

# Southeastern Fisheries Association, Inc.

*Proudly serving the Commercial Fishing Industry for over 50 years!*



## Hotlines Online Edition



July 2004

### 52nd ANNUAL MEETING SUCCESSFUL

The Sarasota Hyatt served as a beautiful venue for SFA's 52<sup>nd</sup> annual meeting. Over 100 members and guests attended the 2 day event and came away full of new and timely information. Darrell Glover of Beaver Street Fisheries said,



*"This was one of the best meetings I have ever attended."* Similar accolades came from members of all sectors of the seafood industry. The new format, allowing each member to have one on one-guided discussions with regulators, law enforcement officers and federal

This newsletter is published by Southeastern Fisheries Association. Please pass it along and encourage others to be added to our mailing list.

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SFA is a non-profit association founded in 1952, charged with maintaining a viable seafood industry in the Southeast.

Robert P. Jones, Editor

officials, was well received. The same format will be used for next years' meeting.

Bob Jones on behalf of SFA installed Bob Gill, *Shrimp Landings* of Crystal River, at his home. President Gill had a bicycle accident just prior to the convention and was unable to be present for the event during the SFA Awards Luncheon. President Gill has promised an aggressive membership recruitment campaign starting in July and concluding at next years meeting with substantial prizes. Tom Hill, *Key Largo Fisheries* is VP & President-elect.

SFA presented awards to the following for their service to the seafood industry:

H.HEBER BELL INTEGRITY AWARD—**Darrell Glover**, Beaver Street Fisheries;

GENE RAFFIELD HUMANITARIAN AWARD—**Paul Barnett**, Paul Barnett Seafood;

RALPH AYLESWORTH GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR AWARD—**Dr. Chuck Adams**, U of F Economist;

DAVE HARRINGTON APPRECIATION AWARD—**Dr. Virginia Vail**, Florida Fish & Wildlife;

SFA MEMBER OF THE YEAR—**Gary Graves**, Keys Fisheries Inc.

SPECIAL SFA RECOGNITION—**Eva Berman**, E & R International Seafood

SFA sends special thanks to the Florida

Fish & Wildlife Commission, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and Dr. Roy Crabtree, NMFS Regional Director for making this convention a success through their participation.

Bobby Bell won the 11th Annual B.J. Putnam Golf Tournament with a score well below par. Grant Erickson won the trophy for the low gross score.

Winners in the drawing were: 1<sup>st</sup> place prize - *Cape Canaveral Seafood*, 2nd place prize - George Gala of *Trico Shrimp* and 3<sup>rd</sup> place prize - Rob Smith of *A&B Chemical Corporation*. We will be doing this again so be ready to participate when you get your tickets. Thanks to all those in the seafood industry who support SFA.

### COMMERCIAL GROUPE FISHING IN GULF OF MEXICO TO CLOSE

Under the US Secretary of Commerce's Amendment 1 to the **Gulf Reef Fish Management Plan**, deep water grouper harvest (mostly yellow-edge) will close when the harvests reaches 1.02 million pounds and the red grouper fishery will close when it reaches 5.31 million pounds or when total grouper landings reach 8.8 million pounds. Indications are the 1.02 million pounds have been reached for deepwater and that part of the fishery will close on July 15, 2004,

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sending more effort on the shallow water grouper, which in turn could force a closed season in October, if the quota is reached.

The organized associations related to the grouper fishing industry are very disappointed neither the Gulf Council nor the Secretary of Commerce addressed latent reef fish permits and endorsements for those vessels historically fishing for grouper.

There is a proposal to establish a 5,500-pound trip limit on all vessels fishing for grouper, but this trip limit would only hit the longliners who already are banned from fishing inside 20 fathoms. Many vessels never catch 5,500 pounds a trip and probably never will because they do not stay out long enough or carry a crew large enough, so imposing a 5,500-pound trip limit would mean nothing to these vessels. Trip limits can lead to a "Derby Style" fishery like red snapper and neither the resource nor the fishing industry wins. If trip limits are the only way to keep the fishery open year round, then they should be tiered and based on trip ticket information for each boat's catch. The law is not set up to "hammer"

only one segment of the fishery. All segments must be "hammered" equitably. Whether or not any legal efforts will be initiated remains to be seen. The new Secretarial grouper regulations will go into effect on July 15, 2004. There is nothing else to be done for this year's fishing season, so hang on for the ride.

#### **ARE YOU UP TO DATE WITH YOUR HACCP PLAN?**

FDA and DACS are writing up more and more companies for not having an up to date HACCP Plan for histamine type fish. Under FDA regulations, you must have a Critical Control Point at receiving that includes random probes of the fish and a quantifiable Organoleptic procedure recorded.

Are you sure of what your responsibilities are regarding sushi? SFA can provide a refresher course to corporate members at a reduced fee in your own plant. Other member firms also can get a savings over the normal cost of a refresher lesson. Call SFA if you are interested in taking advantage of this opportunity for yourself and your employees.

#### **MAGNUSON REAUTHORIZATION BILL FILED FOR ENVIROS**

Members of Congress who are co-sponsors of the Fisheries Management Reform Act of 2004 Lois Capps (D - CA), Ed Case (D - HI), Sam Farr (D - CA), Raul Grijalva(D-AZ), Luis Gutierrez (D - IL), Michael Honda (D - CA), Jesse Jackson, Jr. (D - IL), Dennis Kucinich (D - OH), Barbara Lee (D - CA), Betty McCollum (D - MN), George Miller (D - CA), James Moran (D - VA), Nick Rahall (D - WV), Adam Schiff (D - CA), Chris Van Hollen (D - MD), Robert Wexler (D - FL).

Six California legislators dominate the co-sponsors so far as well as *Jesse Jackson Jr.* of Illinois, and *Robert Wexler* from Florida. This bill follows the recommendations of the PEW Trust and would remove all commercial fishing representatives as Council members. The co-sponsors may assume the Fishery Management Councils make the regulations. Actually, the members of the Councils only recommend regulations, which must be approved and implemented by the US Secretary of Commerce based on the law.

This version of the reauthorization bill is an attempt to further damage and even ban some commercial fishing in US waters. SFA hopes all Congressmen and Senators who care about the fishing resources will oppose this bill vigorously. Under the provisions of this bill, no commercial fisherman, processor or dealer nor any charterboat owner or captain can be appointed to the Councils because of their financial interest. Instead environmentalists and others would hold the Council seats and their own agenda would be put in place. This is legislation every person in the seafood industry should get involved with and fight. If you sit around and let somebody else do it for you, as is so often the case, you will lose.

#### **SFA THANKS IS 2004 ANNUAL MEETING SPONSORS**

**ADMIRALS**— COX'S WHOLESALE SEAFOOD INC.; KEYS FISHERIES INC.; RAFFIELD FISHERIES INC.; SAFE HARBOR SEAFOOD INC.

**CAPTAINS**— AYLESWORTH FAMILY; BEAVER STREET FISHERIES INC.; BOWDITCH INSURANCE INC.; ERICKSON & JENSEN SHRIMP PACKERS; LEAVINS SEAFOOD INC.; WATER STREET SEAFOOD INC.; MARINE UNDERWRITERS INC./SUNDERLAND MUTUAL

**COMMANDERS**— CAPE CANAVERAL SHRIMP COMPANY; GULF SHRIMP INC.; GUNN ALLEN FINANCIAL; HALF HITCH BAIT & TACKLE; PAUL BARNETT SEAFOODS; TRIAR SEAFOOD COMPANY; VERSAGGI SHRIMP COMPANY

**COMMODORES**— E & R INTERNATIONAL SEAFOOD; EASTERN SEABOARD PACKAGING INC.; KEY LARGO FISHERIES INC.; SHRIMP LANDING; SUPERIOR SEAFOOD INC.; VILLERS SEAFOOD INC.; WILLIAMS WHOLESALE SEAFOOD INC.; FLORIDA OFFSHORE, INC.

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## SFA SUPPORTS A 2-YEAR DELAY IN COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LEGISLATION

After meeting with representatives from Publix and Food Marketing Institute (FMI), SFA agreed to work with the seafood retailers and support a 2-year delay in the implementation of Country of Origin Legislation (COOL). This is not a change in SFA's policy of supporting COOL, but a change in strategy to help sell more domestically produced seafood in the immediate future.

The Food Marketing Institute members, including Publix, Winn-Dixie, Kroger's, Kash n Karry, Albertsons and the domestic seafood industry will create a Joint Industry Seafood Promotional Program, which would have two elements: a voluntary seafood labeling program and an aggressive seafood-marketing program for domestic seafood products. The implementation date would be January 1, 2005. Participating retailers (estimated 90% already signed on) will provide information to consumers about seafood consistent with all legal obligations, including those set forth in federal, state and local laws.

Under this voluntary program, retailers will provide information on the method of productions, that is, whether the seafood was farm-raised or wild caught. Additionally the retailers will disclose state or region, such as California or Gulf of Mexico, to their customers in such a way for them to know the seafood is a product of the USA. The labeling program will be significant and an independent third party will do an analysis of the labeling program to see that it meets all expectations.

Finally, the Food Marketing Institute members will work with US domestic

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seafood producers to develop and promote state and regional marketing efforts. SFA thinks working with FMI members will be in the best interest of the seafood industry. If it was not for the large volume of pink shrimp moving through retail channels developed over the years, the value of pink shrimp would diminish. Publix, for instance, has worked hard to develop Florida Pink Shrimp name recognition for their customers even though they pay more for pink shrimp than they would for Chinese pond raised shrimp. Publix and other Florida retailers also buy fish and shellfish, which would be part of their marketing efforts. In reality, if a 2-year delay is granted it will be only a delay of less than a year since there is no way the USDA can get final regulations in place and enforceable by September 30, 2004.

### MISREPRESENTATION OF SEAFOOD PRODUCTS

The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) has added a special spot on their home page discussing the misrepresentation of seafood products. It can be found at [www.fl-seafood.com/pdfs/MenuItemMisrepresentation&ProductSubstitution.pdf](http://www.fl-seafood.com/pdfs/MenuItemMisrepresentation&ProductSubstitution.pdf)

The Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation has sent out an

industry advisory also directed at seafood product misrepresentation at: [http://www.myflorida.com/dbpr/hr/advisories/docs/2004\\_01.pdf](http://www.myflorida.com/dbpr/hr/advisories/docs/2004_01.pdf)

This has become a major problem in Florida and throughout the southeast as more and more demand is created for domestic seafood products.

SFA recognizes imported fishery products make up the bulk of the US seafood market. Much of the imported product has been packed under high standards, is safe and tastes good. SFA just encourages hotels and restaurants to sell their fish under the correct name.

There have been times even at SFA meetings that the grouper ordered to be served were anything but grouper. The situation became so bad for SFA, specific language was inserted into the contract with the Hotel this year stating, if the domestic grouper was not served as ordered for the main dinner function, payment would be withheld. This contractual arrangement worked, because the grouper served to the attendees was delicious and the genuine product. SFA also asked for Gulf shrimp but didn't specify which Gulf, so maybe the tiny shrimp in the salad were from the Gulf of Tonkin.

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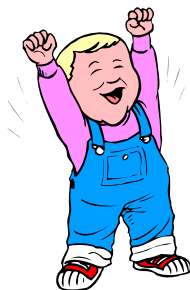
We invite anyone receiving this newsletter, who is not already a member of SFA to join us and become an activist for your business. We are here to respond to your business needs in the state capital and around the Southeast Region. We can help you only if we know you and correspond with you regularly.....We would look forward to serving you and your company!

**Welcome to SFA New Members:** SFA is proud to welcome the following new members into its growing family of successful seafood companies. We encourage each member to support one another for the overall good of maintaining an economic and cultural presence for commercial fishing in America as well as providing marine protein to the people.

**Associate Members:**

AmeriCold Logistics, Marc Malone,  
Tampa, FL

Victory Packaging, Barron Abrams,  
Milton, FL (rejoined)



**Retail Market/Restaurant:**

Ralph Andrew Net Shop, Ralph Andrews, Fort Myers Beach, FL Walters Seafood, Inc., Walter Lippke, Fort Myers, FL Seafood Center, Inc., Jeff Shahin, Lake Worth, FL

**Boat members:**

Captain James E. Roberts, Panama City, FL

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**SHRIMP ANTI-DUMPING PETITION**

As most everyone in America knows by now, the US Commerce Department ruled in favor of the Petition filed by the Southern Shrimp Alliance and imposed tariffs on many foreign companies. Some of the tariffs levied are significant but according to an examination of the findings, 2 Chinese companies that account for 43% of the Chinese shrimp sent to the United States received a 0%.

It will be worth watching to see if those companies that received the high tariffs in fact sell their shrimp to the companies with Zero tariff. This was the Preliminary Finding with the Final ruling to be given around November of 2004.

The Wally Stevens group has been trying to poison the well for the domestic shrimp industry by calling the tariffs a "food tax" and other things and taking a full page ad in USA TODAY newspaper saying a shrimp dinner will cost \$15 in-

stead of \$10 as a result of the tariff. *What a bunch of bull.*

On the other hand the Southern Shrimp Alliance showed how the price of shrimp has been dropping, but none of this savings was passed on to the consumer. Instead the cost of a shrimp dinner at restaurants like Red Lobster has risen substantially. Many newspapers have written editorials supporting the domestic shrimpers while others, such as the Orlando Sentinel does not support their efforts.

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