



SOUTHEASTERN FISHERIES ASSOCIATION

H O T L I N E S

JUNE - JULY 2008

SFA 56th ANNUAL MEETING A GREAT SUCCESS

Every attendee enjoyed the Hilton Historic Bayfront Hotel in St. Augustine, site of the annual meeting. Attendance at the General Session was better than in past years and the Board of Directors Meeting was open and informative. The Board passed a Resolution concerning the fuel crisis and agreed to support, in principle, needed changes in the US Food and Drug Administration as proposed by the Southern Shrimp Alliance.

A dues increase of 5% per year was approved to keep up with inflation. SFA ended in the black and increased the number of corporate members, even in a slower economy. **Sherri McCoy** was nominated for Vice President, **Jim Clary** for Secretary and **Grant Erickson** for Treasurer and all were elected by acclamation at the General Session. Next year's meeting is tentatively scheduled for the Keys area, if suitable hotel arrangements can be negotiated. The members seem to prefer St.

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

RAFFIELD INSTALLED AS PRESIDENT

Eugene Raffield was installed as President of SFA by outgoing President Robert Aylesworth. It was several decades ago when Ralph Aylesworth handed Gene Raffield the gavel and Robert displayed a photo of the event to all in attendance. Raffield said he would devote time and effort in building SFA, for it truly is the premier association dedicated to the broad interests of the seafood industry.



Augustine and the Keys as the annual meeting destination.

SFA AWARDS PRESENTED



Kathi Davis, McRoberts Seafood Sales, received the Raffield Humanitarian Award for efforts on behalf

of the fishing industry. **Joanne McNeely DACS**, received the Aylesworth Award for government employee of the year for the work of the Bureau of Seafood and Aquaculture. **Gerald and Dee Pack, Safe Harbor Seafood**, received the David

Harrington Award for fighting so hard for fishermen on the flounder issue. **Darrell Poli, Marine Supply and Oil Company**, received the H. Heber Bell award for maintaining highly ethical business practices for decades. **Sherri McCoy, Cape Canaveral Shrimp Co.**, received the Member of the Year award for all her efforts on many industry issues last year. Congratulations to all the winners and thanks for all you do to keep SFA viable.

The lucky winners in the 50/50 contest were 3rd Place-**Robert Aylesworth**, 2nd Place-**Raffield Fisheries** and 1st Place-**Sonny Stokes**. Thanks to everyone who participated in this once a year event. We will make it bigger next year.

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THANK YOU

THANKS TO OUR MEETING SPONSORS

We just couldn't be as effective if we didn't receive the support of members who sponsor events at the annual meeting. We recognize them for their generosity in this issue and encourage everyone to have their name on the list next year.

UNDERWRITERS: *The Aylesworth Family, Dixie Crossroads Inc., Keys Fisheries Inc, Marine Supply & Oil, Marine Underwriters/Sunderland Marine Mutual, Raffield Fisheries, Safe harbor Seafood and Triar Seafood.* **GOLD SPONSORS:** *Beaver Street Fisheries, Robert Bell, Cox Wholesale Seafood Inc., Key Largo Fisheries and Triar Seafood.* **SILVER SPONSORS:** *Cape Canaveral Seafood, Julie Gibson Services, Lakeland Seafood Inc., Shrimp Landings, Mc Roberts Sales Inc., Stokes Fish Company and Southern Shrimp Alliance.* **FRIENDS OF THE INDUSTRY DONORS:** *Florida Offshore Inc., Half-Hitch Tackle, Versaggi Shrimp and Williams Wholesale Seafood*

SOUTH ATLANTIC SNAPPER GROUPEL PLAN AP MEMBERS RESIGN

Five members of the SAFMC Snapper/Grouper Advisory Panel resigned at the most recent meeting of the Council in Orlando. Both commercial and recreational members called it quits with several indicating the council was "wholly biased toward the more radical recreational sector". One of the AP members said, "I got on here when this was the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council. It is now the Coastal

Conservation Management Club." Executive Director Bob Mahood stated, "*Only one of the five AP members has spoken to me. I suspect all five (3 commercial and 2 recreational) are frustrated and upset about the reductions in fishing mortality.*" He added, "*I don't quite understand the quote indicating the Council was 'wholly biased toward the more radical recreational sector'. The impacts of the reductions in harvest were equally spread between the recreational and commercial sectors; and with the Council prohibiting the sale of bag limit caught fish, many in the recreational community think the Council is biased in favor of the commercial fishery. Also, why would two recreational AP members resign if this quote (biased toward recreational fishing) was true?*"

SIGNIFICANT FISHERIES GATHERING IN WASHINGTON

Bob Spaeth, Southern Offshore Fishermen's Assn., **Dennis O'Hern**, Fishing Rights Alliance, **Jim Donofrio**, Recreational Fishing Alliance, and **Bob Zales**, Conservation Cooperative of Gulf Fishermen and National Assn of Charterboat Owners, and several individuals in the seafood industry, met in Washington DC on the 18th of June and worked the halls of Congress asking for help in bringing sanity back to the fish management process.

This recreational and commercial fishing coalition is pushing for flexibility in the Magnuson Act to avoid draconian closures for every fisherman in certain fisheries by 2010. What Congress is allowing to happen to the domestic fishing industry is asinine. There is no sane reason whatsoever to shut down fisheries based on the flawed models being used, especially when it comes to recreational catch and landings. Current NOAA policy seems hell-bent on rationalizing as many fishing vessels off the water as possible.

The purpose of this coalition is to establish areas where all sides can agree and work in those areas. There is room to disagree without being disagreeable, but that practiced skill must be honed and will take commitment on the part of all participants. This is a non-partisan group who will accept help from either party and oppose either party based on the issue and not the party affiliation. We need more of this and less enmity toward each other. SFA wishes the coalition success and supports its goals to the fullest.

FUEL...FUEL...FUEL...FUEL

The cost of diesel fuel for fishing vessels is the constant issue of the day. Up to 80% of shrimp fleets are tied up at different ports and every water related activity is suffering because of the sky-rocketing price of diesel fuel. The fuel crisis has shoved the war in Iraq off the radar screen and some wonder if that is happenstance or otherwise. It doesn't really matter because every person in America is suffering and the majority of citizens believe the speculators are the culprits for the biggest increases.



At least at this time, Congress is talking about the speculators and nine bills have been filed, but lobbyists for the oil companies will make their presence felt and only a miracle will change the status quo.

SFA PASSES RESOLUTION AGAINST FUEL PRICES

The Board of Directors unanimously passed a resolution to Congress demanding that they address and reduce

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the cost of fuel so the fishing industry can survive. The Resolution has also been edited and passed by the Small County Coalition which represents 37 Florida rural counties; the Small School District Council Consortium which represents 36 rural school districts and the statewide organizations are also considering adoption. The resolution has been widely distributed and if enough grass roots effort can be shown to Congress, we might get the issue on the front burner..

BOXER-NELSON BILL ON EPA PERMITS

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Vessel General Permit (VGP) to cover discharges incidental to the normal operation of all commercial vessels and of recreational vessels greater than or equal to 79 feet in length and an NPDES Recreational General Permit (RGP) to cover discharges incidental to the normal operation of recreational vessels less than 79 feet in length. Public meetings will be held in Washington, DC (June 19); Portland, Oregon (June 24); and Chicago (June 26). A public webcast will be held on July 2. A public hearing will be held in Washington, DC on July 21. Written comments on this proposal should be submitted by August 1. 73 Fed. Reg. 34296 (June 17, 2008).

This issue came about because environmentalists in California sued EPA over the discharge of water from the ballast tanks of large ocean going vessels. When the federal judge ruled, all exemptions for commercial and recreational fishing vessels were tossed aside. Senator Boxer of California and Sena-

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tor Nelson of Florida filed a bill passed out of Senator Boxer's committee only exempting the recreational fishing vessels but making it mandatory for all commercial and charter boats to apply to the EPA for a permit allowing rain and wash water to be discharged from the vessel. This is a perfect example of the "law of unintended consequences". The problem is with giant vessels dumping ballast water so now every sport and commercial boat will need to get an EPA permit. Absolutely ludicrous and a prime example of what is happening to rule making within government.

The EPA has written some proposed rules that would exempt all recreational boats and most commercial boats less than 79 feet in length but the fines still stand at \$32,000 for first offense if EPA wanted to pursue it.

NEW HEALTH CARE BILL INTRODUCED!

Fishermen now have the opportunity of making a national fishermen's healthcare program a reality, but we need every fishing organization and

every fishermen in the nation to call Congress and support our bipartisan legislation filed in both the Senate and House. Action by fishermen is now what it will take for this effort to succeed.

A full ACTION ALERT is posted on the Fishermen's Partnership Health Plan website at www.fphp.org. It has all the information about the bill, including a summary and the full text of the legislation. There are also testimonials posted on the website from current Fishing Partnership Health Plan members.

If you support Health Care for Fishing Families, please call or visit the district offices of your senators and representatives to ask them to co-sponsor H.R. 5404 and S. 2630, "Commercial Fishing Industry Health Care Coverage Act of 2008".

Tell Congress that, "Healthcare coverage for fishing families is the #1 need shared by every fishing family in the entire nation."

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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.

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It is going to take a national team effort to pass this legislation and make a national fishermen's health-care program a reality. We can do it this year if we work together.

New Corporate Members:

- ◆ Wood's Fisheries, *Edward Wood*, Port St. Joe, FL
- ◆ Bionic Bait, *Patrick Lynch*, Pompano Beach

New Associate Members:

- ◆ Hubbards Marina, *Mark Hubbard*, Madeira Beach
- ◆ Fish On Bait, *Tim Monroe*, Jacksonville Beach

Label all seafood products properly to avoid a citation. **"TRUTH IN LABELING"** is right - **MISLABELING** is wrong. It is just that simple.

Get on board with a winner!!
JOIN SFA TODAY.
 Be a **giver** and not a taker.
 Put something back into your industry.



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



2008-2009

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