



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*

November 28, 2019

Fish Tales

Born to fish

On both sides of his family, as far back as he can trace, Charlie Dodge descends from commercial fishermen.

Some roots go to Norway and England and then there is

Tristram Dodge, of Newfoundland, hired by the settlers of Block Island in 1616 to teach them how to fish so they wouldn't starve.

Charlie Dodge was born on that small island 350 years later. His parents tried to buck centuries of tradition and insisted that he would not become a fisherman.

"I was not allowed to go on my uncles' and my cousins' boats," Dodge recalled.

Fate, and Dodge himself, clearly had other plans.

The story continues here ...

Plumbing the Depths

What to do with 'Peter Pan' scallops?

They have a name:
Peter Pan
scallops.

And why?

Because like the famous character, they won't grow



On the Horizon

We have lots of exciting stuff happening.



We are excited to share some

phenomenal news, and we are sharing it on the perfect day: Thanksgiving!

Herring, the little fish with the huge impact on our ecosystem and economy, have finally received the protections they need, protections many of you joined with us to help create. We recently got the news that the regulations we all pushed so strongly for were approved by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Not only will the huge midwater trawls that hurt our inshore fishery, and starved our herring runs be pushed 12 miles off the coast – all the way from Canada to Connecticut – the Cape's backshore received special attention and the industrial vessels will have to stay outside a 20-mile buffer. And the news gets better, the amount of herring these boats will be allowed to catch will be based on herring's role in the ecosystem.

This day was a long time in coming, but, finally, after 15

up.

But these scallops don't live in Never Never Land. They reside in a place called Nantucket Lightship South, roughly 20 miles east and 60 miles south of the elbow of the Cape; take the Great South Channel (rather than the second star to the right), and straight on until morning.



Why won't they grow up?

Scientists and fishermen have more than one theory, but most agree on a few factors:

These scallops, all born as part of the 2012 year class, settled in water much deeper than typical scallop grounds, around 35 fathoms (210 feet) down, which means that they might not be getting as much nutrient to feed on. Plus, the set that year was phenomenal; packing many animals close together might be another reason why they are stunted.

The story continues here ...

Aids to Navigation

Bringing the Cape's healthcare leadership to the pier

Captain Sam Linnell arrived from offshore around 1 a.m., unloaded his catch, ran it up to a New Bedford buyer in a borrowed truck, sold the fish, motored back to the Cape, cleaned up – and met a contingent of people from Cape Cod Healthcare at the Chatham Fish Pier later that morning.



Time to spare.

The group included chief executive officer and president Mike Lauf, who leads the team that runs Cape Cod Hospital, Falmouth Hospital, Spaulding Rehab, and other crucial healthcare facilities across the Cape. They were on a community benefits tour to highlight programs the organization helps support through grants.

One of those programs is Fish for Families.

Working with Christine Menard, the executive director of the family pantry, the successful program does about five

years, this hard-won rule will dramatically benefit our environment, commercial fishermen, and the entire community.

It wouldn't have happened without your support. So on behalf of a little fish, our biggest thanks.



Since this is a hectic time of year for all, we

wanted to briefly let you know just some of what we have been up to in the last few weeks. Chief Executive Officer John Pappalardo has been busy with his work on the New England Fishery Management Council, including discussions about scallop, skate and groundfish; Research Coordinator George Maynard and Outreach Coordinator Ray Kane were at meetings in Woods Hole trying to make sure the fishing industries views were heard; Philanthropic Officer Jen Bryant was at the annual Philanthropy Day, a moment when we celebrate the importance of giving and how to do it better. Click [here](#) find out more.



This is the time of year when we

think about giving and the value of friendship. Why not join the **Fishermen Friends Society**? Monthly giving is a convenient way to support the Fishermen's Alliance throughout the year with automatic, recurring contributions. By making a monthly gift of any amount, you'll be joining The Fishermen Friends Society. Enjoy benefits like special invitations to exclusive events, outings and meetings, receiving the inside scoop with donor newsletters, recognition in our annual report, and more. Start your contribution today with \$10 - \$50 a month, no gift is too

distributions a year and provides free, high-quality protein in food pantries across the Cape. This year the Harwich pantry alone, largest of the system, is on track to serve 10,000 people with 105,000 bags of groceries. Fish for Families distributed almost 9,000 pounds of fish in 2019, which translates into more than 20,000 meals.

Story continues here ...

Charting the Past

Pleasant Bay Chatham As I remember

Captain Fred Bennett, a Chatham stalwart, has seen a lot, done a lot, and caught a lot of fish. Now 82 years old, we asked him to take a look back and inform us as to what fishing life and times were like around here half a century ago. Here is his tale.



I was a flatlander. No one was going to tell a flatlander what to do, so I went out to try and figure it out on my own.

It was just coming on dark and I was coming down along the shore and there was a little rip. It's still there. I put an eel over and I caught a striped bass and it was a big one. I caught 12 or 13 nice fish a night and did that for two solid weeks.

Finally I got in with the crowd. They said, "I guess he can fish. Maybe we will talk to him."

The story continues here ...

A Day in Photos

Stage Harbor at work

Some people do spring cleaning, fishermen tend to do a haulout in the winter when they are a bit less busy. Fishing vessels work just as hard as their



captains and after a few busy seasons they need to be cleaned up and fixed so they perform better. Since the Chatham Bar is dangerous in every season, but more so in the winter months, many fishermen move their boats to Saquatucket Harbor in Harwich. Greg Connors, captain of the Constance Sea, took the opportunity while he changes harbors to spruce up his boat.

Christine Walsh Sanders documents the efforts of Connors and his crew in these images.

small.



Everyone knows what tomorrow is!

Update your "*fishy swag*" and *shop* to support. Visit our merchandise online store to place your order today and receive it in the mail within a week. And you don't have to brave the Black Friday crowds. Bonus.

On the Water

Ever wonder how a boat, or a fish, got its name? Want the word on what people are catching --- or how to cook it?



One reason why the scallop fishery is one of the strongest and most profitable in the world is that management and harvest decisions are driven by a lot of science, much of it funded by the industry itself. For example, this *video* was recorded on a research trip by VIMS, the Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences, to sample the area known as Nantucket Lightship South on George's Bank. What you'll see coming up in a dredge similar to what commercial fishermen use is a whole lot of small scallops that bear the "Peter Pan" nickname.

On the Shore

This community thrives in large part because of a constellation of non-

[See the gallery here ...](#)

Over the Bar

From the Pacific, a great case study in recovery

By John Pappalardo

The year was 2000. The fisheries for the entire West Coast of the United States was declared a federal disaster.



More than 90 species were in the plan and eight were in big trouble. Some of the stocks sound familiar to us, like sole or whiting or ling cod. But a lot of them were fish we don't see; rockfish – canary, darkblotched, widow – Pacific Ocean perch. Many of them live in deep water and are slow to mature, so scientists and regulators were saying that the timeline for a recovery, no matter what we did or didn't do, could be as much as 100 years. They realized we had targeted and celebrated catching the very fish that did the most to keep stocks replenished, what they called the BOFFF, the Big Old Fat Female Fish, and so now the natural cycles of revival would not turn.

Ring a bell?

There are more similarities between East Coast and West Coast. Both areas have a mixed fishery, often catching more than one species per trip because life in the ocean doesn't exist in silos. That makes efforts to control what's caught and coming ashore even more difficult. And speaking of control, both coasts have the same basic management structure, a fisheries council that defines policy and sends those recommendations into the federal government to be implemented and enforced.

But here's where the comparison moves into differences:

The Pacific Fisheries Management Council came to the conclusion that if it was going to accept its legal mandate, which is that the fishery – a public resource after all, a public responsibility – must be rebuilt, then it had to become aggressive about doing that.

What did that mean?

Step one was that there needed to be a level playing field and accountability within the industry. Fishermen who were working by the rules, reporting what they caught, fishing clean, not hiding and discarding fish they couldn't sell, needed to be supported and given a fighting chance. Like it or not, that meant monitoring what was going on at sea, bringing on federal observers or cameras to document and enforce. And monitoring couldn't be haphazard. It needed to become part of the industry, part of doing business, 100 percent.

Meanwhile, when scientists did their work to assess stocks,

profit organizations and engaged businesses.



Our Chief Operating Officer Melissa

Sanderson joined an interesting, engaged group at the *National Electronic Monitoring Workshop* earlier this month in New Hampshire. We were early proponents of using cameras to help monitor and track fish coming aboard at sea, to better quantify the catch and reveal how much fish is discarded as well. The information gathered from EM will improve science and management decisions, create more accountability, support cleaner and more selective fishing practices, and make for healthier fishing businesses and communities.



One of our board members,

Eric Hesse, also on the board in the organization's early years, was just commended by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Hesse, of Barnstable, fishes for groundfish and tuna and has always valued science. He was thanked by Giovanni Giancesin, a cooperative research scientist who works at the Science Center in Woods Hole. Hesse captains trips for the center's longline survey, which collects data on fish that prefer rocky habitat not accessible to draggers using trawling nets in other surveys.



As we work to remove plastics from the ocean, with support from the Orleans Water Alliance, thanks to some people who are also waging that battle: The Center for Coastal

they partnered with industry itself. Fishermen ran the boats and gear, which built trust in the process. There was no credibility gap.

Before long gear modifications came into play. Fishermen took on new equipment that was more selective, more targeted. With monitoring in place, the incentives for that became obvious, and there was other encouragement too, financial support and better access to areas where cleaner fishing made sense.

The Pacific council also began to get serious about what we call ecosystem based management, thinking about the ocean as a whole rather than regulating stock by stock. This created a better framework and smarter allocations of resources and quotas. Areas that were spawning habitat closed, even if that meant shutting fishermen out of productive, crucial grounds.

There were hard times, pain and sacrifice. Some fishermen went out of business. The fleet got smaller. There were controls put on how much consolidation could take place, how much any one person or group could buy up the historic small-boat industry, but they didn't always work and there was a lot of bitterness. Industry-funded or other buyouts of fishing businesses offered support, but didn't replace the way of life for those who couldn't keep on.

Now fast forward, and here's the good news: From the Canadian border to southern California, the industry has stabilized, and rebuilt. That's not true everywhere, for everyone, but overall it is. The West Coast fishery is now acknowledged as one of the best and strongest in the world. And that's because stocks have come back much faster and better than people expected. Scientists thought it might take until 2084 to get back to full health, but now no species is being overfished, and the last to fully recover should be there by 2024. The management actually worked. Better accountability, better fishing practices and policies, accomplished the goal.

Here in New England, we haven't worked our way up and out of the trough, not yet. But we know how to do it, we can see proof that it can happen, and we're getting there.



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

Studies in Provincetown, with help from Nauset Disposal, has been involved in a program that proactively locates and collects "ghost" fishing gear from the ocean. Read more about the efforts [here](#).

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.



In fisheries we talk a lot about discards, mainly about how to avoid throwing fish overboard that were not being targeted. This *story* from across the pond looks at it a different way – how discarding feeds 3.45 million birds in the North Sea.



This *piece* from one of our partners, Seafood Harvesters, reminds us that although we all talk about how important it is to protect commercial fishermen, we sometimes forget that they face a lot of challenges no one really prepared for.



This *story* is closer to home, from WCAI. It touches on how aquaculture can be used for more than just filling our bellies, and what that means for New England.



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