

# Southeastern Fisheries Association, Inc.

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



## Hotlines Online Edition



June 2003

### SFA's 51st ANNUAL MEETING A HIT



Cocoa Beach turned out to be a very good place for SFA to

hold its annual meeting. The Double-tree staff was very accommodating, the meeting rooms more than adequate and the food very good. The speakers all brought new and important information to those in attendance and Dr. **Martha Roberts** keynote speech at the Awards Luncheon was dynamic. Dr. Roberts is Deputy Commissioner for the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Five more Aylesworth scholarships were presented by the Aylesworth Foundation and Dr. **Bill Seamens** from the Florida Sea Grant program at U of F. **Bob Gill** of Crystal River was unanimously elected as President-elect. **Jim Clary** of Jacksonville was elected Secretary and **Paul Barnett** of Miami was elected Treasurer. **Bobby & Dawn Aylesworth** received the Member(s)

of the Year Award; **Bob Gill** received the Heber Bell Award, given for top quality seafood and high integrity in business practices. The Gene Raffield Humanitarian Award was presented to **Jim Clary** for his work in feeding the hungry and training the less fortunate. The David Harrington Award for leadership and integrity was presented to **Commander David Cinalli** of the USCG.

At the end of the meeting, everyone boarded the big bus for the short ride to THE DIXIE CROSSROADS RESTAURANT. WHAT A DINNER. Shrimp as big as an arm, boiled and fried, rock shrimp, corn fritters, mullet, salad and service fit for a king. **Rodney Thompson** and his family and staff KNOW how to cook seafood. Not a person in the group walked away hungry. Kudos to Rodney for his generosity in hosting all the annual meeting attendees at his great restaurant.

### SFA DISCUSSES POLICY ON THE USE OF PHOSPHATES

An informative seminar on the use/abuse of phosphate agents in seafood was held in Cocoa Beach on May 30, 2003. The discussion revolved more about the abuse of tripolyphosphate than the use of it to retain moisture. It is common knowledge within

the industry that some firms soak seafood for extended periods of time to gain as much as 15% weight. SFA's position is if this much water is added to a product then it must be labeled. There is no way a "dry" pack can compete with a "wet" pack. Some buyers are so knowledgeable that they ask for the dry pack but at the wet price. SFA will be revisiting this issue at the Board Meeting this winter. In the meantime, if you go to [www.southeasternfish.org](http://www.southeasternfish.org) you can read/study the preliminary recommendations the association has established. If you have any comments pro or con on this issue, please let the Tallahassee office know and your comments will be part of the record presented to the Board for their consideration.

### LONG AWAITED PEW REPORT WAS ABOUT AS EXPECTED

Pollution, development and overfishing were cited as major reasons the oceans of the world are going to hell in a hand basket. State and federal fishery managers were taken to task for not "protecting" the ocean in the manner that Pew wants them protected.

As is always the case, Pew detailed some of the abuses occurring in parts of the world, but neglected to tell any of the success stories in the United States. This is a tactic using half-truths

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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

## Part of the Education Process of the PUBLIC:

On your next order for business checks from your bank have printed just above the signature line **"Commercial Fishing makes this payment possible"**

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to smear and denigrate opponents. The report, as far as most people who have read it can determine, never uses the word recreational fishing. Here in Florida, recreational fishing takes the major share of all the food fish landed.

The Pew Trust is a billion dollar "charity" that has long been opposed to most commercial fishing. The funding for Pew comes from proceeds of the Sun Oil Company. The Commission releasing this report was chaired by Leon Panetta, former Chief of Staff for President Clinton. Members sitting on the Commission never heard the real story of commercial fishing in the southeastern part of the United States. It seems the Pew Report would like to have a single agency in charge of the oceans and appoint a Czar to decide who lives and who dies.

Bottom line is the United States has done a good job in protecting the fish resources in most of the waters under its jurisdiction. Our US industry has sacrificed production on highly migratory species while other nations refuse to reign in overfishing occurring in their waters. The Pew Report could have been written without holding any meetings or spending any charitable dollars by just going to the websites of several of the environmental groups where the same song could have been cut and pasted. The report boils down to stopping overfishing (commercial), stopping pollution (yea, right), stop-

ping coastal development (not in a hundred years) and establishing Marine Preserves throughout the United States inshore and offshore waters (don't bet on it). To read the report, go to [www.pewoceans.org](http://www.pewoceans.org).

### SHRIMP DISASTER RELIEF UPDATE

The FWC has submitted the grant proposal for distribution of the shrimp disaster funds to NOAA for approval.



The grant is now in the Washington DC office, so no word has been received when the funds will become available. Governor Bush has asked that the grant be expedited. His assistance is greatly appreciated. For more information on this grant call William Teehan of FWC at 850/487-0554.

### HACCP INSPECTION SYSTEM QUESTIONED

Wholesale Dealers and Processors in the Florida Keys are upset by the fact that of the 93 licensed wholesale seafood dealers in Monroe County, only 17 companies have been reviewed. Under a Freedom of Information request, the FDA sent a list of all the wholesale dealers they had inspected since December 2001. Dealers in other parts of Florida have the same questions the Keys businesses asked but have not asked FDA for information from their particular counties. The cost of the FOI for Monroe County was

\$280.80. Members in other parts of Florida who are interested in getting similar information under an FOI request should contact Bob Jones in Tallahassee for assistance.

### SEAFOOD STING SNAGS TWO DEALERS, A RESTAURANT AND TWELVE ANGLERS TO THE TUNE OF \$171,000 AND 330 DAYS OF SANCTIONS

The alleged violation occurred when Mastry's Bait and Tackle, Inc. of St. Petersburg bought reef fish harvested in federal waters from sport fishermen who had been on the headboat FV Florida Fisherman II. It is illegal to buy any reef fish that have been caught under a bag limit. Never buy fish from a recreational fisherman. Mastry's was assessed a civil penalty of \$105,000 and a 300 day permit sanction. The 12 anglers were fined \$1,500 for each count of illegally selling fish to Mastry's. Several fishermen had multiple-count penalties.

The restaurant involved, Matoi Sushi Inc., was issued a NOVA for \$7,500 for purchasing recreationally caught fish. All SFA members are urged to obey the law. In order to buy reef fish from a fisherman a dealer must have a federal reef fish dealers permit. The fisherman must have an SPL, Restricted Species and a reef fish permit. Without any of these licenses, the fish are illegal to be sold. The backdoor sale of sport caught fish to restaurants is rampant in the Tampa Bay/St. Petersburg area as well as most other parts of Florida.

### SFA SUPPORTS SOFA IN ESTABLISHING A SHALLOW WATER GROUPEL AND LONGLINE FISHING ENDORSEMENT

Efforts are underway to develop a grouper longline buyback program for

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the Gulf of Mexico. There is much interest in establishing a VOLUNTARY longline buyback program in order to reduce the number of vessels in the fishery. There is a Council control date established to determine who would be eligible to participate in the fishery after the vessel reduction occurs. However, there are so many latent reef fish permits in existence, the only way a buyback program would work is stop any reentry into the fishery after the buyback is concluded. SFA and SOFA are requesting the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council to develop an endorsement program so that a buyback program can commence.

**New Fine Schedules adopted by NMFS.**

Go to SFA's website: [www.southeasternfish.org](http://www.southeasternfish.org) to read the new schedule that combines the penalties for both commercial and recreational fishing violations.

**COUNTRY OF ORIGIN REGULATIONS WILL BECOME FINAL 09/30/04**

Every wholesale and retail dealer of seafood will be required to post the country of origin on all boxes and packaging as well as in front of the product in the display cases at retail. The only exemptions will be restaurants or venues that sell directly to the consumer. There is great opposition to this from businesses that don't want their customer to know where the product comes from.

There is also great support, particular

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

FDA trained consultant with over 39 years experience in all levels of the seafood industry.

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from domestic fishermen and dealers who have been trying to compete with cheaper and inferior products from all over the world.

The USDA has been holding hearings throughout the country and by and large the audiences were in support of country of origin labeling.

There will still be a major push by several Congressmen in Texas who don't want the cattle industry included in the regulations.

**AOL PROMOTES ANTI-FISHING AGENDA**

America Online, which is going to lose many accounts from fishermen, has highlighted the "sky if falling" work



done by Myers and Worm, two Canadian biologists who used old Japanese longline information to determine there are no more big fish in the ocean. The AOL story quotes that great anti-commercial fishing spokesman, Sylvia Earle, who is known not to eat anything with a

face. (According to an interview in the New York Times---now that's a pair) As always, half-truths are accepted by the general public with someone with a PhD follows their name. The general public has not found out yet that PhD's have personal agendas as well as the common folk.

For Sylvia Earle and Pew to complain that fisheries here in the southeast are not under strict management and that most fisheries are sustainable is ridiculous. Even a cursory examination of the fishery management plans and historical landings will give a much clearer picture of the real world. Not one of these anti-fishing spokesmen have ever recognized that Florida has a 3,000,000 acre shrimp preserve in the Tortugas that was created through the work of the commercial fishing industry. SFA will be leaving the AOL family as soon as arrangements can be made for a comparable server. Anyone in the fishing industry, commercial or recreational should consider dropping AOL if they can't put out a balanced report on fishing. AOL may be known for its "You've got mail" but they will soon be hearing, "You don't have my business anymore."

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.

**Full Corporate Member**

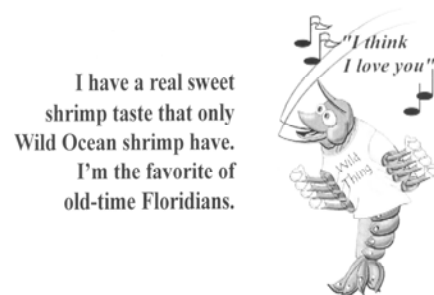
A & B Chemical Company, Inc., (Food Chemicals) Rob Smith, President, Highlands Ranch, CO

**Retail Market/Restaurant Member:**

D & R Stonecrabs, Duane Levingston, Chokoloskee, FL

*Dixie Crossroads, Inc.*

*Serving Cape Canaveral's Finest Seafood*  
 1475 Garden Street • Titusville, Florida 32796 • Telephone (321) 268-5000  
 Mailing Address: 860 Singleton Avenue, Titusville, Florida 32796



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**RICHARD NIELSEN DIES AT SEA**

Richard Nielsen was a good man. He was a great fisherman; father, brother, son and friend to all who knew him. Richie was pulled overboard by the line while working the golden crab traps from the deck of his boat. He was recognized as a "Highliner" by the Na-

tional Fishermen magazine a few years ago and gave an exceptional acceptance speech at the banquet. He will be missed. May his soul and the souls of all the faithfully departed, Rest in Peace.

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