



SOUTHEASTERN FISHERIES ASSOCIATION

H O T L I N E S

M A Y / J U N E 2 0 0 7

PORT CANAVERAL SECURITY REQUIREMENTS UNJUST

As of this date, only Cape Canaveral Seafood is required to have fencing and security guards at their location in the port. Rumors are Atlantic Seafood will soon come under the fencing and security impacts, but a wide variety of other marine activities will be totally free to come and go under the current situation. It is unjust to single out one of two commercial fishing businesses and ignore everything else. It just isn't fair and it should not stand. All rock shrimp fishing vessels working out of the port have federal vessel monitoring systems so the National Marine Fisheries Service (US Dept of Commerce) knows where they are 24/7. These commercial fishing boats are not the problem at all but are the target for selective law enforcement. It seems the only way to balance this issue with fairness and accountability is for the legislature to amend the law to let FDLE concentrate on real security problems.

OCEANA PUSHING FOR RED SNAPPER PLAN

Press releases issued by Oceana concerning red snapper management have again been picked up by the news media a few days before the Council meets to discuss and vote on the issue. It is certainly a luxury for activist groups to have the money and political machine to manage the press so completely when it comes to marine resources. The editorial in the Tallahassee Democrat still gave the impression that Florida Shrimpers were having a large bycatch of red snapper and all of us in this controversy know this is *not the case*. On this issue Florida Shrimpers are not even involved with red snapper bycatch. Oceana and others have no problem in calling for draconian cuts or a litany of regulations for commercial and recreational fishermen because none of the people proposing the regulations are affected. *Same old same old*.

FLORIDA OFFICIALS INTEND TO STOP SEAFOOD FRAUD

Governor Charlie Crist, Agriculture Commissioner Charles Bronson, Attorney General Bill McCollum and Secretary Holly Benson, head of the Department of Business and Professional Regulation, have all



given their support to stop seafood product fraud in Florida. Secretary Benson recently raised the fine for 1st time restaurant offenders from \$250 to \$500 which might stop some of the abuse. However, many people in the industry feel the fines should be in the range of those the Attorney General can levy, which are in the \$2500 to \$5000 range. If the fines or penalties don't hurt, they will be considered by those who cheat as just the cost of doing business.

Florida, by far, leads the nation in protecting seafood consumers from "bait and switch" operations, substituting cheap fish for red snapper, grouper or other more valuable menu items. In many other states it's "let the buyer beware" with little attention paid to fish fraud.

SFA INVESTIGATING WAY TO RECOGNIZE HONEST BUSINESSES

Many businesses within the seafood industry do not take shortcuts and substitute panga for grouper. But so much is being substituted, it's hard to tell the legal folks from the illegal folks. There has to be a way we can capitalize on the Fresh from Florida program and we will be working in that direction.

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

If you want to be removed from the list, please contact us.

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

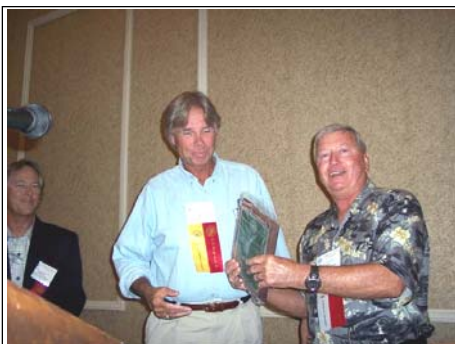
Robert P. Jones, Editor

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SFA 55th CONVENTION VERY SUCCESSFUL

The 55th Annual SFA meeting was well attended and the programs were all educational and informative. The Seafood Product Substitution Panel was a major highlight. Many state agencies were on the Panel as well as *Guy Pizzuti* of Publix, *Will Gergits* of Therion Intl, *David Earp*, Florida Restaurant Assn VP and *Max Gray*, director of DACS Weights and Measures Division. Three Aylesworth Scholarships were presented to outstanding college students by retiring Sea Grant Director *Jim Cato* and *Robert & Dawn Aylesworth*. Drs. *Joanne Brown* DACS and *Bill Tynan* DOH gave an in-depth report on ramifications of the bird flu and what might happen in Florida during a pandemic.



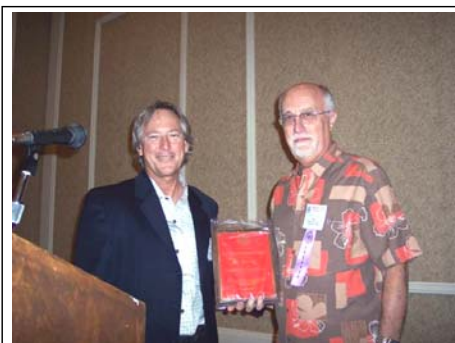
Peter Jarvis, **TRIAR SEAFOOD**, Hollywood, Florida was presented the *Heber Bell Award* for maintaining high ethics and honesty in his business practices over a long period of time.



Captain Rob Buckles, USCG received the *Capt. Dave Harrington Award* for his years of dedicated service on behalf of the United States Coast Guard.



Bob Gill, Shrimp Landings, Crystal River received the SFA Member of the Year Award for working tirelessly on behalf of the entire industry.



Dr. Jim Cato was presented the *Aylesworth Outstanding Employee Award* as a "Keeper of the Flame" during his tenure with the Florida Sea Grant Program.

The Gene Raffield Humanitarian Award was presented to *Wayne Swingle*, ED of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council since its creation in 1976 for always doing the right things for the right reasons. Mr. Swingle wasn't present to receive his Award presented by Eugene Raffield.

The Board of Directors, in other business, voted to increase the dues for the first time in a dozen years and asked for a voluntary assessment from all the members to bolster the association's finances. Increased dues will take effect on July 1 as well as increased charges for HACCP training. All members are urged to respond favorable to the dues increase and voluntary assessment.

The 50/50 drawing from the voluntary contributions received went to

the following. 3rd Place, John Williams, 2nd Place, Gib Migliano and 1st Place Tom Hill. Congratulations to the lucky winners!

FDA TO ISSUE UPDATED HAZARDS GUIDE

The Food and Drug Administration will be issuing an updated Hazards Guide to take the place of the current one used since the creation of their HACCP Program for seafood. Some of the changes will be subtle and others will be much more substantive. As soon as the guide is available and it is determined which requirements have changed, SFA will be offering classes on the updates and provide assistance to amending a company's HACCP program including development of any new records.

CONGRESS PROVIDING SOME OVERVIEW OF FDA

Poisons found in peanut butter, fluoroquinolones in seafood and melamine in feed, has prompted Congress to hold a few hearings and appropriate some new money for FDA to address the problems raised. Some news reports indicated that FDA lacked the power to close down the ConAgra plant in Syl-vester, Georgia after the peanut butter problem and was even having a hard time getting the company to respond to the agency in a timely manner. If this had happened in the seafood world shipments would have been stopped and businesses could have been closed had the products been declared adulterated. Evidently from what the media reports, there is a difference in how seafood is regulated and how peanut butter is regulated.

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DOES NMFS PLAN TO ALLOW CONTINUED FISHING IN THE GULF?

From the perspective of the commercial fishing industry and many in the recreational industry, the National Marine Fisheries Service is trying to close as much fishing as possible in the southeastern part of the United States. The agency keeps all participants in a crisis mode which many feel makes it easier to put regulations in place that become stricter over time. NMFS current plans call for major cuts in the red snapper fishery and very mysteriously, new information was gathered



just in time for a Council meeting to show even though the shrimp industry is less than 50% of what it was, NMFS officials are calling for a further 74% reduction. It could be their goal to have zero bycatch which others might like as well because the shrimp industry would be gone. The latest ploy seems to see if the recent gag grouper stock assessment can be used as the catalyst to stop all red grouper fishing as well. NMFS is becoming an equal opportunity employer because they would shut recreational fishing down as well. *Why fight the battle for Marine Protected Areas when they can stop fish harvesting*

Southeastern Fisheries Association will customize your company's HACCP Plan!

FDA trained consultant with over 40 years experience in all levels of the seafood industry.

Call today:
850/224-3180
 or fax an inquiry to
850/222-FOOD



for food or fun? Before the Magnuson Act was passed in 1976, we had robust fisheries throughout the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic but after about a decade of controlling the people who fish; all fisheries went to “hell in a hand basket” from their management perspective. The time is fast approaching for commercial and recreational industries to stop trying to cut each other apart and join forces to have Congress do an in depth overview of fisheries management and hold public hearings throughout the area. These Congressional Hearings should not be “managed” to such a degree that only a selected number of pre-approved people are allowed to testify before their elected members of Congress. All commercial and recreational interest groups had better join forces before the “charitable trust juggernaut” stamps out all use of the oceans except possibly for oil and mineral explorations.

IS FDA PREPARING TO WORK WITH THE PUBLIC?

Word on the street and an article in SeafoodNews.com indicates that because of such heavy criticism by Congress, FDA is going to establish a panel of experts in hopes of doing a better job of communicating with the public over health and safety issues concerning food. The industry doesn't fault FDA for lack of inspections because if federal or state legislatures don't give food inspection agencies enough funds to properly inspect the food supply from foreign countries, the agencies can't be held totally responsible.

Many businesses don't like inspections of any kind but if improvement isn't made soon the public will lose even more confidence in the ability of the government to guarantee safe food. Voluntary self-inspections by businesses providing food for consumption needs to go

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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 Membership

- ◆ Monroe County Commercial Fishermen (rejoin)

Restaurant/Retail Membership

- ◆ Hull's Seafood Market, *James G. Hull, Jr.*, Ormond Beach, FL

- ◆ The Island Fish Company, *Bobby K. Kuchinski*, General Manager, Marathon, FL
- ◆ ITC Japanese Food Distributors, *Yuki Ishizuka*, General Manager, Medley, FL

Boat Membership

- ◆ m/v Denise Ann, *James G. Hull, Jr.*, Ormond Beach, FL

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the way of the horse and carriage. We are now globalized and our food comes from thousands of places all over the world. We must

have secure sources and the seafood must be kept safe from the water to the waiter.



Southeastern Fisheries Association, Inc.
Serving the Commercial Fishing Industry for over 50 years



Think Food Safety

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