



## Fleet meets lift the veil on fishing

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CHATHAM — Long-raker Mike Anderson has never had a job outside of the commercial fishing industry.

"I love it. It's what I believe in," said Anderson, 69, who moved to Chatham in 1968 after college.

Anderson's experience and passion for fishing were evident last week at "The Many Faces of Quahogs," part of the monthly series called "Meet the Fleet" presented by the Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen's Association on Main Street.

The association, known locally as "The Hook," aims to conserve marine resources through sustainable fishing and to educate the public about the Cape's fishing communities.

In early 2012, the association launched Meet the Fleet to connect the community with the local fishermen in a fun, educational way, said John Pappalardo, chief executive officer.

"It's sort of a win for the fishermen because it gives them a forum to talk about their lives," said Pappalardo, 41.

The focus of Meet the Fleet changes each month. For last week's meeting, Nancy Civetta, the association's communications director, reached out to two Chatham fishermen who are quahog experts.

"It's something of a lost art," Anderson told the audience of 60 in "The Barn," a cozy room in the Captain Nathan Harding House, the association's location since 2009.

Anderson was joined by Dave Likos, a commercial shellfisherman for 18 years, who presented an overview of quahogs and described the day-to-day activities of a "scratcher," a fisherman who uses different types of rakes — three of which were on display for the audience — to scrape the ground in search of quahogs.

"It's a tough way to make a living, but I enjoy it," said Likos, a Chatham resident who grew up in Milton but spent summers on Cape Cod as a child and stayed permanently after college.

Although Anderson said quahogs are "not as numerous" as they were when he started out as a fisherman, Chatham's propagation program has ensured the reproduction of shellfish in local waters for the past 40 years.

"Chatham raises over 2 million quahogs ever year," said Likos, 55, chairman of the shellfish advisory committee, which sets up regulations to help preserve fisheries.

"I'm glad to see propagation is preserving quahog fishing," said Likos. "As the coastline changes, the fishery changes."

The audience was enthralled as Anderson and Likos described the propagation process along with the processes of scratching and long raking, which involves using a 28-foot telescopic pole in waters as deep as 25 feet.

When Likos showed a slide of his biggest catch to date — a 6-inch, 2-pound quahog — the audience gasped.

"I threw it back in the next day because it had 30 growth rings," said Likos, meaning the quahog was 30 years old.

The audience applauded and cheered.

"These fishermen are like diamonds in the rough," said audience member Joanne Dray, 80, a Chatham resident for 23 years.

Fishermen weren't the only ones celebrating clams at the event. Steve Enos, 47, chef at Finely J.P.'s Restaurant and Bar in Wellfleet, showed the audience how to prepare clams casino, a broiled dish that tops clams on the half

shell with butter, peppers, bacon and bread crumbs.

"It's been a huge success," said Darren Saletta, 38, outreach coordinator for the fishermen's association, said of the monthly get-togethers.

"It's a great way to get the community involved."

## Meet the Fleet

The Meet the Fleet event is held at 5:30 p.m. on the last Tuesday of each month at the Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen's Association office at 1566 Main St. in Chatham. April's meeting will focus on conch and will feature fisherman Jamie Eldredge and others. Please RSVP by calling 508-945-2432, ext. 111, or by emailing [info@ccchfa.org](mailto:info@ccchfa.org). For more information, visit [www.ccchfa.org](http://www.ccchfa.org).

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