**November 2014 MVSA Newsletter**

**October Meeting**-President Scarpone introduced and welcomed new members including Jason Cray who has been away on military duty. “Wharf Rats” Sherry Mele and Roland Perreault were also welcomed as was Jesse Oliver who recently rejoined the MVSA after a long absence.

Treasurer Phil Horton reported that our current balance remains at about $6000 which is nearly identical to this time last year. We raised over $10,000 from the annual raffle and dues and expenses amounted to $10,000 which included the cost of the banquet and meetings plus the scholarship to MVRHS, and donations to the Rod and Gun Club, the MVRHS Science Fair and the Wounded Warriors saltwater Challenge. Phil noted that our scholarship donation was increased by $200 by the Beals from their 50/50 raffle win.

Don Scarpone announced that future meetings will be held at 7:00PM on the first Tuesday of each month. The meetings will continue to be held at the MV Rod & Gun Club and pizza will be served. Scarpone also announced that the annual banquet and awards ceremony will be held on Jan. 24 2015 at the Old Whaling Church in Edgartown. Kathi Pogoda put out a request for volunteers to help with the collection of raffle donations and there were some immediate volunteers but anyone interested in helping out or wishing to donate an item or items should contact Kathi- katspog@aol.com

Themes and ideas are needed for the remaining winter meetings. Anyone who is interested in giving a talk on fishing subjects (using specific plugs or gear, off-island fishing destinations, equipment issues, descriptions of secret fishing spots, etc.) should contact Don. Hawkeye and Kathi have offered to lead a discussion of pier fishing techniques for next months’ meeting. Some interest was expressed in having an equipment and tackle selling/buying/ swapping session at one of our meetings.

Once fishing picks up again in the spring, meetings/picnics will be back on the beach at locations to be announced. The one exception will be the July meeting. After breaking with tradition last year this meeting will once again be held at Bend in the Road beach in Edgartown to accommodate members who simply want to enjoy the camaraderie and good food. Scarpone would also like to have a “make your own plug” contest in June and asked for ideas for themes for the contests for our August and September picnics.

Club hats are still available for $15 but free to anyone recruiting a new member. President Scarpone has also received prices on MVSA windbreakers. The price is based on a blue insulated shell with the MVSA logo embroidered on the front left breast and M.V. Surfcasters and a striped bass embroidered on the back, similar to our club T-Shirts. . There is a minimum order of six and to date, Don has commitments for three. The price $170. Please contact Don at Don Scarpone 508-627-1269 or donaldscarpone@yahoo.com if you are interested in reserving one.

Scarpone also talked about changes to the MVSA In-House Tournament. Although efforts to increase overall participation appear to be succeeding, participation in the fly rod and boat divisions is not. In 2015 at least 4 total fish from each division must be weighed. We will look to discontinuing those awards if participation does not pick up. Also in 2015 a Top Rod award has been added. A special award will be given to the angler who accumulates the most monthly points for the entire year. Points will be awarded monthly in each category of fish. (i.e. 5 points for a first, 3 for a second, 1 for a third).

Pin winners for October were Ron Domurat for striped bass and bluefish, Ralph Peckham for bonito and Mary Ann Angelone for her Derby winning false albacore.

In the overall standings Ron still leads in the striped bass and bluefish category, Dave Nash leads in the bonito division and Mary Ann leads in the false albacore category.

The winners of the club sweatshirt drawing were Dave Nash and Mike Mullen and Lou Ferrucci and Jim Cornwell were the winners of the monthly Ron McKee lure drawing.

**Oops!**-In our 2014 Derby wrap-up, we inadvertently omitted Sarah Jackson daughter of long time member Jim Jackson. Sarah was a winner of a Junior Weekly prize for catching an 8.04 false albacore. Nicely done Sarah, sorry for the omission.

**Larry’s Octoberfish-**MVSA members did well in Larry’s Tackle Shop 22nd annual Octoberfish contest for hard core Island (and a few off island) anglers who refuse to give up the ghost when the Derby ends. Phil Horton was second in the Shore False Albacore division followed by Ralph Peckham who was third. Ralph was also third in the Shore Bonito Division. Ron Domurat was second in the Shore Bluefish Division followed by Don Scarpone in third. Ron was also third in the Shore Striped Bass Division.

**Fishing Report**-As of November 16 there were still some fish around for those willing to brave the cold and wind. Peter Johnson, Jack Livingston, Ralph Peckham, Hawkeye, Paul Schultz and a few other hard cores, have occasionally been scoring small bluefish and bass along the south shore and the Chappy breach. Before the big October Nor’easter Ralph weighed in a 19.90 lb. striper and on November 9th Versie Geary weighed in a personal best 20.8 lb. striped bass and leads the monthly pin contest.

**Beaches-**This time of year, every passing storm has an effect on our beaches but here’s the beach report as of November 17th. The Chappy beaches took a pretty good pounding during the recent Halloween nor’easter and the Trustee’s wisely shut much of them down until they started to show signs of rebuilding. As of 11/17 most of East Beach from Leland’s Point to the Jetties has been re-opened for OSV travel but remains” iffy” and vehicle drivers should exercise extreme caution.. The beach is tiered and the sand on the lower level is very soft. The upper level is limited to one lane of travel without much room to turn out or turn around. The key to driving on this entire stretch of beach is to reduce tire pressure to 15 PSI or less.

Wasque Point lost much of the sand it gained over the summer and has again been cut back to the bluff. It cannot be accessed by an OSV.

The beach from the Jettie’s north is open to the last turnout where vehicles must exit the beach and take the inside trail behind the lighthouse. Along that stretch the storm exposed the bones of an 1800 vintage shipwreck. The wreck has been marked off by the Trustee’s but should be approached with caution to avoid a possible tire puncture.

The area under the lighthouse to the Windmill House took a beating. It is lined with cobble and boulders and there is literally no sand along the entire stretch. It is currently closed to vehicle travel. The Gut is accessible on the inside trail.

Norton Point fared well and in many places has grown in width as it continues to migrate to the east. The opening at the eastern end between Norton Point and Chappy has shrunk to less than 25 yards at low tide and appears to be a little shallower.

**Striped Bass**-Thanks to all of you that took the time to send an e-mail or write a letter to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) in support of measures to slow the decline of striped bass stocks. On October 29, 2014, the ASMFC finally took some long overdue action on what most of us have known for years--that striped bass stocks are declining. Beginning with the start of the 2015 fishery, the ASMFC will institute measures along the entire striper coast to reduce both the recreational and commercial catch of striped bass by up to 25%. It is expected that most coastal states will implement a daily 1 fish @ 28” catch limit although it is possible to see states exercise an option called a “conservation equivalency” and enact stricter regulations or even 2 fish @ 32”. With the exception of Chesapeake Bay states which had already instituted a reduction, states with a commercial fishery will reduce their annual quotas by 25%. Uncaught commercial quotas cannot be transferred to other states.

Let’s hope it is not too late! In an November 3, 2014 e-mail to members, Brad Burns, President and Founder of the Striped Bass advocacy group Stripers Forever, summed it up this way. “Will the lower quotas work? And what will happen if they don’t? It is impossible to predict the future spawning success of striped bass.

Certainly the more big stripers that come in to spawn, the better the chances that a big year class will result. The new coastal size and bag limit is one fish at 28 inches, rather than two fish. Will that change really reduce pressure and mortality on big stripers? Not very much, I fear. Most fishermen don't catch two legal keepers anyway, and the new ruling will encourage the illegal practice of hi-grading – releasing smaller, dead keepers already in possession to keep a larger fish.

While we can’t say for sure what next year’s striped bass young-of-the-year number will be, we can look at the production that has already taken place to see just how many fish are in the biomass. It is the fish that are already born that we will have to work with for years to come.  Nothing can change that, which means we will not have generally improving fishing for striped bass for many years. The reportedly large 2011 year class is in the pipeline. Those fish are now 17 inches or so in size and should be filling every nook and cranny along the coastline as is normal for three year old stripers from a giant year class. But very few fish of this size have been reported by anglers up and down the coast; nor were those 2011 fish seen in abundance last year as 11-inch, two-year-old stripers. There is no denying that the number of small stripers available over the past 10 years is much smaller than it was in the previous decade. That means there will be many fewer big fish in the coast-wide striped bass population down the road than there are now.

So while the vote this week mandating regulatory changes for 2015 is a step in the right direction, we would be surprised if those changes will substantially improve the striped bass population, or even make any difference.”

*Here are excerpts from the ASMFC press release*.

October 31, 2014 703.842.0740

**ASMFC Atlantic Striped Bass Board Approves Addendum IV for Implementation in 2015**

**Mystic, CT –** The Commission’s Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board approved Addendum IV to Amendment 6 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. The Addendum establishes new fishing mortality (F) reference points, as recommended by the 2013 benchmark stock assessment. In order to reduce F to a level at or below the new target, coastal states will implement a 25% harvest reduction from 2013 levels. Chesapeake Bay states/jurisdictions will implement a 20.5% harvest reduction from 2012 levels since their fisheries were reduced by 14% in 2013 based on their management program. All states/jurisdictions will promulgate regulations prior to the start of their 2015 fisheries.

The Addendum responds to results of the 2013 Atlantic striped bass benchmark assessment indicating F in

2012 was above the new F target, and female spawning stock biomass (SSB) has been steadily declining

below the target level since 2006. This means even though the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not

occurring, ***SSB is approaching its overfished threshold and stock projections show SSB will likely fall below***

***the threshold in the coming years. In addition, a similar decline has been observed in total harvest***.

The Addendum includes changes to the coastal commercial quota and the coastal recreational fishery to

achieve reductions in 2015. Commercial quotas established in Amendment 6 will be reduced by 25% while

maintaining current size limits to minimize discard mortality. The Board also maintained no transfer of

unused commercial quotas as a conservation benefit to the resource. The coastal recreational fishery harvest

will be reduced by implementing a one fish bag limit while keeping a 28” size limit. Under Amendment 6,

states may use conservation equivalency to develop state-specific measures that are different than a one

fish bag limit and 28” size limit for their coastal fisheries but still achieve a 25% reduction in harvest.

The Chesapeake Bay states/jurisdictions will reduce their 2012 Bay commercial harvest level by 20.5%

and will submit conservation equivalency proposals to achieve a 20.5% reduction from the Bay recreational

fishery. The Technical Committee will continue to work on Chesapeake Bay specific reference points for

future management.

The Addendum will be implemented on January 1, 2015. The Technical Committee will review any

submitted conservation equivalency proposals by the states and the Board will review and consider

approval of those proposals at the Commission’s Winter Meeting in Alexandria, VA.

Addendum IV will be made available on the Commission’s website, www.asmfc.org, under *Breaking News*

by mid-November. For more information, please contact Mike Waine, Fishery Management Plan

Coordinator, at mwaine@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

**MVSA Calendar**

**December Meeting**-December 2, MV Rod & Gun Club! 7:00PM, Pizza

**January Meeting**-January 6, MV Rod & Gun Club, 7:00PM, Pizza

**Annual Awards Ceremony and Banquet**-January 24, 2015, 1:00PM