



## Martha's Vineyard Surfcasters Association January 2008 Newsletter

### 2008 Awards Banquet and Raffle

Thanks to our volunteer solicitors the raffle drive is in full swing for this year's banquet. Last year, the support and generosity of 150 local and off island merchants provided us with more than \$11,000 worth of donated merchandise that was raffled off or placed in the silent auction. Your support enabled us to collect more than \$5,500 from raffle ticket sales that allowed us to establish a \$1000 scholarship at the high school as well as continue support for programs like the Boys & Girls Club, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, The Red Stocking Fund and others. This year's raffle should be even better than last year's so be sure to mark January 26, 2008 on your calendars. For those members that are unable to attend this year's event, raffle tickets are included in this mailing and can be returned with your annual dues. If you would like to purchase additional tickets, please e-mail Chuck Hodgkinson at [cahodg@aol.com](mailto:cahodg@aol.com) with your mailing address and how many additional raffle books you would like to buy. *Checks can be made out to the MVSA and returns mailed to: MVSA, PO Box 3053, Edgartown, MA 02539.*

Here is how it works:

Schoolies: 3 Tickets for \$5.00; Each ticket entered in drawings for "Schoolie" sized prizes.

Keepers: 2 Tickets for \$5.00; Each ticket entered in drawings for "Keeper" sized prizes.

Lunkers: 2 Tickets for \$10.00; Each ticket entered in drawings for guess what size prizes.

*As in the past, we need "shuckers" to arrive early. We are also looking for our wonderful volunteer chefs to prepare appetizers and desserts.*

### Membership Dues

Your membership dues for 2008 are due upon receipt of this newsletter. Our membership fees remain unchanged from last year.

Family \$35  
Regular \$25  
Senior (Age 65 & Over) \$10  
Junior (16 & Under) \$10

*Please make your checks out to the MVSA and return to: PO Box 3053, Edgartown MA 02539.*

*(Note-if you joined the organization for the first time within the last three months, the fee submitted will cover your 2008 dues).*

## **Annual Election of Officers**

Our annual election of officers will take place at the Awards Ceremony and Banquet on Jan 26, 2008. A number of positions need to be filled as Paul Shultz and Ron Domurat are stepping down from leadership positions. In addition, Jeff Sayre who has served as president for the last five years is relinquishing his duties but will continue to serve as vice president if elected.

Charter member and good friend to all, Paul Schultz is stepping aside as vice president to allow more time to fish. In the past Paul has served as president and has been serving as vice president for the past few years. Paul also administers the In-House-Derby and will continue in that capacity. Ron Domurat is also stepping aside. Ron has served as treasurer and membership chairman since moving to the island in 2002. He has also served as banquet chairman the last few years and compiles the quarterly newsletter.

Janet Messineo has agreed to place her name in nomination for the president's position. Janet is a past president who served from 1999 to 2003. Also, Sue Geresy has volunteered to serve as treasurer and Will Geresy has assumed the role of membership chairman. Additional names for any position may be placed in nomination by contacting Jeff Sayre at 508-693-4841 or [jeff@flyfishingthevineyard.com](mailto:jeff@flyfishingthevineyard.com).

### **Proposed Slate of Officers.**

<b>Janet Messineo</b>	<b>President</b>
<b>Jeff Sayre</b>	<b>Vice President</b>
<b>Will Geresy</b>	<b>Vice President</b>
<b>Sue Geresy</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
<b>Bob Lane</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Paula Sullivan</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Phil Cronin</b>	<b>Program Chairman, Web-master</b>
<b>Will Geresy</b>	<b>Membership Chairman</b>
<b>Chuck Hodgkinson</b>	<b>Prizes</b>
<b>Dave Nash</b>	<b>Action Committee Chairman</b>

## **Once Again Surfcasters Excel in Derby**

In what was a highly competitive Derby, Surfcaster members once again proved they are among elite Derby anglers. Led by first year members Sandy Fisher and Clark Goff Jr., who held Grand Leader keys on awards day, fifty MVSA anglers or one third of our members, captured a total of more than 140 awards that included 17 major, 7 grand slam, 12 weekly and 110 daily prizes. At one point in the competition MVSA members held 11 spots on the leader board including all three places in the shore striped bass division. In addition, Paul Schultz (bluefish) Julian Pepper (striped bass) and Dave Nash (bonito) each took home a \$500 prize for catching the biggest shore fish in the Saturday Sweeps.

Other major award winners were Morgan Taylor and Julian Pepper who won the newly established shore team competition. Morgan also placed second in the shore striped bass division and Julian won the Abe Williams Memorial Award for the first shore angler to record a grand slam.

In the Flyrod Shore False Albacore Division, Scott Patterson finished first and Phil Cronin placed second. Phil also placed second in the Flyrod Boat False Albacore Division and this marks the third consecutive year that he has been on the overall leader board. Also in the Flyrod Division George Moran placed second in the shore striped bass category missing out on a first place finish by a scant few ounces.

Also, our senior members scored four of the eight special awards as Ed Amaral and Wally White won the Ray Metcalf Memorial Awards for boat and shore striped bass and Don McGillivray and George Gomez won the Howie Leonard Memorial Awards for Boat & Shore False Albacore.

And last but by no means least, our junior members proved themselves as well as Conor Smith won the shore false albacore category and Doug Fraser placed third with a shore striped bass. This was Conor's third consecutive trip to the stage on awards day.

**Major Awards:** Sandy Fisher, Clark Goff Jr., Julian Pepper (2), Ed Amaral, Don McGillivary, George Gomez, Peter Herrmann, Morgan Taylor (2), George Moran, Phil Cronin (2) Scott Patterson, Doug Fraser (junior), Conor Smith (junior)

**Grand Slam:** Steve Baccelli, Ron Domurat, Ed Lepore, Don McGillivary, Holly Mercier, Dave Nash, Julian Pepper.

**Weekly Awards:**

Dave Nash (2) Doug Fraser (junior), Fran Clay, Morgan Taylor, Holly Mercier, Lois K. Stout, Sandy Fisher, Clark Goff, Jr. Scott Paterson, Janet Messineo, Matt Sudarsky, Conor Smith (junior).

**Daily Awards:**

**Six:** Ron Domurat, Keith McArt

**Five:** Tom Barlosky, Steve Baccelli, Jim Fraser

**Four:** Tom Kieras, Chet Loiselle, Dave Nash, Ed Lepore

**Three:** Win Crocker, Kurt Freund, Cooper Gilkes, Ed Amaral, Morgan Taylor, Phil Horton, Bob (Hawkeye) Jacobs, Julian Pepper, George Moran.

**Two:** Ralph Peckham, Lois K. Stout, Don McGillivary, Chuck Wendel, Janet Messineo, Jack Livingston, Sandy Fisher, Josh Kressel.

**One:** Conor Smith (junior) Ernie Baracchini, Marshall Segall, Dan Stiles, Peter Sliwkowski, Doug Fraser (junior) Wally White, Holly Mercier, Sherm Goldstein, Dave Balon, Hank Unczer, John Piekos, Phil Hennig, Paul Schultz, Matt Sudarsky, Steve Purcell, Jim Cornwell, Phil Cronin, Lee Bruni, Jaroslav Kral, Jack Kimberly, Ed Wessel.

## 2007 Final In House Derby Standings

### Open Division

#### *Shore All Tackle*

##### *Striped Bass*

1. Ron Domurat, 34.90 lbs
2. Chet Loiselle, 33.20 lbs
3. Chet Loiselle, 28.20 lbs

##### *Bluefish*

1. Bob Jacobs, 10.70 lbs
2. Paula Sullivan, 10.10 lbs
3. Paul Schultz, 8.98 lbs

##### *Bluefish Release*

1. Peter Sliwkowski, 34"

***False Albacore***

1. Clark Goff Jr., 15.86 lbs
2. Bob Jacobs, 11.59 lbs
3. Julian Pepper, 10.17 lbs

***False Albacore Release***

1. Jeff Sayre, 11.0lbs

***Bonito***

1. Holly Mercier, 5.34 lbs
2. Dave Balon, 5.32 lbs
3. Ron Domurat, 5.32 lbs

***Shore Flyrod***

***Striped Bass***

1. George Moran, 17.50lbs

***Bonito***

1. Dave Nash, 5.40lbs.

***False Albacore***

1. Phil Cronin, 11.65 lbs
2. Dave Nash, 8.79 lbs

***False Albacore Release***

1. Dave Nash, 27 1/4"

***Boat All Tackle***

***Bluefish***

1. Peter Herrmann, 9.36lbs

***Bonito***

1. Jeff Sayre, 6.07lbs

***Bonito Release***

1. Peter Herrmann, 24"

***Boat Flyrod***

***Bonito Release***

- Peter Herrmann, 25"

**Senior Division**

***Shore (All Tackle)***

***Striped Bass***

1. Will Point, 23.90lbs

2. Jim Cornwell, 23.60lbs
3. Jim Cornwell, 22.60lbs

### ***Bluefish***

1. Win Crocker, 10.65lbs
2. Jim Cornwell, 8.30lbs
3. Versie Geary, 3.90lbs
- 4.

### ***False Albacore***

1. Dan Geary, 9.48lbs
2. Versie Geary, 9.05lbs

## ***Boat (All Tackle)***

### ***Striped Bass***

1. Chuck Wendel, 39.05lbs
2. Ed Amaral, 36.38lbs
3. Lois K. Stout, 32.62lbs

### ***Striped Bass Release***

1. Ed Amaral, 43"
2. Ed Amaral, 40"
3. Ed Amaral, 38"

### ***Bluefish***

1. Sylvia Wheeler, 11.33lbs
2. Don McGlivery, 9.59lbs
3. Lois K. Stout, 9.33lbs

### ***Bonito***

1. Don McGlivery, 9.20lbs
2. Jack Kimberly, 6.20lbs
3. Don McGlivery, 5.63lbs

### ***False Albacore***

1. Don McGlivery, 10.32lbs

## **Junior Divison**

### ***Shore All Tackle***

#### ***Striped Bass***

1. Doug Fraser, 20.68lbs

#### ***False Albacore***

1. Conor Smith, 10.56lbs

## **All Tackle Shore Grand Slam**

1. Ron Domurat, 56.19lbs
2. Dave Nash, 38.35lbs

## **Abe Williams Memorial Award-Largest Shore Striped Bass-Ron Domurat**

**\*\* Note: Only the first place finishers will receive plaques.**

### **Short Casts**

**State Saltwater Fishing Derby-** Congratulations to members Will Geresy, Clark Goff, Jr. and Don McGillivary for submitting winning entries in the State of Massachusetts 2007 Salt Water Fishing Derby. In their respective species, all three caught the biggest in the state. Geresy's was a 6.0 Spanish mackerel; Goff's was a 15.86 lb Derby winning false albacore while McGillivary caught a 9.2 oz bonito. All three will receive engraved Paul Revere bowls for their efforts. The awards will take place at the Eastern Fishing & Outdoor Expo held at the Worcester Centrum in February.

**Octoberfish XV-** McGillivary's bonito also took first place honors in the fifteenth annual Octoberfish contest sponsored by Larry's Tackle Shop. Member Julian Pepper's 10.55 false albacore took first place in that category.

**Young of Year Index-**The Maryland Division of Natural Resources reports that the 2007 YOY Index was 13.4, which was above the 54-year average of 12.0 and well above last years 4.3. The year's healthy reproduction is the ninth above average index in the last twelve spawning seasons. There are twenty-two sampling sites in four major spawning systems in the Chesapeake Bay. Each year all are visited monthly from July thru September by DNR biologists collecting fish samples with two sweeps of a 100-foot beach seine. The index is calculated as the average catch of YOY fish per sample.

**American Littoral Society Fish Tagging-**This past season MVSA members participating in the ALS tagging program tagged more than seventy striped bass and twenty bluefish. To date, none have been recaptured. The MVSA will participate again next season and there are a number of kits still available for those wishing to participate. The kits contain a tagging needle, ten tags and post cards. Tagging fish this year were Joe & Jake Gubitose, Gary Mirando, Jim Cornwell, Ron Domurat, Chet Loiselle and Jeff Sayre.

The ALS reports that in 2006 more than 29,000 fish were tagged and 1,300 recaptured. Striped bass head the list as the fish most tagged with 23,000 followed by fluke and tautog with 3,200 and 1,600 respectively. Surprisingly, bluefish slipped to fourth with fewer than 1,300 tagged.

**The Homing Instinct-**Some of you may have seen this interesting bit of information in a recent NE Fisherman article by Al Anderson about tagged striped bass in the Thames River in CT. "*Striped bass movements, as many once believed are not hap-hazard. Research indicates female fish make up the bulk of a migrating population with some males mixing in. These fish possess genetic memory, passed on by their progenitors which means they are programmed to visit areas that were once beneficial to previous generations; so basically, every striped bass you catch is genetically programmed to be there!*"

**Derby Notes-**Some things never make it into the record book or newspapers but don't go unnoticed like the intrepid Phil Horton spending countless hours at the end of the Cape Poge jetty hoping to catch that elusive bonito to complete his grand slam and a repeat of last years second place finish. While some might consider that a wasted effort Phil caught more than forty false albacore in the process.

.....And how about Dave Nash who had a chance to make Derby history with the first recorded double Grand Slam? Dave completed his all tackle shore slam and half of the shore flyrod slam including the elusive bonito mentioned earlier. As far as we can determine, he would have been the first Derby angler in history to do both in the same year. Great effort Dave!

.....In our club we have hard core anglers and we have *hard core anglers* but not many fish the Derby as hard as Keith McArt. In the past Keith's efforts have led him to top finishes in the shore all tackle striped bass category as well as the shore grand slam. While it was not in the cards for Keith this year, it wasn't due to lack of effort. Rumor has it that on more than one occasion while pulling all night fishing excursions, fatigue caused him to pull off the road while traveling

to up-island locations. One night at least four times! It became such a regular occurrence that he had his stops planned out along the way like a long distance traveler. (*Keith did finish third in the newly established team competition but received no prize as the category was introduced as a trial and an award was only given to the first place team*)

....We can all learn a couple of valuable lessons from one of the MVSA's better anglers who for this piece shall remain anonymous. One; that honesty, however noble is not necessarily always the best policy and two; derby anglers should be familiar with the rules. Prior to the Derby this angler had never caught a bonito from the shore, but needed one to complete a shore grand slam that would have placed him in the top three overall. Being a hard-core angler, this member put in his time and did everything right. But for almost four weeks of the Derby he could not hook the elusive fish. Frustration set in badly as he watched those around him regularly hooking up with bonito including a friend who had not fished much in her life let alone hook and land a bonito. When his time finally came he landed his fish only to discover it was foul hooked. Upon some cajoling from a few fellow onlookers, he released the fish, believing it was illegally caught. The rule reads: '*intentionally foul-hooking or snagging a fish*' will disqualify a catch. Obviously the key word is '*intentionally*'.

....What happened to the stealth and secrecy of Derbies past? In the late Robert Post's wonderful book *Reading the Water*, he tells about Derby anglers who went to great lengths to cover their tracks and protect their secret and productive spots, even to the point of covering drag marks and leading snoopers on wild goose chases around the island. Others would go to equally great lengths to find them and stooped so low as to stake out houses and even check the color of the sand on tires. These days it appears as though many anglers would rather have a reputation of being in the know than that of protecting their favorite fishing holes along with the prospects of scoring a major Derby prize. Early in the Derby this year, the Wasque Point area was giving up some pretty good striped bass but once the word got out it was so crowded and so lit up with headlights it looked like Oak Bluffs after the annual fireworks display. One guy got stuck in the sand and left his headlights shining over the water for at least fifteen minutes while his buddy hauled him out of his predicament. *The fishing shut down that night!* Old salt Derby anglers would never think about divulging information or flashing their lights over the water! And along the same lines, did you ever notice that the better surf anglers are quietly modest about their successes, grudgingly giving up information about catch numbers and sizes only when asked, while others are right in your face as soon as you encounter them. Why is that?

***Last Fish of The Year ( ? )*** Speaking of hard-core anglers let's not forget arguably the hardest working, and certainly the hardiest of them all. Chet Loiselle said his last ***overnighter*** of the year produced two stripers, one 26" and one 28". **The date: December 1<sup>st</sup>! The temperature: twenty-two degrees!** He brought his frozen eels back to life by thawing them by use of the truck heater. *He says it was his last trip of the year!*

***Stemming the Tide***-If you're looking for a good off-season read, pick up a copy of *Stemming the Tide* by Charley Soares. Charley is an outdoor writer, seasoned fishing guide and the pre-eminent speaker at NE Fishing shows. In the book he chronicles his years as waterman, beginning with his days as a thirteen year old fishing guide rowing his clients to his favorite productive fishing holes, right through his days competing with legendary Cuttyhunk fishing guides, and up to the present time casting eels and plugs into Sow and Pigs Reef and Devils Bridge for trophy size stripers. The book combines some great tips while telling wonderful stories about the characters he's met and fished with including the 'old salts' who helped mold his character. \$16.95 plus \$3.00 shipping! [www.fishingthesalt.com](http://www.fishingthesalt.com) - [linesiders@verizon.net](mailto:linesiders@verizon.net) or Charley Soares, 2 Pleasant View Avenue, Swansea, MA 02777.

***Eastville Point Beach Committee***-Some time ago, County officials, specifically Tristan Israel, asked the Surfcasters if we would participate in a committee to look into improving conditions at Eastville Point Beach. As a result, Dave Nash has attended some meetings and is now chair of that committee. At the core of management problems associated with this neglected little beach is the fact that parts of it are owned by the County and both the towns of Oak Bluffs and Tisbury. A strip is also owned by the state. With no identified funding, this beach provides access to thousands of residents and visitors for fishing, birding and just plain beaching. Unfortunately, the beach also attracts people who freely litter, routinely dispose of furniture and assorted waste and generally neglect the property. It is home to deteriorated fencing, dead vegetation and a biological inventory of invasive species. The committee has been looking at ways to clean-up, fund and manage this beach and hopefully over the next few months will begin to make some progress at identifying ways to make these improvements happen. Initial needs are for split rail fencing and materials with which to build a kiosk (similar to those used by TTOR and the Land Bank). Some available time donated by a carpenter who can build a kiosk would also be helpful. Once some site improvements are made, the committee will try to identify a longer term management plan which will hopefully call for improvements on the beach itself, establishing picnic areas, improving

access for fishing, better defining parking, and creating a better managed wildlife area with opportunities for viewing wildlife as well. Longer term, and with identification of funding sources, the committee is hoping to consider trash management and seasonal sanitary facilities. In the near future, the committee may be looking for donations but for now anyone interested in attending meetings and becoming involved at any level are welcome. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday at noon at the county offices at the airport. The next meeting is Jan. 9, 2008. Dave can be reached at 627-4867 .

***Massachusetts Estuaries Project***-The water quality report on the Edgartown Great Pond has finally been released by the Mass. Estuaries Project. The report is available on the Vineyard Gazette website [www.mvgazette.com/PDF1/estuaries\\_report.pdf](http://www.mvgazette.com/PDF1/estuaries_report.pdf).

The report discusses the various factors which impact water quality in Edgartown Great Pond and projects future impacts based on available levels of growth. The impact to fishermen and shellfishing are obvious and as the first such report to be released (other island ponds will be studied in the future). Anyone with an interest in the water quality of ponds on Martha's Vineyard; anyone who uses these ponds for fishing, shellfishing or recreation should read this report. It discusses the impact of growth and development around the pond and also presents data on impacts from birds and wildlife as well as the Edgartown sewage treatment plant. The report is long and contains much data but there are excellent summaries which provide good insight into our present conditions and how we got there.

***Lights Out America (and on Martha's Vineyard)***-There is a nationwide initiative to promote awareness in energy conservation by encouraging a reduction in non-essential lighting. On Saturday, March 29, 2008, people are being encouraged to support this initiative by turning out all non-essential lighting for one hour from 8:00 to 9:00 p.m. Dinner by candlelight; reading a book instead of watching TV or just thinking about ways to reduce lighting are ways that we can all support this effort. Surfcaster, especially, are intimately aware of how excess lighting can alter the night's skies. On the Vineyard we are truly blessed with beautiful, dark, night skies and turning off a light is a wonderful way to not only support energy conservation but to help protect that night sky resource. There is more information at [www.lightsoutamerica.org](http://www.lightsoutamerica.org) and you can also go to the web page of the Vineyard Conservation Society almanac ([www.almanac.vcsmv.org](http://www.almanac.vcsmv.org)) and click on the "Lights Out MV" button.

***Dredging Projects Update***-With two Surfcaster members on the Edgartown Dredge Committee (Paul Schultz and Dave Nash) we now get updates on dredge projects in Edgartown. The dredge season is now in full swing. The Cape Poge pond dredging is making good progress and the dredge has entered the narrows in the last few weeks. After redefining a channel in the back end of Cape Poge pond, the dredge is now moving into the narrows and will eventually move to Dike Bridge and redefine the channel all the way back to the inlet. The dredged materials will be deposited on East beach. Other projects in Edgartown harbor for which permits are being sought include the entrance to Cape Poge pond and the Edgartown light salt pond. A feasibility study is underway to study the need to erect groins along the Fuller Street beach.

Another project involves nourishment of the Bend in the Road beach with sand dredged from Sengekontacket. Two benefits are realized from that project; one is improved water quality in Sengekontacket pond and the other is the creation of a system of dunes and beach at Bend in the Road as well as some of the county beach at State beach and beaches at Cow bay. This project is anticipated for winter of 2008-2009.

Tisbury continues to study dredging of the Tashmoo Pond inlet. The study is looking to widen and straighten the inlet plus remove what has now been identified as a shelf on the western jetty near the outlet. Also as part of the interim study, deficiencies in the existing jetties were noted so efforts to rebuild and tighten those jetties are now being considered.

## **Oak Bluffs Fishing Pier Update**

It what continues to be a project that surprises many islanders, the Oak Bluffs selectmen have agreed to sign a "Land Management agreement" with the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game. This agreement represents just one more step in the process and paves the way for the state to begin design of a 250' to 300' public access fishing pier proposed for the Oak Bluffs shoreline just north of the SSA dock. Following the design phase, the state will seek funding through the state bond commission the approvals through local boards such as the Conservation Commission. Meanwhile, the MVSA has taken the first steps in the formation of an Advisory Committee which will initially assist in development of some

design and use considerations but which will also be around for years to come to help in dealing with effective year-to-year management of the pier.

The interim Advisory Committee consisting of Walter Lison, Steve Morris, Coop Gilkes, Michael Dutton and Dave Nash, met earlier this month and developed a set of recommendations for the pier (with support from members who came to our Surfcasters November meeting). Although these are only recommendations, there seems to be support for these types of low impact plans for use of the pier. It would be limited to fishing and no boat usage. We are recommending lighting (preferably solar), running water and a filet station with a drain pipe. The pier would be accessible 24 hours per day. An information kiosk would be proposed for the area approaching the pier (near the existing comfort station) and would identify fish species, size and catch limits in addition to promotion of various educational and would be multi-lingual. The next meeting of the Advisory Committee group will be with state representatives and will focus on making sure everyone is consistent in how they are looking at future uses for the pier. So far, everything seems to be moving along quite smoothly.

## **MVSA Takes Stand on the Practice of Yo-Yoing**

The MVSA sent the following letter to Paul Diodati, the MA Director of Marine Fisheries. Copies were also sent to Governor Patrick, Mary Griffin the Commissioner of MA Fish & Wildlife, Representative Eric Turkington and Senator Robert O'Leary. Additional letters calling for a ban on the practice of yo-yoing were sent by the MV Striped Bass & Bluefish Derby as well as Stripers Forever and the Cape Cod Salties. MVSA members are encouraged to send their own letters to Mr. Diodati—[paul.diodati@state.ma.us](mailto:paul.diodati@state.ma.us). *Numbers count!*

*November 15, 2007*

Paul Diodati, Director  
Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries  
251 Causeway Street, Suite 400  
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Mr. Diodati:

The practice of 'yo-yo' jigging for large striped bass came to the forefront during the recent Martha's Vineyard Striped Bass & Bluefish Derby. Most likely you are aware that the practice involves the insertion of one or more lead, or lead like weights into a large menhaden. A hard steel rod, wire or wooden skewer is added for stability and a "hog ring" is used to close the mouth of the bait. Commercial striped bass anglers utilizing this method usually rig many baits in advance of their time on the water. The bait is fished by affixing the entire rig to the anglers line and lowered to the bottom and jugged or 'yo-yo'd' in a manner that causes it to act like an injured bait fish. It is an extremely effective method for catching larger striped bass but many times during a fight the rigged menhaden will fall off only to be ingested by other fish in the school. Often, a very large fish will break free from the angler. In both instances the entire rig including the lead weights and skewer, is trapped in the stomach or soft tissue of the striper creating a blockage and/or health hazard to the fish as well as the consuming angler, and in commercially caught striped bass, the fish consuming public. (The Derby fish in question had more than one and a half pounds of lead in its digestive system.) Also, as most, if not all of these fish are fecund females, damage to the brood stock contributes to an overall increase in total mortality rates.

As an organization, the Martha's Vineyard Surfcasters Association condemns the practice of 'yo-yoing' believing it to be harmful to the resource, the environment, and the consumer of the fish. We request that the Massachusetts Department of Marine Fisheries take immediate action to permanently ban the use of the technique or any derivative there-of, by both commercial and recreational anglers.

The Martha's Vineyard Surfcasters Association was founded in 1989 and consists of more than two hundred individuals and families. The stated purpose of the organization is: "*to encourage the sport of surfcasting and interest in sport fishing; to gather for entertainment and good fellowship; to promote and uphold sound conservation practices and laws, and to see that these laws are properly enforced and carried out by members; to further good sportsmanship; and to see and protect public access to fishing areas on Martha's Vineyard*".

*Note:* On December 26 the MVSA received an undated letter from Mr. Diodati acknowledging our request to “restrict fishermen from rigging natural baits with metal weights and other objects.” The letter also stated that: “accumulation of hardware in a fish’s stomach, especially lead weights, likely has a deleterious effect on it’s health,” and that “*Marine Fisheries* advocates for responsible fishing practices in all fisheries. We believe that most informed fishermen will take responsibility for conducting their fishing activity in ways that benefit resource conservation. Accordingly, the Division will conduct an educational initiative to encourage responsible fishing during 2008. We will examine regulations of other coastal states with regard to rigging natural baits, discuss with environmental police possible regulatory effectiveness as a deterrent of the practice, and consider possible rule-making to restrict this activity later next year.”

## **Saltwater License Update**

The re-authorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation Act in 2006 included a section that requires all states with a saltwater coastline to provide a register of their saltwater anglers. Essentially this means the establishment of a saltwater fishing license program to identify the saltwater anglers in those states. The MVSA has joined a movement started by the Cape Cod Salties to ensure that the State of Massachusetts instead of the federal government establishes and administers the license program. The Massachusetts Beach Buggy Association has also joined in the effort.

The deadline for all states to implement the license program is 2009. If a state does not implement a license by that time, the federal government will step in and collect a fee and put the names of license holders directly into their register, bypassing any involvement by the state. Many states like Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, Alabama and Louisiana already have saltwater license programs in place and states like Maine, Connecticut and New Hampshire are in various stages of legislation to establish a license in their states.

All states with a saltwater license have tried to establish programs that benefit the angler, protect the revenues collected and work to improve access and regulation enforcement but more importantly a license program gives a face to the recreational angling community whereby it is clear as to how many anglers there are and estimate economic benefits with regard to tourism dollars and the like, much like they do for hunting and fresh water fishing. These recreational groups have a say in the laws that govern them and the natural resources. Currently, recreational anglers in MA are without power and have little or no input to the DMF.

Recently the Cape Cod Salties invited DMF Director Paul Diodati to a meeting to speak about the federal requirements because the Salties feel that there is a need to have a saltwater license program that will protect the revenues collected and benefit the recreational angler as well as protect and improve our marine resources. Many members came away from the meeting with the feeling that Diodati is *not* in support of a license program that he has to administer and run. The feeling was that he wants the status to remain what it is now with recreational saltwater anglers being an undefined number of people who have little influence as to what the DMF does. In addition, most people got the impression that Diodati would like to see the license program default to the federal government or have it combined with the Massachusetts fresh water license program. In either case saltwater anglers lose their identity and very likely funding for important programs like marine enforcement and access.

The Salties want to see a comprehensive proposal for a saltwater fishing license that can be put into law on Beacon Hill and want to involve as many interested organizations as possible and get input on how to make this a program that will benefit the recreational saltwater anglers and marine resources of our state.

*Note: Terry Tessien contributed to this article. Terry is a member of the Cape Cod Salties and the MVSA.*

## **Dave Belcher to Retire**

After nineteen years as Superintendent for The Trustees of Reservations on Chappaquiddick and more recently Lelands and Norton Point Beach, Dave Belcher has announced his retirement effective in late May.

When hired in 1989 Dave had just one summer assistant and a seasonal staff of two at the Wasque gatehouse. Since that time reservation activities have grown into an outdoor experience with activities for anyone who enjoys the

outdoors, particularly the coastal environment. The reservation now offers fishing, kayaking, lighthouse, natural history and kayak tours in addition to pristine and well-maintained beaches. The staff has grown to more than twenty -five full time and seasonal employees including many MVSA members.

When asked about his accomplishments Dave said the most important one was getting the fishing community to understand that he was working for them. He said the early years were his toughest with the state and federal governments handing down new guidelines to protect shore birds. "I was always working to keep as much beach open as possible even though it didn't look or sound like it." He said he even remembers receiving a death threat and having federal agents show up with shotguns and warning him to be careful. "Those were fun times."

Dave says he is grateful for the appreciation and kindness he's been shown by recreational users, past and present. "Over the years many fishermen, some still here and many now gone, were, and still are a big part of what this reservation has become. Without the support and help of many fishermen, my job would have been a lot more difficult." He also expressed gratitude to the great staff he has built over the years and called them the most dedicated and caring employees of any reservation in the state. He says the things he will miss the most are the people. We'll miss you too Dave and wish you the best in your new life in the sunshine state of Florida. Yours will be big shoes to fill!

## **President Bush Signs Executive Order to Protect Striped Bass**

At a ceremony on October 20, 2007, in Saint Michaels Maryland, President Bush signed an executive order directing the federal government to make striped bass a game fish in federal waters and encouraged states that haven't already done so, to do the same.

The executive order was the culmination of an effort by several recreational advocacy groups that included Stripers Forever, the Coastal Conservation Association, the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, and tackle manufacturers represented by the American Sportfishing Association.

In signing the order, the President made it clear he is not against commercial fishing but recognizes that game-fish designation is the best management tool for protecting certain species that are vital to the recreational fishing public. Economic studies have shown that striped bass harvested recreationally are many times more valuable than those harvested commercially. President Bush said "I hope the state officials take a serious look at game-fish designation: it is an effective tool to protect endangered or dwindling species." "Strong fisheries mean local sales. Local sales means better economy." He also went on to say that decades from now our children and grandchildren will see oceans teeming with fish and sea life.

While viewed as largely symbolic by many, the order permanently prohibits the sale of any striped bass caught in the three to two hundred mile Exclusive Economic Zone established in 1983. Massachusetts DMF Director Paul Diodati has been a strong advocate of opening the zone to commercial striped bass fishing. The order also puts additional pressure on states like MA to designate striped bass as a game-fish and eliminate commercial fishing and the sale of fish caught in the wild. The order does not affect the sale of fish raised in aquaculture. In 2002 more than 12,000,000 lbs of striped bass for the market were raised through aquaculture operations. The number was 1,000,000 pounds more than the total combined catch of recreation and commercial anglers in Chesapeake Bay. The commercial quota in MA is slightly more than one million pounds.

In a recent interview a spokesman for Stripers Forever said "when you take the price tag off the head of a resource, the resource has benefited." He went on to say, "What so often seems to get lost in this debate is establishing game-fish status for wild striped bass is first and foremost designed to benefit, and for the long term, the well being of the strippers."

## **Albie Madness - North Carolina Style**

*By: Will Geresy*

We were inspired by stories from Charles Harner, an MVSA member from Otis to try Albie fishing in North Carolina this past November. So we met Charles and Peggy in NC for a week of fishing, feasting and other outdoors stuff. We heard all the stories about big albies and didn't need a lot of provocation to try it. The fishing grounds are about 850 miles down the road from the Vineyard, all easy driving.

The location for surfcasting we tried was the Cape Lookout National Seashore. You'll find it on a map just to the south of the Outer Banks near the town of Beaufort, NC. The Cape Lookout area is a fantastic 56 mile stretch of totally undeveloped beach. But you don't have to worry; the fish are relatively easy to reach.

The folks down there are outstanding. They think we're crazy for chasing Albies but are more than happy to do business with us. You'll meet lots of Northerners down there chasing albies too.

The fish are big, very aggressive and powerful and strike hard, they will break 12# mono before your drag clicks even once. Add a strong current to punish you even more. I packed too light the first day, didn't bring my Boga-Grip and didn't get a weight on my biggest fish. The thing measured 33 ½ inches. I was never without my scale from that day on and never weighed a fish under 10 pounds.

Plenty of other activities are available for the rest of the family. The same ferry that takes you fishing will take them to the Shackleford Banks where they can hike the beach with the wild horses descended from the times of the Spanish Conquistadors. Shopping in Beaufort, nice beaches and very good reasonably priced restaurants that serve fresh local seafood in staggering proportions are also part of the fun package.

This trip is on our calendar for two weeks the next time.

**Where:** Cape Lookout National Seashore and other undeveloped islands in the Beaufort, North Carolina area.

**When:** November- best time window is 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> weeks (maybe). In 2007 the second week was just the beginning of the run. Fish from about 9 AM to 4 PM to catch at least one good tide flow.

**How to Get There:** About an 850 mile drive from the Vineyard on easy travel roads (except DC area). No close airports with good fares.

**Where to Stay:** Timeshares in the Atlantic Beach area are easy to get if you or a buddy has one to trade. Or often you can get a last minute vacation week from RCI for \$250/week for a 2 BR timeshare on the beach. Otherwise, there are plenty of motels in Morehead City and lots of beach houses for rent in Atlantic Beach by the week. You can save two 30 minute drives each day by staying on Harkers Island but there is NOTHING to do there at night.

**Gear:** Start with a rod that can handle big Albies. My 8 foot one-piece medium action Loomis was perfect. Don't even think about bringing a "girlie rod. Your reel should have a great drag with no other mechanical issues. Tune it up and bring a spare reel too. These fish and the blowing sand will break your gear fast. I used 12# mono and regretted it. Spool up with at least 14 or 16 # mono, finish with a Spro 50# mini swivel and 20 # fluorocarbon leader. Tie your lure directly on the leader, no snaps. Bring lots of spare line. I had to re-spool every evening. The albie runs are real burners. Your line will look like a slinky at the end of the day. I saw the bottom of my spool several times. The fish work the current and are very hard to slow down without something going pop.

**Lures:** The locals use a silver metal lure that seems to work. However keep it simple and bring your favorite Vineyard albie lures. Bring lots; you will lose many lures if the fish are around. My Vineyard albie landing rate went from 90% to 20%. The wind is a killer down there so bring your favorite lures in the heavier sizes too. I used #1 and #2 Deadly Dicks and hooked lots of fish. REPLACE the original equipment hooks with 4X or 6X size 1 premium grade trebles. You won't be able to buy our typical favorites down there so plan ahead.

**Fly Fishing:** I dragged around my fly rod just hoping the wind would stop. When it did some local tour boat full of shell collectors pulled up in my spot and sat all afternoon. Your 9 weight with a very good drag, lots of backing and an intermediate sinking line is just the ticket. You'll need your stripping basket but a fold up will save room when you pack in your gear. I saw every color combination of flies, poppers and gurglers being used. They all seemed to work. Bring your favorites and have faith.

**Fishing Spots:** The Cape Lookout lighthouse area is the starting point for fishing. You'll get there by taking a water taxi from Harkers Island. I found the people at the Harkers Island Fishing Center (252-728-3907, [www.harkersmarina.com](http://www.harkersmarina.com)) were knowledgeable and very helpful. Captain Sandy was always out trying to spot fish and ready to share his

information. Typically you'll go to a place called the spit, a sandbar between Cape Lookout and Shackleford Bank. A round trip was \$22. You will be fishing out where there is nothing but sand. You have to pack in what you might need for the day. Pack light in a backpack. I found essentials to be; extra reel, extra spool or extra line, 20 # fluoro leader, small 50# Spro swivels, #1 and # 2 Deadly Dicks ( replace hooks with 4 or 6X size 1 high quality trebles), lightweight waders, a water proof wind breaker, sweatshirt, scale, camera and lunch. On the cool heavy wind days you will pay anything for a Thermos of coffee and a donut but you'll have to pack them in. Most bring a fold-up chair and a sand spike too but I never sat down since there were Albies in the area almost constantly. If you are really adventurous, you can camp out overnight in the park. After a few days of a honking NW wind the fish started piling up on the beach in Atlantic Beach and at Fort Macon. They were reachable in the surf and were everywhere.

**Tide and Weather:** The wind is going to blow hard. A rule of thumb is you'll be able to get to the "spit" 3 or 4 days out of 7. Tides run fast and create lots of chop.

**Fishing License:** You are required to have a North Carolina Saltwater License to fish from the beach, 10 days for 10 bucks. You can buy one online before you go.

**The Secrets:** If you know how to catch Albies on the Vineyard you have all the technical knowledge you need to catch fish from the beach in North Carolina. There are also all kinds of other fish the locals go after but their motivation is excellent eating and not Albie Madness. Search the shoreline for deep water next to sand bars. The fish will follow the contours and be at your feet if you find a hole next to shore. Cast at breaking fish, they are nasty aggressive. The water is clear so stay back from the fish if you can; they will see and avoid you. Persistence pays off. Watch breaking patterns and look for moving water. They seem to chase small 1 -1/2 inch long bait. If you find that, start casting. The snapper blues will come in first followed by the albies.

I hope this is enough inspiration for you to go. We had a very enjoyable time, met some great people and caught some very nice Albies.

## **MVSA Braggin Board**

Morgan Taylor, 35.15lb Striped Bass

Sandy Fisher, 15.33lb False Albacore

Clark Goff Jr. 15.86lb False Albacore

Will Geresy 34" False Albacore (Harkers Island)  
6.0lb Spanish Mackerel

Steve Baccelli, 8.23lb Bonito

Don McGillivary, 9.06lb bonito

Lois K. Stout, 32.61lb Striped Bass

Ed Amaral, 32.31lb Striped Bass

## **2008 MVSA Activities**

In addition to giving back to our members in the form of our annual banquet and awards ceremony, summer picnic, shark tournament, ALS Tagging Program and pizza night, your dues money, fund raising efforts and active participation allowed us to give back to the community in the following ways:

- **Continued to advocate for a public access fishing pier in Oak Bluffs. (*The project has been given preliminary approval*)**

- **Establishment of a \$1,000 Scholarship at the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School.**
- **Establishment of the Fred Stula Memorial Science Fair Award at the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School.**
- **Donation of \$1,000 to support the Martha's Vineyard Boys and Girls Club.**
- **Donation of \$1,000 to support the Big Brothers, Big Sister Program.**
- **Donation of \$300 to support the Red Stocking Fund for needy Island children.**
- **Donation of \$500 to support the Martha's Vineyard Rod & Gun Club Annual Kid's Trout Derby.**
- **Donation of \$200 in memory of Phil Craig to support the Martha's Vineyard Community**
- **Donation of \$150 to the American Littoral Society to participate in their fish-tagging program.**
- **Spent-a-day fishing with the Safe Haven Project Kids at Duarte's Pond.**
- **Participated in the VCS Beach Clean Up at Norton Point & South Beach.**
- **Maintained several 'spent fishing line' boxes on the Island's most popular fishing beaches to encourage the proper disposal and recycling of old fishing line.**
- **Maintained our "Courtesy Patrol" on the Islands OSV beaches.**
- **Continued to advocate for the completion of the herring run between Katama Bay & the Edgartown Great Pond.**
- **Continued to participate in Island Plan-Natural Resource Workgroup.**
- **Participated in the American Littoral Society Tagging Program**
- **Placed two members on the Edgartown Dredge Committee**

## **2008 MVSA Calendar of Events** *(Please Save)*

**January 26, 2008-Annual MVSA Awards Ceremony, Banquet and Awesome Raffle**  
12:00PM, Old Whaling Church Edgartown,

**February 12, MVSA Monthly Meeting**  
7:00PM, Martha's Vineyard Rod & Gun Club

**March 11, MVSA Monthly Meeting**  
7:00PM, Martha's Vineyard Rod & Gun Club

**April 8, MVSA Monthly Meeting**

7:00PM, Martha's Vineyard Rod & Gun Club

**July 12, Annual MVSA Summer Picnic**

5:00PM, Bend In The Road Beach, Edgartown

**Sixth Annual Members Only Chappaquiddick Shark Tournament**

July 26-August 9

**September 14-October 18, 63rd Martha's Vineyard Striped Bass & Bluefish Derby**

**November 12, MVSA Monthly Meeting**

7:00PM, Martha's Vineyard Rod & Gun Club

**December 9, MVSA Monthly Meeting (pizza night)**

7:00PM, Martha's Vineyard Rod & Gun Club

**January 24, 2009, Annual MVSA Awards Ceremony, Banquet and Awesome Raffle**

12:00PM, Old Whaling Church, Edgartown