the Coast” feature, has been involved in nearly every issue facing lobstermen since he began teaching in the University’s Food and Animal Science Department. He was instrumental in developing a vaccine for gaffkemia, a deadly disease plaguing lobsters held in pounds, as well as a method for preserving the quality of frozen lobster meat. His curiosity about lobsters led him in many different directions and helped the Lobster Institute become a recognized authority on Homarus americanus.

One of the problems facing lobsters and lobstermen is the continuing changes in the Gulf of Maine. This month Landings looks at the marine heat wave that took place in the Gulf in late summer. The Gulf of Maine Research Institute noted that sea surface temperatures across the Gulf hit a near-record high of 68.9°F on August 8. Landings explores the cause of the spike in temperature this summer and what the steadily increasing average temperature could mean for the marine food web.

At the Maine Fishermen’s Forum in March, Maine Sea Grant set up a sound studio to record the stories of Maine fishermen, their families and others involved in marine careers. The stories, called “Voices of the Fishermen’s Forum,” reveal the complexities as well as the deep satisfaction derived by those who work on the sea. This month Landings begins publishing some of those stories by introducing you to Pat Shepard, a groundfish sector manager at the Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries in Stonington. Landings will continue to bring you these stories in collaboration with Maine Sea Grant, in order to share with our readers some of the hidden worlds of the Maine coast.

Again, thank you for reading. We welcome your ideas for future articles.

COASTAL OUTLOOK Thoughts from MLCA President Patrice McCarron

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In the early 2000s, Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (CEI) submitted a report to the Maine State Planning Office’s Coastal Program called “Preserving Commercial Fishing Access: A Study of Working Waterfronts in 25 Maine Communities.” The investigators surveyed 25 coastal communities and created a “vulnerability matrix” to rate these communities. The higher the score (i.e., 6 or 7 rather than a 2 or 3), the more vulnerable the community to losing that waterfront. The highest-rated towns at the time were Biddleford, Kennebunkport, and Kittery, with Freeport and Boothbay Harbor following close behind. The communities that scored least vulnerable at the time were Stonington and Jonesport, with towns like Swans Island and Vinalhaven ranking as slightly more vulnerable.

Maine’s coast is about 7,000 miles long, if you count all the islands, and at the time of the report “working waterfronts represented a mere 25 miles of this coastline.” In 2001 a task force was convened by the Maine Legislature to look at threats to the fishing industry. According to the report, “The task force heard from fishermen, municipal officials, and coastal residents who offered testimony of lost access in their town: no-trespassing signs across paths to clam flats, growing congestion on municipal piers, and working wharves converted into summer residences. Aside from stories like these and the 25 miles figure, the task force had almost no other data.”

A lot of work and effort went into creating this important report and recent headlines in local newspapers suggest that it’s time to update it. There are noise complaints about airboats in Freeport, increasing development requests in Boothbay Harbor, rising summer populations putting pressure on water access in Harpswell, parking issues. And everywhere we hear about limited moorings, new homeowners contesting access to the water by the public and clam harvesters, and non-water-dependent businesses like hotels attempting to build on the waterfront in Portland.

Historically, Maine has used its waterfronts as a place for industry and transportation. There’s a growing desire, however, for the waterfront to be enjoyed passively, without obstruction by business and, most importantly, privately.

This desire to view but not to use the waterfront affects not just commercial fishermen but aquaculture businesses as well. The demand for Maine-grown oysters and other shellfish is skyrocketing, but it’s hard to grow an oyster industry when residents in some communities are fighting aquaculture companies in defense of their view. Portland is familiar with this problem: earlier this year a cold-storage facility was protested against because its height would block the view of some West End residents.

Spinney Creek, a shellfish aquaculture company in Eliot, is facing vigorous opposition as it tries to expand its leased acreage. Residents of the area have formed a group called “Friends of Spinney Creek” because, according to an article at Seacoastonline.com, “They feel [the project] threatens the delicate ecosystem, their property values, boat navigation and quality of life.”

However, in the view of some, the working waterfront adds to the quality of life. In a recent Letter to the Editor in the Boothbay Harbor Register, a new resident shared his story about moving to Maine after years of visiting and dreaming of living here. “In 2015, that 40-year dream became a reality. We weren’t originally attracted to fancy hotels and restaurants, but instead ... to people who still had a little dirt under their fingernails.”

Monique Coombs is the Director of Marine Programs for the Maine Coast Fishermen’s Association.

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Monique Coombs: Working waterfronts hold many roles in the state
What a spectacular summer! A bit muggy at times, but who’s complaining? As we head into another fall there are always issues on the table for Marine Patrol and Maine fishermen. Here are just a few friendly reminders.

There continues to be some confusion as to what constitutes a female v-notched lobster. Just remember a v-notch of any size is illegal to possess and if in doubt, throw it back. The hefty fine and potential loss of license is not worth the risk. If you wish to get additional guidance, speak directly with the Marine Patrol Officer in your area. They are who you will most likely have contact with at sea.

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As many of you know, we are having a new Super Wesmac built at the yard in Surry. This vessel is funded primarily with NOAA Joint Enforcement funds and is on track to be finished late this year. We are not adding a vessel to the fleet as we sold the 20-plus-years-old P/V Challenge II earlier this year.

Two weeks ago, Patrol launched the newest of our fleet, the 26’ General Marine Moxie. This vessel performed well in sea trials and is now stationed in Stonington where we have high hopes that the two officers assigned to that area will use the boat to its capacity. Moxie was primarily paid for with NOAA Joint Enforcement funds.

As you begin the process of shifting gear offshore and as the winds become more brisker and the water temperatures drop, please be safe.
PEOPLE OF THE COAST: Bob Bayer retires from the Lobster Institute

By Melissa Waterman

Bob Bayer, 74, did not set out to be a renowned lobster scientist. Bayer, who grew up in New York, started out in high school working in the summer on a dairy farm in Austerlitz, N.Y. “And I delivered newspapers,” the retiring director of the University of Maine’s Lobster Institute said with a chuckle.

Bayer pursued his interest in animal science while an undergraduate and graduate student at the University of Vermont. He received his doctorate in animal science in 1972 from Michigan State University. “I was looking for a job after grad school and I wanted to be in rural New England,” he recalled. He was offered a position in the Department of Animal Science at the University of Maine in New York City but instead took a job at the University of Maine. “I was hired to do poultry research and teach classes in animal science,” he said.

Bayer found his way into the marine world via one of his graduate students, who hailed from Scarborough. “Dale Leavitt was doing his master’s thesis on rabbits and it had failed. He came to me and asked if I’d be interested in supervising him in something to do with lobsters,” Bayer said. “I bit.”

The professor and the student studied specific nutritional requirements for young lobsters, refining the animals’ diet to promote growth. “We realized that we might be developing the most perfect diet for these lobsters but they might not like it. So then we started looking at attractants and that later led to alternative baits.” Bayer has continued to investigate alternative baits for lobsters since that time.

It was while working with another graduate student, Jim Rittenburg, that Bayer began studying gaffemia, a deadly disease commonly known as red tail which had for years attacked lobsters held in pounds. “That was the first time I had seen it,” Bayer said, referring to his student’s research. Through studies into the nature of the disease and its communicable properties, Bayer created an injectable vaccine to protect lobsters from infection, for which UMaine holds a patent. Then he developed a medicated feed that pound owners could use to prevent an outbreak of the disease among their pounded lobsters. “Now red tail is gone,” Bayer said.

Always curious about lobsters, Bayer also turned his attention to the quality of a lobster once cooked and frozen. Working with food scientists at UMaine, he developed and patented a method for maintaining fresh flavor in frozen lobster for several years. “I also developed a dog biscuit made from lobster byproducts,” Bayer added. “It’s called Lobster Bisque-its and it’s still available at Blue Seal Feeds.”

“The University didn’t take kindly to me transitioning into lobster research,” Bayer said drily. After all, he was an animal scientist in the College of Life Sciences and Agriculture at a time when the University did not even have a School of Marine Sciences, as it does today. At one point, Bayer recalled, the U.S. Department of Agriculture came to Orono for its review of the Animal Science Department. “I talked about my lobster research,” he said. “One reviewer basically offered me a job at UNH. I took a serious look at it. Then the Dean decided that lobsters were O.K.”

Bayer was allowed to pursue his interest in lobster but without financial support or assistantships from his department. “It was the Sea Grant program that gave me support. Ron Dearborn [Maine Sea Grant director] underwrote much of my disease research and helped me work with lobsters,” he said.

Bayer found himself working alongside lobstermen like Jack Merrill of Islesford and David Cousins of South Thomaston, as well as legendary lobster pound owner Herb Hodgkins. “Then pretty soon the phone started ringing with questions from all over. I went out to the islands to talk to kids, I did the Kiwanas Club circuit. There was just a lot of interest in lobster,” Bayer said. He received the University of Maine’s Presidential Public Service Award for his work in 1998.

In 1987, Maine Lobstermen’s Association president Eddie Blackmore, vice-president Joe Vachon and Bob Brown from the Maine Import/Export Lobster Dealers Association sat down in Nobleboro to talk. They had an idea for creating a lobster think tank that could address the various issues facing both lobstermen and lobster dealers. “They wanted to bring science into lobstering,” Bayer explained. “They each put $5,000 in to get the Lobster Institute started.” Maine Sea Grant extension agent David Dow helped move the idea from concept to reality. In 1987, the University of Maine Board of Trustees approved the Institute’s creation. Dow was appointed first executive director and Eddie Blackmore became chairman of the Institute’s Board of Advisors.

“It was a truly innovative way to link lobstermen to scientists and vice versa,” Bayer said. “Of course, the lobstermen did most of the work because we had no money then.” Projects supported by the Lobster Institute provided an opportunity to demonstrate that lobstermen could collect good data.

Bayer became director of the Lobster Institute in 1995. As he recalled, there was never any lack of topics to address. “We were looking at lobster shell disease long before it became a major issue because we could see it would be. This was before the big die-off in Rhode Island in 1999,” Bayer said. “The problems that presented themselves were always different from day to day. Pollution issues. Contaminants in lobsters in Massachusetts. Now it’s climate change and ocean acidification.”

Bayer and Lobster Institute associate director Cathy Billings created the popular Lobster College as a way to educate people about the lobster industry and lobster biology. “It started as a learning vacation and fundraiser,” Bayer said. “Unfortunately the first session took place the week after 9/11.” Despite the tumult after the September attacks, many attendees still managed to make the drive to Winter Harbor to take part. “The Lobster College was later moved to Boothbay Harbor for a few years. The popular program continues today.

Michael Tourkistas, founder of East Coast Seafood, one of the world’s largest lobster companies, brought some customers to Lobster College in Boothbay. He adapted the Institute’s Lobster College into East Coast’s annual Lobster Academy, currently housed at the Huntsman Marine Laboratory in St. Andrews, New Brunswick.

Bayer also instigated the bi-annual Lobstermen’s Town Meeting, a gathering of lobstermen and fisheries scientists from Canada and the U.S. The event rotates from a Canadian to a U.S. site every other year. After 46 years delveing into the world of animals and, more specifically, lobsters, Bayer continues to exude...
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Voices of the Maine Fishermen’s Forum

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Patrick Shepard, 30, grew up in a fishing family in Stonington, Maine. He graduated high school in 2006, went to college and returned home to work for the Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries. This interview was recorded in March 2018 at the Maine Fishermen’s Forum. Shepard was interviewed by Galen Koch and Matt Frassica with help from intern Katie Clark.

I was born and raised in Stonington. Well, I wasn’t born there. I was born in a hospital. But I was raised in Stonington in a fishing family. My father is a fisherman, still is a fisherman. His father was a fisherman. His father before that, and so on. I think, so my brother and I started our first fishing business when we were eight and nine. And we were fifth generation fishermen at the time. So I worked for my brother basically all through my childhood. We were business partners, you know. And before we turned ten years old we were working with each other. We started out with I think three traps apiece and by the time we graduated high school we were working from our third boat. And had eight hundred trap allocations between us. With I think three traps apiece and by the time we graduated high school we were working from our third boat. And had eight hundred trap allocations between us.

We started out in a 21-foot Privateer, outboard. My father paid about $7,000 for it when we were eight. I was eight, my brother was nine. We had paid him back by the end of the summer. And that wasn’t atypical. Kids in my generation, when we were growing up at the time, you started off working for your father. In our case, we skipped that step and went straight out on our own. But it was pretty typical to get into the fishing industry early, at a really young age, and have your own checking account when you were eight years old. And managing your own business and finances. It’s pretty cool. It’s one of the cool things about being from a small town, sort of learning the value of a dollar at a very early age. I think it’s something that the rest of America, urban America, misses.

My mom that first year when we were eight, eight and nine, my mom went with us just to be the safety, be a parental figure sort of on the boat. And she used to sit on the bow and read magazines. And after a few weeks of her going with us, we woke her up one morning and she rolled over and looked at us and she goes, “You know what? You guys are prepared to handle anything that would happen out there a lot better than I can, so just go.”

Now, I am a sector manager for a group of groundfish fishermen that operate from, well they hold permits from Jonesport, Maine all the way to Cape Cod. We’re one of 18 groundfish sectors in New England. We have 33 permits in our sector. Most of them are lobster fishermen who hold groundfish permits in hopes that the groundfish resource will rebound in eastern Maine so that they can have the opportunity to go [fish] again.

I’m 30. In my lifetime, I’ve witnessed an entire coast full of fishermen, boats of all different sizes, fishing for all different kinds of things, fishing for scallops and groundfish and herring and shrimp. My dad would fish for lobsters in the summer and fall. And then he’d rig his boat for scallops in the winter, and he would drag for scallops all winter. And then he would take the scallop rigging off and he would go either seineing for herring or groundfishing in the spring. And then he’d roll right back into lobstering. And that was what you had to do to make up an income. You were a diverse fisherman and you had licenses for all these different things to fish. And in my lifetime, over the past 30 years, we’ve been condensed to just one fishery here on the coast of Maine. And lobster is king and we don’t really have access to much of anything else.

You know, fishermen are incredibly intelligent. They will figure out how to do things more efficiently. They’ll figure out how to catch more fish with limits and regulations. That’s what they do, they innovate. They’re constantly innovating to try to run more efficiently and make more money and catch more fish. And that’s the beauty of what they do. But unfortunately that also causes some problems, right? We see innovations and technology that allow us to catch more fish. We develop these 3D scanning sonars that allow us to see fish in the water column. We have 3D depth finders that show us the exact contours of the bottom of the ocean. And fishing, through these technological innovations, has become a video game. Anybody can jump on a boat with a wheelhouse full of equipment and go fish fish or lobster or whatever it is. Technology. I think, has been one of the demises of a lot of the fisheries that we’ve lost. So, we need to figure out how to use the innovation and creativity of fishermen to start to restore some of the fisheries we’ve lost and start to sustain them over time. Sort of harness the incredible ability that they have to innovate and use that to our advantage.

We want our food, we want our seafood, we want it portioned, packaged, vacuum-sealed, frozen, with a YouTube video on how to cook it. And, you know, everything short of somebody picking up a fork and stuffing it in your face. It’s pretty ridiculous that we don’t know how to cook whole fish anymore. And that’s one of the things that we’re trying to do with the sector is educate people on how to prepare a whole fish in their homes. It’s pretty easy when you start to learn how to do it. Even filleting. If you wanted to fillet a whole fish, I could probably count on two hands and a half a foot the number of people from here to Eastport that can fillet a fish. That’s pretty staggering. Probably the same amount of people who could tell the difference between a haddock and a cod. So we need to educate our neighbors on how to handle this stuff and capture that value in our own communities.

Well, unfortunately, the way change has happened in the past is through a major crash. A species will just take a digger. And we have to figure out, okay this resource has all but collapsed. If it’s starting to come back, we need to limit the amount that we’re taking and we need to figure out how to make a profit from that. Some of these other species like lobster. We have an amazing resource in lobster. Is it going to take a crash in the lobster fishery to start to change people’s minds about the volume that they’re bringing in? I hope not. I hope we can start to figure that out.

Shrimp, the same story. The shrimp fishery crashed in the state of Maine. We may or may not be seeing that resource come back. There is some talk of maybe having a fishery next year. But it’s going to be very limited in scale. And through these species crashes, we’ve figured out how to innovate. And some of the best ideas, actually probably all of the best ideas, on how to capture the value of a limited amount of resource have come from fishermen. And that’s been pretty cool to watch.

What do I value about our community? Well, I mentioned that my brother and I started our own business when we were very young. Obviously, that’s something I value about Stonington and places Downeast. Our kids are our most val-
about two seconds so it was another winter spent working on the boat,” he recalled.

Throughout this time Murphy also worked as a sternman for Marr and fished with David Johnson, another Long Island lobsterman, as needed. “Everyone on the island is always willing to help out the younger generations,” Murphy said. “Long is a tight-knit community. The lobstermen are upfront, they tell you what to look for, changes in temperature or where the bottom may be different. Where you would think most people would withhold information, they don’t.”

It was during the time Murphy was getting started in lobstering that the National Marine Fisheries Service instituted the sinking line rule, which required lobstermen to stop using floating line between their traps in a trawl and instead use a more expensive line that lay on the ocean bottom. The purpose of the rule was to protect North Atlantic right whales from becoming entangled in arcs of line that float between traps in the water column. “It wasn’t a huge hassle to switch over my gear because I didn’t have as much as I do now,” Murphy said. Now using sinking line is just part of what he does in order to go lobstering.

Like many Maine lobstermen, Murphy is a keen observer of the wildlife that surrounds him. He takes pride in how he operates his lobster business and would never want to cause harm to a whale. Though he’s never seen a right whale while out fishing, he’s noticed plenty of pilot whales and a few minke whales this summer. He also has noticed the water temperature in Casco Bay has changed over the years since he started fishing. Often he finds warmer-water species in his traps, like sea bass, skate and the seahorse he pulled up in a trap in September.

Murphy buys bait from and sells his catch to Casco Bay Lobster, which is owned by Cozy Harbor but is located on Long Island. “Having a place on the island to live or have a place on the island is always willing to help out the younger generations, “ Murphy continued from page 1

And just that solidified for me how important it is to do the work we do. You know, that sort of made it rock solid in my mind. That’s what this is I need to be doing. It’s pretty cool. I have a really good relationship with the guy and I didn’t know that I had that much of an impact. Stuff like that keeps me going. It’s pretty cool. I have a really good relationship with the guy and I didn’t know that I had that much of an impact. Stuff like that keeps me going.

Murphy became a Maine Lobstermen’s Association (MLA) member two years ago. He wanted to join because most lobstermen on Long Island are members and he thinks that the MLA is the best place to get information about the fishery. “I appreciate being able to stay informed about what is happening while I’m out to sea during the year,” he said.

He bought his current boat, a 36-foot Crowley Beal called Blue Dolphin II, in May, and is looking forward to a long career on the water. “I like working for myself,” Murphy reflected. “Your success is more or less built up on your abilities and your efforts and I like that.”
The Maine lobster industry is facing unprecedented challenges. The magnitude of these issues is like none that we have seen before. Next year lobstermen will have to deal with massive bait cuts and skyrocketing bait prices. We will be battling to stave off sweeping changes to the fishery in the government’s efforts to save North American right whales. A newly elected Maine Governor and administrator will be in office, whose actions in the coming years remain uncertain.

How Maine lobstermen respond to these challenges will be a true test of what this industry is made of. Will we fight one another? Will we play victim? Will we point fingers? Or will we have the fortitude to come together and find ways to continue our legacy as stewards of one of the world’s most sustainable fisheries?

The MLA has been here for 64 years. We know what it means to fight for Maine lobstermen and the many small communities that depend on the fishery. It is no coincidence that MLA was the only Maine lobster organization to weigh in on the bait issue and to attend many meetings over the past several years to fight for our industry. As an organization, we have never been shy about tackling the issues that matter to our members. Our ultimate success in the future, however, will rest with lobstermen. How do we decide what is right and what is wrong for our industry? The MLA listens, and the MLA advocates. We listen to lobstermen to understand their concerns and what they need to make a living. We listen to scientists to ensure that we remain strong stewards of our marine resources. The board listens, it discusses (sometimes for months) and processes all sides of the issue, and then the MLA pushes for measures to preserve our industry, our future and our way of life.

The MLA was started back in 1954 by lobstermen who understood that they would be stronger and have a more powerful voice if they worked together. The MLA takes the long view for our industry, while not sacrificing our ability to survive in the short-term.

The issues we face on bait and whales are tough. We are going to need to think outside of the box. We are going to need to contemplate change at a fundamental level. Some changes will be forced upon us as we cope with legal and management realities. But there are also changes that we can choose for ourselves that will help us through these tough times and make our industry stronger in the long-term. I’m thinking that lobstermen will have to be like trees. A tree has deep roots in one place and carries a heavy canopy of leaves throughout the summer. When a storm comes, that tree needs to bend in order to survive. Its roots remain in place while it flexes and turns in the wind. And as long as it bends, it does not break.

Lobstermen typically resist change yet at the same time you’d be hard-pressed to find a lobsterman who doesn’t have ideas on how to make things better. Ideas are a place to start, but real solutions to daunting challenges only happen if individuals engage and are open to change. There are no easy answers. We are going to have to roll up our sleeves and talk about all the options, no matter how unpopular they are.

For example, how can lobstermen survive the bait shortage next year? At first glance, you might say, “No way. It will ruin me!” But there are simple actions that can help us through the problem, such as further diversifying the bait supply and cutting the amount of herring used per bait bag. After that there are additional steps to take, such as to stop dumping hawg bags and use bait savers where you can. Don’t tell me that it’s impossible to use less herring: Necessity is the mother of invention and I have no doubt lobstermen will find creative ways to lessen the blow of the herring shortage. It will happen naturally for most; others will respond to peer pressure.

But what about some of the tougher choices? Lobstermen often talk to me after meetings or call the office, wondering if we should talk about trap reductions. Would Maine lobstermen be better off financially if they fished 600 or 400 traps? Could lobstermen reduce operating costs with fewer traps yet maintain their catches as a way to offset the bait shortage and price increases? Some think that would work; others strongly disagree.

How will our industry respond to the federal push for stricter whale rules? What are lobstermen willing to do to make Maine gear safer for whales? Will you insist that you can’t make it without the rope that you are currently using or can you fish with smaller diameter vertical lines? Maine must come up with something that will work for the whales as well as lobstermen or we will have to swallow draconian solutions from scientists (ropeless fishing), the conservation community (weak rope) and the federal government (closures). National Marine Fisheries Service, right whale scientists and the conservation community are already pushing hard for Maine to have much less lobster gear in the water. In order to not be blindsided, we must decide on what we are willing to do to protect the whales.

And to do that, we must talk the issue out, not hide our heads in the sand.

‘There’s that old Chinese proverb, “May you live in interesting times!” Well, we certainly do. There are plenty of questions, but no clear answers. I truly hope that Maine lobstermen can come together to work through these significant challenges. Many, I know, are happy to move forward with an “every man for himself — survival of the fittest” mentality. Sure, that’s a great approach for those who have paid off their boat, their home, and the truck, whose children are out of the house and whose health remains robust. But what about everyone else? What does that attitude do for the long-term health of the lobster industry, for our kids, for the economies of our coastal communities?

When times are tough, decisions are hard. Making the right choice is complicated. But not talking about all the choices, painful as they may be, is just plain dangerous.

As always, stay safe on the water.
MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

MLA DIRECTORS MEETING SUMMARY

The MLA Directors met on September 5 in Belfast. President Kristan Porter welcomed Marine Patrol Col. Jon Cornish and DMR lobster biologist Kathleen Reardon to discuss the definition of a v-notch and its enforcement standard. The MLA has requested DMR to look at ways to better educate lobstermen on the standard for v-notching.

The past standard had been a “perfect flipper,” but this led to enforcement problems since there was no room for discretion. The current definition is “zero tolerance,” which means a v-notch of any size makes the lobster illegal to possess. Any lobster with a mutilation that could hide a v-notch is illegal to possess.

Cornish and Reardon presented a series of photos showing the v-notch in a lobster immediately after it’s been notched and then prior to its first molt, after its first molt and after its second molt. The board also reviewed a series of photos and discussed which would be considered v-notched and illegal. After a long discussion, the board concluded that “zero tolerance” is the best definition for v-notch. It is incumbent upon lobstermen to re-notch any lobster to assure that is not landed by another lobsterman after being thrown back. Marine Patrol officers have discretion to work with lobstermen if something close to a v-notch makes it into the tank. Col. Cornish stated that Marine Patrol writes less than 15 v-notch summonses each year. Going to a “perfect flipper” definition and removing officer discretion would likely end up in more confusion and more summonses. Reardon reminded the board of how important v-notching is to the conservation of the lobster population. Lobstermen should be urged to re-notch all egg-bearing females and to re-notch any lobster they haul with a small notch.

MLA membership director Andi Pelletier updated the board on MLA’s project, spearheaded by Brooks Trap Mill, to provide high quality v-notch tools to all of Maine’s new commercial lobster license holders. The lobstermen are receiving a personalized stainless steel v-notch tool, information on v-notch, a complimentary MLA membership, and a Brooks Trap Mill T-shirt and hat.

The board believes that there is a strong need to educate lobstermen, and especially sternmen, on the importance of v-notch. The MLA urges all lobstermen to re-notch egg-bearing females. “When in doubt, cut it out.” Our future depends on it!

Col. Cornish said that officer recruitment is improving. Last year Marine Patrol was down eight officers; this year they are down by only two. Two new recruits, currently in the Police Academy, will be assigned to Gouldsboro and as a seasonal officer in Kittery. DMR launched the 26’ vessel Moxy in September. The boat will be based in Stonington. DMR is also acquiring a 31’ Impact vessel which will be based in Portland for fisheries enforcement. The Super Wsmac boat is due for completion in December. Marine Patrol has received many complaints about wet storage and will be increasing enforcement and penalties for this violation. DMR can take licenses after two or more wet storage violations.

MLA Board members praised the project of having a sternman license, even if it’s only for travel to and from the lobstering grounds. The sternmen must be accountable for their actions on a lobster boat. If a sternman were found at fault for a lobster violation, along with the Captain, it may prevent him or her from working on another lobster boat. Others believed it is the Captain’s responsibility to ensure that the sternman is adhering to all of the rules.

Caitlin Cleaver is working with DMR on its lobster gear research project related to future whale rules. The project is collecting three streams of data: 1) online survey asking simple questions about the types of vertical lines used and how gear is rigged; 2) collecting samples of vertical lines from lobstermen for breaking to determine functional breaking strength of the rope; 3) deploying load cells on lobster boats to determine the amount of strain on the rope as it goes through the hauler under a variety of conditions. Together, this data will provide a better understanding of how Maine lobstermen are fishing gear and assess the impacts of various proposals to expand whale protection measures. Strong participation by lobstermen in this project will be essential to Maine’s ability to negotiate future whale rules. Lobstermen who want to participate should contact Caitlin at 207-706-9466 or caitlin@theforenvironmental.com.

The MLA is partnering with the Maine Coast Fishermen’s Association and several believe in a waterfront livelihood leadership for the lobster industry during the change in administration while major issues related to bait and whales are decided, the candidates’ stance on ocean energy, working waterfront access, tariffs and other challenges. Those interested in attending should RSVP through MCFA’s Facebook page.

The MLA continues to closely monitor herring management and quota changes.

The 2018 quota has been reduced to 49,900 metric tons, which keeps the probability of overfishing at or below 50%. The NEFMCouncil will meet on September 25 to vote on Amendment 8 to the herring plan, which could result in further quota reduction in 2019 and beyond. The best-case scenario for projected 2019 herring quota is a maximum of 28,900 metric tons. The MLA will attend the Council’s Herring Advisors and Committee meetings as well as the full Council meeting to ensure that managers understand how devasting this quota cut will be for Maine lobstermen.

The MLA is surveying its members to understand concerns with regard to the bait crisis. Results to date indicate that 85% are concerned (47% extremely and 38% are concerned) about bait in 2019. Nearly equal numbers of lobstermen believe this bait crisis will lead to an economic crisis for lobstermen in 2019. More than half of respondents want to see the MLA respond, however, there was no consensus on what form that should take. Input included educating lobstermen on the coming crisis, urging lobstermen to use less bait, fighting for a higher quota, fighting for more poggy quota, looking at trap reductions, or just staying the course and letting the situation work itself out.

As members of Maine’s Take Reduction Team (TRT), Patrice McCarron and Kristan Porter were part of a group that travelled to Washington in September to update Maine’s delegation directly on the emerging right whale crisis and its impact on Maine’s lobster industry. The MLA continues to monitor the court case against NMFS as intervenors, participate in all TRT meetings and coordinate with DMR and lobstermen on Maine’s strategy to enhance whale protections. NMFS is expected to release a draft white paper on the status of right whales in September and will convene the TRT in October. Craig Stewart told the board that he had deployed 20 vertical lines using a “braided sleeve” at the beginning of the season in Casco Bay. He lost eight buoys in the first week so did not continue to test the sleeves. They were incorporated into 5’16” rope.

The MLA continues to work with engine manufacturers on the onerous Tier 4 engine standards, which are impossible for Maine’s boat builders to comply with, to support Portland fishermen’s efforts to protect the working waterfront, and to monitor the status of the proposed salmon farm in Belfast.

Pelletier informed the board that membership renewals are going well. The MLA urges lobstermen to support the MLA Legal Defense Fund to ensure that the MLA can fully represent the industry as the whale case moves through the courts. The MLA lost its funding to support lobstermen in understanding health insurance options and enrolling in the health insurance marketplace but will keep lobstermen informed of who should contact instead. The next MLA meeting will be October 3 at 5 p.m. and November 14 at 5 p.m. in Belfast.

BAIT UPDATES

2018 Atlantic Herring Landings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>2018 Atlantic Herring Landings For Data through September 24</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cumulative Catch YTD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1A*</td>
<td>18,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1B</td>
<td>1,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6,702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3,082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29,689</td>
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*Quota June 1 thru Sept 30 = -18,581; Oct 1 thru Dec 31 = -6,942

Spawning closures dates

The Eastern Maine Spawning closure is in effect from August 28 to September 2. Western closures may exceed 30 days extended closures. There has been no announcement on the spawning closure dates for the other two areas. The default dates (if no samples are taken) for the Western Maine Spawning closure is September 26 to October 24; and the Mass/NH Spawning closure is October 1 to 28. During a closure, it is unlawful to fish for, take, possess, transfer, or land in any Maine port or facility, or to transfer at sea from any Maine-registered vessel, any catch of herring harvested in the closed area.

Area 1A Herring Fishery Update

The Area 1A herring fishery was closed on September 13 because 97% of the herring landed by the fisher are considered to be undersized. There was no consensus on what form that should take. Input included educating lobstermen on the coming crisis, urging lobstermen to use less bait, fighting for a higher quota, fighting for more poggy quota, looking at trap reductions, or just staying the course and letting the situation work itself out.

Continued on page 10
Changes to Herring Management Plan and Quota

The Council’s Herring Advisors recommended that the Council consider the least restrictive option for setting commercial catch quotas while still protecting the herring resource (alternative 1). The Herring Planning Development Team projected that this option would set the 2019 Allowable Biological Catch (ABC) at 24,253 metric tons, resulting in a catch limit closer to 18,000 metric tons. The Herring Advisors recommended that the seasonal closure of Area 1B be removed as the alternative to address localized depletion and that existing area-by-area herring quota allocations be carried forward in 2019. The Council’s Herring Committee met the next day, putting forward different recommendations to the Council. The Committee recommended a more restrictive option for setting commercial catch quotas (alternative 8B/amended). The Herring Planning Development Team projected that this option would set the 2019 ABC at 21,266 metric tons, resulting in a catch limit closer to 14,558 metric tons. The Committee recommended that this medium vessels be prohibited from fishing within a 12-mile buffer of the coast in all herring management areas on a year-round basis. The NEFMC Council met on September 25 and adopted the Herring Committee’s recommendation. This will result in a projected quota of 14,558 metric tons in 2019. In addition to the year-round coast-wide ban on Midwater trawlers within 12 miles, the ban was extended to 20 miles off the Cape.

MAINE REOPENS MENHADEN FISHERY

Maine re-opened the State Allocation menhaden fishery on September 17. Menhaden harvest may occur between 12:01 a.m. on Monday and 11:59 p.m. Thursday each week. The daily limit is reduced by this regulation to 80,000 pounds, with a weekly limit of 160,000 pounds. Harvesting and landings are restricted to Maine territorial waters and may occur once per 24-hour period. All landings must be reported daily via email to menhaden.dmr@maine.gov.

The fishery for Atlantic menhaden is managed through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). Maine’s allocated quota share for 2018 was 2,439,114 pounds, which was fully consumed on July 22. The DMR has been the recipient of additional menhaden quota via transfers of quota from partnering states to allow for a re-opening of the fishery this fall.

SEAFOOD INDUSTRY GUBERNATORIAL FORUM OCTOBER 4 IN ROCKLAND

The MLA is partnering with Maine Coast Fishermen’s Association and several other industry groups to sponsor a forum with the candidates running for Governor, Shawn Moody, Janet Mills, Alan Caron and Terry Hayes have been invited to attend. Candidates will respond to questions regarding issues important to Maine’s seafood industry. The event is free and open to the public on October 4 from 5 to 7pm at the Strand Theatre in Rockland. Please RSVP if you plan to attend. FMI www.maineaquafortuna.org.

LOBSTERMEN NEEDED TO IMPROVE WHALE REGULATIONS

Maine DMR is collecting data to provide a better understanding of how Maine lobstermen are fishing gear and assess the impacts of various proposals to expand whale protection measures on Maine lobstermen. Strong participation by lobstermen in this project will be essential to Maine’s ability to negotiate future whale rules.

Online Survey – The online survey asks simple questions about the types of vertical lines used and how gear is rigged. Survey information includes rope type and diameter, trap configuration, distance from shore, depth, and type of surface system. Take the survey online at www.maine.gov/dmr/science-research/species/lobster/ropecvysurveylandings.html.

Vertical Line Collection – DMR is collecting used vertical lines from lobstermen to determine the functional strength of the rope. DMR needs samples that are representative of how people fish in different areas.

Load Cells – DMR is looking for lobstermen to volunteer to deploy load cells on lobster boats to determine the amount of strain on the rope as it goes through the hauler under a variety of conditions.

For more information or to participate, contact Caitlin Cleaver with FB Environmental at 207-706-9466 or caitlenc@fbenvironmental.com.

TIER 4 ENGINE EMISSION STANDARDS

The MLA is working with a Mack Boring engineer and Maine’s Congressional delegation to seek relief for Maine’s boatbuilders and lobstermen regarding EPA’s strict diesel emission standards for Tier 4 engines. These standards apply to marine engines over 800 horse power. There are currently no Tier 4 engine solutions for Maine lobster boats, leaving those who wish to power new vessels at this level without any engine options. Since the EPA rules are already in place, a resolution to this issue has been difficult to identify.

NORDIC AQUAFARMS BEGINS PERMITTING FOR MAINE LAND-BASED SALMON SITE

Courtesy of Seafoodnews.com. Nordic Aquafarms says it expects to submit an application for a Maine Pollution Discharge Elimination System Permit to Maine DEP within the next month for its proposed land-based salmon farm in Belfast. The company plans to hold its first required public information meeting featuring a summary of the work done to bring the project to the permitting stage for the application before submitting it. This first of several meetings is expected to take place during the last week of September or first week of October. Those in attendance will be able to ask questions about the Maine Pollution Discharge Elimination System licensing process, the timeline, and discharge.

“We are setting a wastewater new standard for the fish farming industry,” Nordic Aquafarms said in a statement. “Our planned application will propose discharging the treated wastewater about a kilometer off shore. However, before discharge, we will treat wastewater to reach the best environmental profile per pound of fish produced that has ever been documented in industry history.” One of the company’s key priorities is limiting the amount of nutrients discharged, in addition to determining how they are diluted in the ocean and the potential impact they will have on the environment. The update on their water discharge permit comes just a few weeks after the company announced that they had purchased an additional 14-acre parcel next to their site. The company now has a total of 56 acres for their facility.

MAINE ISSUES PRECAUTIONARY SHELLFISH CLOSURE

The DMR precautionarily closed a stretch of the Downeast coast to harvesting of four shellfish species due to test results and experience with the domoic acid in recent years. The closure, implemented September 7, prohibited harvesting of clams, oysters, mussels, and geoduck clams between the southern tip of Petit Manan and the southern tip of Pond Point on Great Wass Island. DMR’s Public Health Bureau tests coastal shellfish areas for biotoxins weekly from March through October to determine the species and concentration of phytoplankton. The current precautionary closure is due to water and shellfish sampling that indicated the presence of domoic acid, which causes Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning (ASP). While toxin levels in shellfish sampled in the impacted area fall below the federal threshold for closures, DMR has determined that Pseudo-nitzschia causes shellfish to become toxic more quickly than other species of phytoplankton. The use of precautionary closures for ASP is designed to prevent the need for recalls of shellfish.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thick Weight</th>
<th>Each Bale Shrink</th>
<th>Each Bale Price</th>
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<tr>
<td>135472</td>
<td>50 lbs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>135422</td>
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<tr>
<td>135452</td>
<td>220 lbs.</td>
<td>79.99 ea.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
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<tr>
<td>18”</td>
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<tr>
<td>17”</td>
<td>6 lbs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16”</td>
<td>5 lbs.</td>
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Fish Totes
Plastic, No Holes

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<tr>
<th>Plastic, No Holes</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>28” X 16’ 1/2” X 14’</td>
<td>70 Liter</td>
<td>1 bushel capacity</td>
</tr>
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<td>Gray</td>
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<td>78 Liter</td>
<td>1 bushel capacity</td>
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<td>Blue</td>
<td>28” X 16’ 1/2” X 14’</td>
<td>85 Liter</td>
<td>1 bushel capacity</td>
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</table>

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Attention Maine Lobstermen

The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (MA DMF) has begun an Industry-Based Trawl Survey for Gulf of Maine cod (Cod IBS) aboard the F/V Miss Emily. The survey area includes federal waters off of the coast of Maine, specifically in lobster zones: E, F, and G. The survey starts on October 1st, 2018 and ends on January 31st, 2019. Tow locations will be announced monthly on MA DMF website, social media, and the MA DMF listserv. To receive real time text message updates of the survey go to the MA DMF Website and sign up or call Bill Hoffman at 978-282-0308 ext 106. Additionally, the survey vessel will monitor VHF channel 16 during survey operations. In order to avoid gear conflicts, MA DMF respectively requests that fixed gear be temporarily removed from the tow locations during survey times.

October 2018 tow locations adjacent to the Maine coast detailed in maps below

For future month tow locations visit www.mass.gov/marinefisheries and visit the Cod IBS project page.

---

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There’s a new lobster cooperative in Maine. Lobster 207, located in Lamoine, is operated by the Maine Lobstering Union, a local of the International Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) Union, which was established in 2013. The Union purchased the Trenton Bridge Lobster Pound, a wholesale lobster distributor in 2017 from fourth-generation owner Warren Pettiegrew’s family for $4 million. Pettiegrew remains the company’s chief executive officer of wholesale operations.

“We’re growing by leaps and bounds,” said Rocky Alley, president of the Maine Lobstering Union and a Jonesport lobsterman. “This is in the best interests of the lobster industry. The profit is going into our hands, not into the hands of big business.”

In a fundamental sense, Lobster 207 operates largely as Maine’s other lobstering cooperatives do. Members of the co-op sell their lobster to the company, which holds the lobsters and grades them; the company then markets and sells those lobsters to customers large and small. At the end of the year, co-op members receive a dividend, based on the pounds of lobsters they sold that season to the company, minus the expenses it took to run the business.

What makes Lobster 207 different is that all elements of the business are done by unionized workers. That means many of the lobsters brought to the wharf are harvested by Maine Lobstering Union members. The employees who pack the lobsters for shipment are unionized. The trucks that move the lobsters from Maine to far-flung destinations are operated by unionized truck drivers.

It is that trait — that Lobster 207 is a union-based company — which plays a key part of its marketing strategy.

The purchase of the Trenton Bridge Lobster Pound was a crucial element in the union's mission to improve the price paid for its members' lobsters. Funding for that $4 million purchase was enabled by financing from the Bank of Labor, a Kansas City bank established in 1924 by the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers for labor union members in that state. The Bank now serves labor unions throughout the United States.

“We had to pay out nearly $1 million last year. But we've paid the debt to the Bank of Labor. They were great to us.”

According to Alley, Lobster 207 sold between 13 and 14 million pounds of lobster last year — soft-shells to processors and hard-shells to accounts in the U.S. and abroad. The dividend paid to Union members at the end of 2017 was 5 cents per pound. The number of Union members that sell to Lobster 207 fluctuates between 300 and 350 each month, said Alley, depending on whether each member has paid his or her Union dues. In addition, non-union lobstermen also sell their catches to the company.

Lobster 207 began its online retail sales in August 2017. The online sales “means diversifying our business operations, owning as much of the supply chain as possible and taking advantage of our strengths, working with our union brothers and sisters,” said David Sullivan, IAM business representative, in an interview with Payments News and Mobile Payments Trends last year. The company has delivered Maine lobster to Philadelphia’s mayor after that city’s Super Bowl win this year as well as to a group of Google employees attending the famous Burning Man celebration in the California desert.

“We have a three-phase plan,” Alley said. Lobster 207 first approached Union members and other lobstermen in the Jonesport area and Vinalhaven to sell to the company when it started operations in 2017. This year Alley said the company wants to get lobstermen in the Boothbay Harbor area to sell to it. And after that, “lobstermen all the way to the Kittery Bridge,” Alley said. “We’ve got eleven lobster brokers working for us. We hope to get a better dividend this year and more members.”

“We had to have three appraisals before we closed [on the property],” Alley said. “We had to pay out nearly $1 million last year. But we’ve paid the debt to the Bank of Labor. They were great to us.”

Lobster 207’s hallmark is that all workers at the company are unionized, including the truck drivers. Photo courtesy of PHL.
Western Maine Community Action (WMCA) in Wilton received a 2019 Federal Navigator Grant from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to support the work of Health Insurance Marketplace Navigators in Maine. WMCA coordinates a group of Navigators at Community Action Agencies across the state. The funds will support the Navigators work providing free, unbiased assistance to Mainers seeking more affordable health insurance options. The WMCA-led group of Navigators are very experienced; since 2013 they have been helping Mainers understand health insurance options, enroll in coverage, and address related issues. This year, adjustments made to the Affordable Care Act resulted in some uncertainty about the future of the Health Insurance Marketplace and the Navigators’ status. While some details remain unknown, the 2019 health plans will soon be available through the Marketplace and Navigators (and other assisters) will be here to help residents.

**Open Enrollment Period — the time when any eligible person can sign up for this type of health insurance — begins on November 1 and runs until December 15.**

We want people to know that they can still apply and enroll in health coverage, often with tax credits, through the Health Insurance Marketplace at HealthCare.gov,” said Hillary Barter, WMCA Health Navigator. “Anyone who needs assistance with enrollment or re-enrollment should contact a certified Health Navigator to schedule an appointment.” Those interested can call 855-806-7333 with questions or for a referral to a local assister. Note: the MLA will not have trained Navigators on staff and cannot assist with health insurance enrollments.

**ANTHEM RETURNS TO MAINE HEALTH INSURANCE MARKETPLACE**

From Healthinsurance.org, September 16

Maine has one of the few remaining ACA-created CO-OPs (Community Health Options); despite challenges in 2015 and 2016, the Community Health Options was able to enroll more than 3,000 new members for 2017, and was one of only four CO-OPs (nationwide) continuing to offer coverage for 2018.

Only two insurers — Harvard Pilgrim and Community Health Options — were offering coverage in Maine for 2018 after Anthem Blue Cross dropped out of the Marketplace Exchange. But in 2019, Anthem will rejoin the Exchange. The company announced earlier in 2018 that it would rejoin the Exchange if Maine’s proposed reinsurance program was approved and implemented for 2019. Federal approval for that program was granted in late July, 2018.

The Maine Bureau of Insurance has posted a summary page showing the following approved average rate changes for 2019:

- **Community Health Options:** 0.9 % increase
- **Harvard Pilgrim:** 2.1% increase

In 2018, 75,809 people signed up for coverage via Maine’s Marketplace Exchange during open enrollment, down about 4.5% from the 79,407 people who enrolled in plans for 2017. That, in turn, was a decrease of about 5.5% from the 84,659 who enrolled the year before. The decreased enrollment is likely a result of the ongoing uncertainty about the future of the ACA under the Trump Administration.

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Maine Navigator Agencies, 2018-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP)</td>
<td>Stan Targonski</td>
<td>(207) 554-4158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Communities Coalition (HCC)</td>
<td>Dianna White</td>
<td>(207) 779-2834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midcoast Maine Community Action (MMCA)</td>
<td>Melissa Kettell</td>
<td>(207) 442-7963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Opportunity Alliance (Cumberland County)</td>
<td>Kate Albert</td>
<td>(207) 523-5045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penquis (Penobscot &amp; Piscataquis Counties)</td>
<td>Teri Cicciotti</td>
<td>(207) 973-3645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waldo Community Action Partners (WCAP)</td>
<td>Penny Peaslee</td>
<td>(207) 338-6809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Maine Community Action (WMCA)</td>
<td>Hillary Barter</td>
<td>(855) 806-7333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York County Community Action Corporation (YCCAC)</td>
<td>Bobbin Bibber</td>
<td>(800) 965-5762</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After December 31st 2018 please direct clients to our statewide Navigator line at 1 855-806-7333. A navigator will evaluate the client’s situation over the phone; depending on the kind of assistance required help may be offered remotely or a referral may be made for an in-person appointment.
Mary Coombs, in collaboration with the Maine Lobstermen’s Community Alliance (MLCA). More than $5,000 was raised during the all-day event for the MLCA’s Lobstermen’s Relief Fund. “I can’t say enough about the work that the Charboneaus and Mary Coombs put into the day. Their commitment to Maine’s lobstering families is steadfast and truly admirable,” said Antonina Pelletier, the MLCA’s programs and development coordinator.

The benefit began in 2016 after the death that summer of 28-year-old Jon Popham of Machiasport. The Charboneaus wanted to do something to help the Popham family and the families of other lobstermen hurt or killed while fishing. “They came to us with the idea of the benefit and it’s just taken off from there,” Pelletier said.

Patrons of Cook’s enjoyed special entrees made for the day, such as clams casino, crab rolls, chicken pot pie, and beef Wellington, created by Chef JP Dubois from food donated by Sysco, Day’s Lobster & Crabmeat, and Moody’s Seafood. Of course, steamed lobster with corn on the cob was the biggest seller of the day with Bow Street Market of Freeport and local lobstermen chipping in the ingredients. Thanks go to Jim Merriman, Herman Coombs, Glen Rogers, Nick Martinez, Tommy Clemons, John Tanguay, and Jim Barclay of Harpswell who donated lobster. Lobsterman Craig Stewart organized fellow Long Island lobstermen to contribute over 100 pounds of lobster. Geary’s Brewing Company showcased its classic India Pale Ale and a new OG Lager while Tito’s Vodka donated a portion of all drinks made with their signature liquor.

Throughout the day people bid on a wide selection of items donated to the silent auction, from lobster-related jewelry to gift baskets. By evening the competition was stiff for quirky items such as two dozen mini-whoopee pies from Wicked Whoopees, a giant gift basket of Geary’s Brewing Company beer, a case of pre-filled wine glasses from Old Port Spirits & Cigars, and the much-coveted lobster traps donated by Brooks Trap Mill, Honey Hole Trap and Brazier Trap, which were won by lobsterman John Tanguay.

New this year was an appearance by Snughouse, a lively band from Portland who played a mix of Americana-style rock and ballads. Their music and the camaraderie among patrons kept the party going long after sunset. “What a great night!” local resident Joseph Amorello said. Amorello attended with his wife Robin and out-of-town guests. “Great food, great weather, a gorgeous evening and a good cause.”

Another patron mentioned that his brother was a lobsterman in Bar Harbor. “We saw the poster and marked our calendars,” his wife said. “We’ve missed it the last two years because we were busy. I said we would not miss it this year! It’s so important to support our lobstermen.”

There are so many things to consider when measuring the importance of the waterfront: its value for transportation, industrial uses, food production, recreation. As Maine’s popularity as a place to live as well as visit grows, so is the need to better understand how to measure those values and rank them. There is no one single use for any waterfront, whether it’s in a well-to-do town like Eliot or a hardscabble harbor like Cutler. By its nature, a working waterfront is no one single use for any waterfront, whether it’s in a well-to-do town like Eliot or a hardscabble harbor like Cutler. By its nature, a working waterfront...

Bayer continued from page 5

energy. He is planning an online class on lobster biology and sustainability for Husson College. And he just completed a 26-mile bicycle circuit of the Penobscot River.

“I plan to continue to support the Maine Marine Patrol in prosecution of individuals illegally removing eggs from lobster. I will also be working on lobster food product development with a couple of different companies. Plus I’m working with Giada Giachinto in Milan, Italy, on using lobster shell in her jewelry as a replacement for endangered coral. I wouldn’t say I’m retiring,” he said.

Bayer continued from page 5

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12-mile buffer zone from the shore. This is in addition to the existing ban on midwater vessels in Area 1A from June 1 to September 30. The Council meeting drew a contentious crowd of commercial fishermen, environmental groups, recreational and charter boat fishermen and the public. The testimony revealed a deep divide between many who fear the midwater fleet could wipe out the fishery and who are steadfast about leaving more herring unharvested to support tuna, marine mammals, sea birds and predator fish and those who favor allocating more fish to support the commercial herring and lobster fisheries.

Patrice McCarron, the Maine Lobstermen's Association's (MLA) executive director, testified emphatically on the devastating economic impacts that the new long-term control rule will have on the Maine lobster fishery. "Supporting this option will result in the loss of more than 77 million pounds of fresh herring from the lobster bait supply. The lobster fishery has already absorbed herring landings dropping by half since 2013 and the resulting spike in bait prices," she said. McCarron noted that bait prices have climbed steadily from $26/bushel in 2013 to nearly $50/bushel this year. "Some island lobstermen are reporting bait prices in excess of $60/bushel," she said. "To make matters worse, we lose this steady, local, fresh source of bait during our peak lobster fishing months. It will be impossible to replace all those fish."

Maine's Commissioner of Marine Resources, Patrick Keliher, also expressed concern over the impacts of deep herring quota cuts on Maine's lobster fishery. Keliher made a motion to maximize the commercial herring catch while still providing strong protections to the stock. He argued that Maine's lobster fishery, and particularly those who live in Maine's most remote rural communities, will be extremely hard hit by the quota cuts. Keliher's motion was coolly received by his Council colleagues and was soundly defeated. Keliher also expressed concern over the impact the Amendment will have on the herring fleet. The results of the recently completed herring stock assessment complicated the Council's discussions. The prognosis for future stock size appears poor given the low recent recruitment. Scientists were clear that the stock decline is not due to overfishing. Yet the stock assessment shows a significant decline in recruitment and spawning stock biomass over the last five years, with 2016 being the lowest level of recruitment on record.

The most heated debate erupted over options to manage localized depletion, specifically actions that would prevent midwater trawl vessels from fishing certain areas. Many stakeholders blame the poor state of the herring resource on the midwater fleet, although the stock assessment is clear that the herring resource is not overfished. Many also voiced concern that midwater gear cannot coexist around inshore fishing gear because it causes significant gear conflicts. Opposition to midwater boats was strong from Massachusetts charter boat captains and recreational fishermen and representatives from the herring purse seine fleet, who strongly supported pushing the midwater boats 25 to 50 miles offshore but were willing to compromise on a 12-mile buffer. The Council approved a 12-mile buffer zone across all herring management areas providing a coastwide prohibition of midwater trawl gear inside the buffer. In addition, the Council included blocks 99 and 114 on the back side of Cape Cod, extending the prohibition of midwater gear in that area to approximately 20 miles from shore.

"It's hard to wrap your head around exactly what these changes will mean for Maine lobstermen. Eighty million pounds is a lot of fish to lose," commented McCarron. "We will certainly see acute bait shortages and significant increases in bait prices. Lobstermen are likely to lose fishing days due to lack of bait and will probably be on rations when there is bait.

MASSIVE CANADIAN BUYING OF LOBSTER KEEPING PRICES STEADY IN MAINE, DESPITE LOSS OF CHINA MARKET

By John Sackton, Seafoodnews.com, September 13. Reprinted with permission

When the China lobster tariffs of 25% went into effect on July 6, many feared an immediate reaction in Maine leading to lower prices. That has not happened. During the first six months of this year, Lobster exports to China from Maine were booming. Many feared that the sudden cut off of these exports would crash the market. During the January to July period, Maine shipped 3 million lbs of live lobster to China in 2016, 5.6 million in 2017, and nearly 12 million in 2018. To have such growth suddenly halt is like an airplane aborting a take off.

But the lobster market is much bigger than just China, and it appears that other fundamentals in the market such as strong demand for both live and tails, shortages of product, and average landings are all supporting current pricing. The chart below shows that the increase in Maine shipments to Canada that occurred this past July is actually normal. The July 2018 exports are similar to 2016, when there were no tariffs.

There is no question that the tariffs have put the Canadian side of the lobster industry in the catbird seat. Canadian shippers can allocate their product without restriction, and are now the first option for lobster buyers in both Asia and Europe.

But the largest market for Canadian lobsters continues to be the U.S. In this market, the story is that processor caution on packing meat and tails due to difficulties in the last two years is still the dominating trend. The problem the lobster processing industry faces is that packers have to produce both meat and tails, and if one product is in short supply, especially the high quality lobster used for shipping overseas. And Maine landings have begun to slow. So the upshot is that even though the China tariffs are important, other market factors are still controlling the lobster market, and the key is that strong demand in the U.S., and slowdowns in landings, is keeping prices stable.

Much has been made of the fact that U.S. exports to Canada jumped in July by huge amounts over the prior month. But, as our graphic shows, this is an historical pattern that was also seen in 2016 when there were no lobster tariffs. When processors are after product, more lobster goes from the U.S. to Canada. There is no guarantee that the Chinese tariffs will not have a price impact later in the year. The demand for lobster around the Chinese New Year has been a big driver of prices in recent years. But given that the Canadians have a range of market options, it is not surprising that some U.S. lobsters are being sold into markets where the country of origin is not at issue.

Prior to the Canadian and European Trade Agreement (CETA), much of lobster exported to Spain and Italy and France at Christmas was of Canadian origin, but was counted as U.S. exports. When tariffs are not involved, the industry has traditionally not been pressed too hard to distinguish the country of origin. Where the lobster was packed was sufficient.

The tariffs in China and the favorable treatment of Canadian lobster in Europe has changed this situation, but there is still plenty of room in the market for Canadian producers to supply their customers legitimately with American lobster.

Live Lobster Pricing 1 1/4 hard shell: Urner Barry

Live lobster U.S. wholesale prices have remained within their normal range. Adding to this picture is that prices have come down over 2017 in most areas of Canada. So it is once again attractive to produce lobster tails and meat, with packers feeling more confident that they can remain profitable.

Live markets this summer have remained strong as well. Pounds are depleted, and Canadian tubed lobsters are in short supply, especially the high quality lobster used for shipping overseas. And Maine landings have begun to slow. So the upshot is that even though the China tariffs are important, other market factors are still controlling the lobster market, and the key is that strong demand in the U.S., and slowdowns in landings, is keeping prices stable.
Casco Bay and Cutler. The number of deep-water juveniles was much greater on the cobble seafloor more than 250 feet below the water’s surface in the waters off Cutler. In September Wahle reported that he found young-of-the-year lobsters in this area, to offer a suitable nursery site and where researchers weren’t looking for them. The number of deep-water juveniles was much greater off Cutler than in Casco Bay.

Two seafood processing facilities are opening at the Buckstown Heritage Park, a 63-acre site in Buckport, just off Route 1 on Route 46, Pemaquid Mussel Farms of Damariscotta planned to open its mussel-bagging operation by the end of September. Greenhead Lobster of Stonington will break ground on a new lobster processing facility in October. Buckstown Heritage Park is already home to Water World Seafood, a crab, shrimp, lobster and clam processing plant, and Central Maine Cold Storage, which handles frozen seafood and blueberries. In addition, Whole Oceans still plans to build a $250 million salmon farm off Route 1 on Route 46. Pemaquid Park, a 63-acre site in Bucksport, just miles down the coast, will host the headquarters of Greenhead Lobster of Stonington.

Buckstown is booming with seafood businesses

In the NEWS

NEW DEEP-WATER LOBSTER NURSERY AREAS FOUND

Since 1989, scientists led by University of Maine professor Richard Wahle, who was recently appointed as the new director of the Lobster Institute, have looked annually for juvenile lobsters at 100 shallow-water test sites from Rhode Island to New Brunswick to monitor the health of this fishery. The number of young-of-the-year, as the tiny lobsters are called, found in the samples started to decline about a decade ago, puzzling scientists. Wahle wondered if larval lobsters were actually settling down in new places where the water had warmed enough to offer a suitable nursery site and where researchers weren’t looking for them. In September Wahle reported that he found young-of-the-year lobsters in cobble seafloor more than 250 feet below the water’s surface in the waters off Casco Bay and Cutler. The number of deep-water juveniles was much greater off Cutler than in Casco Bay.

BUCKSPORT IS BOOMING WITH SEAFOOD BUSINESSES

For the first time, inshore lobster fishermen in southwest Nova Scotia will carry fishery observers on board as they head out to sea later this fall. The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans wants to gauge how many species, particularly cod and cusk, are being inadvertently caught in lobster traps. By-catch monitoring will take place in Canada’s largest lobster fishery, from Halifax to the Bay of Fundy, known as Lobster Fishing Areas 33, 34 and 35.

LOBSTERMAN GETS 4 YEARS FOR MANSLAUGHTER

Christopher A. Hutchinson, 30, a Cushing, Maine, lobsterman charged with seaman’s manslaughter in the death of two crewmen nearly four years ago is expected to plead guilty next week and take responsibility for the deaths of his crew.

In exchange, the U.S. Attorney’s Office has agreed to recommend a sentence of 48 months in prison with credit for time he has served while awaiting trial. The prison sentence would be followed by three years of supervised release. The charges carried a potential sentence of 10 years in prison. Hutchinson’s 45-foot fiberglass boat, No Limits, capsized and sank in heavy seas on Nov. 1, 2014, while returning to port after hauling lobster traps for several hours. The two crewmen aboard — Tomas Hammond, 27, and Tyler Sawyer, 15 — were never found after the boat overturned. Hutchinson made it into a life raft and was rescued. The boat had been hauling in an area called Eleven Mile Ridge, despite National Weather Service warnings of dangerous weather and sea conditions. Hutchinson initially told officials that a heavy storm caused the at-sea incident, but later tests revealed traces of Oxycodone and marijuana in his blood.

DMR HONORS TWO EMPLOYEES

Maine DMR Commissioner Patrick Kelihier (center) honored Bryant Lewis as 2018 Employee of the Year (left) and Kohl Kanwit as 2018 Manager of the Year (right) during the Department’s recent annual meeting on Burnt Island. Lewis, who works as the DMR’s Growing Area Program Supervisor, received the Employee of the Year Award for his problem solving skills, work ethic, and ability to deal effectively with media. Kanwit, Director of the Department’s Public Health Bureau, was recognized for her exceptional professionalism and devotion to a high standard within the Bureau.

GULF OF MAINE EXPERIENCES MARINE HEAT WAVE

This summer a marine heat wave occurred in the Gulf of Maine. Sea surface temperatures across the Gulf hit a near-record high of 68.93°F. on August 8 during a month-long spate of hot weather. A marine heat wave occurs when the Gulf’s average temperatures are above the 90th percentile of temperatures for a 37-year period (since 1981). The temperature data were drawn from NOAA satellite images, and covered an area of 80,447 square miles down as far as a meter below the surface. In some parts of the Gulf during August, sea surface temperatures were nearly 11 degrees warmer than normal.

This summer’s marine heat wave officially started on July 20. But Gulf of Maine Research Institute researchers noted that all but 40 days during 2018 saw average sea surface temperatures greater than the 90th percentile. Ten daily temperature records were tied this summer; 18 records for warmth were set during the winter months.

Part of the problem this year was a large mass of remarkably warm water that settled in April in the Northeast Channel area between Cape Cod and Nova Scotia. Canadian scientists reported deep water temperatures reaching 57.2°F., much higher than the typical 46.4°F.

DMR photo.

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October 3
MLA Director’s Meeting. Nautilus restaurant, Belfast. FMI: 967-4555.

October 4
Seafood Industry Gubernatorial Forum, 5-7 p.m., Strand Theatre, Rockland. Hosted by the MLA, the MLDA, the Maine Coast Fishermen’s Association, MLU, Alewive Harvesters of Maine, and the Maine Aquaculture Association. Free.

October 9-12
Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team meeting, Providence, RI. FMI: www.nefmc.org/calendar/oct-9-12-2018-atlantic-large-whale-take-reduction-team-meeting.

October 10
Ram Truck Night & The Night of Pink, 5 – 8 p.m., fundraiser for American Cancer Society, Newcastle Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep. FMI: 563-8138 or Facebook.

October 13
Maine Lobster Boat Racing Association annual meeting, 5-7 p.m., Robinson’s Wharf, Southport.

October 21-25
ASMF fall meeting, the Roosevelt Hotel, New York City. FMI: www.asmfc.org.

UPCOMING

November 6
Ropeless Fishing Consortium Meeting, New Bedford, MA.

November 8
North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium Annual Meeting, New Bedford, MA.

November 13
MLA Director’s Meeting, Darby’s restaurant, Belfast. FMI: 967-4555.

November 15-16
ASMF Northern Shrimp Advisory Panel and Section meetings.

Legal Hauling Times for the Maine Lobster Fishery

The following information pertains to both Commercial and Non-Commercial State Licensed Lobster Harvester in both State and Federal waters.

It is unlawful to raise or haul any lobster trap;
SUMMER: During the period 1/2 hour after sunset until 1/2 hour before sunrise from June 1st to September 30th, both days inclusive, and during the period 1/2 hour after sunset until 4 a.m. from October 1st to October 31st, both days inclusive;
WEEKENDS: During the period from 4 p.m., EDST, Saturday to 1/2 hour before sunrise the following Monday morning from June 1st to August 31st, both days inclusive.

It is legal to haul lobster traps at any time from New 1st to May 31st; it is also legal to set lobster traps at any time throughout the year.

Legal hauling times statewide as shown on the hull are computed from the times of sunrise and sunset for Aroostook as established by the National Aeronautic Office of the U.S. Naval Observatory and are shown in EDST.

*It is lawful to raise or haul traps during this period if a hurricane warning issued by NWS is in effect for the coastal waters of the State.
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