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CAPE COD COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN'S ALLIANCE

Small Boats. Big Ideas.

*An e-magazine about our fishing community –
who we are, how we fish and our connection to the sea*

February 22, 2018

Fish Tales

A young man carving out a life on the sea

Scott MacAllister is in the throes of groundfish season. He has been working 16-hour days, barely sleeping during the hours he has before waking up in the middle of the night to set off from Chatham Fish Pier once again.



So he is exhausted, but running on adrenaline and what seems like a perennially great attitude, when he makes it to his first set of gillnets that have been soaking overnight. This set, like yesterday's, didn't have a ton of fish. There are three sets, 15 nets in each, but this is an inauspicious beginning; the first few 300-foot nets come up almost empty or with fish looking like grey pajamas, all floppy and soft. Hag fish, red and snakelike, slide across the deck – they have eaten all the meat.

Suddenly there is a burst of gunfire.

The story continues here..



On the Horizon

We have lots of exciting stuff happening.



Grab three friends and your bowling shoes for Rally the Alleys on March 23, co-hosted by Habitat for Humanity of Cape Cod and ALS Charitable Foundation. Come bowl at Ryan Family Amusements for the Fishermen's Alliance and help us raise money that directly benefits the fishing community of Cape Cod!

Click here for more details!



The Fishermen's Alliance thanks all of our sponsors, speakers, and Chef Dan Cote from the Chatham Bars Inn for making our *first Meet the Fleet of 2018* a great success. There was standing room only and the food was phenomenal. Stay tuned for the next Meet the Fleet on March 28, where we'll talk about shellfish!

On the Water

Ever wonder how a boat, or a fish, got its name? Want the word on what people are

Plumbing the Depths

The specter of oil drilling in waters off the Cape looms again

In December 1976, a tanker named the Argo Merchant broke up and sent 7.6 million gallons of crude oil spewing onto Nantucket Shoals in an area known locally as Fishing Rip Shoal.



That 40-year-old history, a more recent accident in Buzzard's Bay that belched oil along 90 miles of coastline, and the much more devastating disaster when the Deepwater Horizon drilling platform exploded in the Gulf of Mexico, have all been brought up lately as the Trump administration contemplates opening the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf off New England to drilling for oil and gas.

The vexing issue that came up in the 1970s, 1980s and even as recently as 2008, is back.

The story continues here.

Aids to Navigation

A fish out of water makes a difference in D.C.

Stephanie Sykes, 23, went to high school at Tabor Academy, graduated from the University of New Hampshire with honors and a bachelor of science. She grew up on the Cape, came back last year, lives with her mom, has a boyfriend and lots of friends, goes skiing when she can and hits the gym in her free time.



Sykes is also part of a rapidly disappearing demographic, and she knows it. That's why she was up at 3 a.m. during a snowstorm getting ready to board a flight to Washington, D.C.

The story continues here.

Charting the Past

Fields of ghostly nets

Truro resident Gwen Kazlouskas-Noyes has a long family history with both the Cold Storage plant and the twine fields. Her grandfather George Howard was an engineer at the plant and while he passed away when she was little, her

catching --- or how to cook it?



Great whites are not the only sharks plying our waters. There are basking sharks, blue sharks, brown sharks, and of course the small shark we call dogfish.

All have names that make sense, based on what the animals do, or how they look. And then there's the shark with a name from left field:

Porbeagle.



Photo courtesy of Janne B. Haugen

On the Shore

This community thrives in large part because of a constellation of non-profit organizations and engaged businesses.



A number of non-profits across the Cape and beyond are gathering supporters and heading up to Boston to decry government plans to use waters off New England for oil and gas production.

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is holding a *hearing* on Tuesday, Feb. 27 from 3 to 7 p.m. at the Sheraton in Boston.

Their hope is for a big show of opposition. They're looking

grandmother lived to be nearly 100 and used to take Kazlouskas-Noyes and her brother to the empty twine fields to pick blueberries.

“It was just a dirt road and a meadow then,” Kazlouskas-Noyes says. “But my grandmother would tell us about the fishing boats coming up alongside the tram that used to run past the pond area. They would load their fish totes onto the tram, which would then convey them to the cold storage freezer.”



The story continues here...

Over the Bar

Looking at the water, imagining the future

My work with our fleet, with government officials who regulate our fleet, with people who care about our fleet and want it to survive and thrive, can easily



get bogged down in details. Sometimes I end a day realizing that my conversations have been full of talk about acronym-filled rules and stock assessments, complicated quota equations or economic impacts of monitoring. And then I take a deep breath and remember what we're in this for, why it matters:

A future that includes a vital, independent fishing fleet, which of course requires and celebrates a vital, healthy ocean.

And so I'll swing by the waterfront on the way home, park where I can see the horizon, and imagine what that would look like:

I conjure up a diverse fleet fishing hard and well. I conjure up an ocean in which stocks have rebounded and habitat recovered. I conjure up sons and daughters of people I know (and don't know) stepping into the wheelhouse, handling the winch, sorting the catch.

Here's something I don't conjure up:

Oil and gas rigs.

I'm not old enough to remember the Argo Merchant oil spill off Nantucket in 1976, but some of the reporting in this month's e-mag reminds me how disastrous it was, and how much worse it could have been. I am old enough to remember the Exxon Valdez in Alaska, the much smaller Bouchard spill in Buzzards Bay, and of course the Deepwater Horizon blowout in the Gulf of Mexico. I know what such events

for some dramatic flair too; many will be wearing light blue shirts and other props suggesting the ocean life and livelihoods – life jackets, snorkle gear, wetsuits, etc.

350 Cape Cod & Mass Sierra Club will *run a bus* from the Cape.



Local efforts focused on coastal

restoration and watershed management were recently *awarded funding* from the Commonwealth, part of \$250,000 in grants to conservation districts for environmental projects across the state. \$42,000 will be coming to Cape Cod to “help establish and maintain an up-to-date, prioritized inventory of Cape-wide coastal resource restoration projects.”



We recently wrote about our Fish for

Families program in the Catch of the Week column, which we are happy to see in the Cape Cod Times. Fish for Families provides local seafood, caught by our fleet, to people who come to the *Family Pantry of Cape Cod*. For the January distribution, Greg Connors, captain of the F/V Constance Sea, was there to hand out and talk about mackerel.

The idea behind this five-year partnership is to help a growing number of year-round residents who are struggling to make it work as the cost of living dwarfs paychecks. Fish for Families also distributes fish through the Cape-wide Hunger Network. We believe in the great work the pantry does and if you want to support them, their big gala is coming up.

would mean for our community and coast. So I wonder why we should allow our public resource, fish and habitat, to be exposed to it.

Evolution didn't encourage us humans to weigh a tiny, tiny risk, something that might happen one in 10 million times, against catastrophic damage that would change our lives forever if it did happen. We analyze risk and benefit in more immediate, tangible ways – it is worth driving through that yellow traffic light? – so we tend to live day to day.

But push to shove, who really benefits from offshore exploration and development anyway? It's hard to avoid a conclusion that it's mainly oil companies who might provide some local jobs but generally hire from elsewhere, whose profits are big enough to justify spending billions for what scientists say equals only about a decade – if that – worth of oil for our country.

Speaking of science, it also now seems clear the technology used just to search for oil and gas deep within the seabed creates major damage to things that live on or near the bottom, from spawning groundfish to scallops. That's something we didn't know decades ago.

This is a bad bargain, one I thought we had put to rest.

I suppose it gets back to sitting at the pier, imagining a future. When members of a diverse, productive fishing fleet reach shore, I imagine them driving home past rooftops layered with solar panels, checking a battery in the basement rather than a furnace, maybe worrying about how an offshore wind farm might affect fishing rather than a multi-million-gallon oil spill.

People who know me know that I'm a pragmatist, I like to get things done and I don't mind slogging through meetings and bureaucracy to get there. But remembering why it matters, and where we want to be a generation from now, is what makes it all worthwhile. Offshore oil and gas has no place in my big picture.



(John Pappalardo is the CEO of the Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance)

On the Hook

We do a lot of reading, searching through the wide world of fisheries, and often find intriguing pieces to share. In the old days, you might call this your clipping service.



Precious few are getting into the fishing industry today, and former Chatham fisherman Jeff Pike – whose work these days on Capitol Hill includes a lot of advocacy for fishermen – *talks about how legislation can help.*



Some Cape fishermen were interviewed in *this* show that gets up close and personal with climate change. Hard to doubt it given what we're seeing first-hand.



The New England Fishery Management Council *voted* to cordon off deep sea coral beds to the east from most fishing.



“Rotten: Cod is Dead” features Carlos Rafael in 2012, but some people are more upset at the *way it portrays* fisheries management in New England.

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