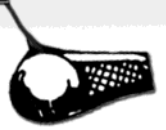




cannonball

G A Z E T T E



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MICHIGAN CHARTER BOAT ASSOCIATION • SPRING 2016

DUBSKY LEAVES \$2500 TO MCBA SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The late Captain Ron Dubsky, former membership secretary, and executive secretary, has left \$2,500 to the Michigan Charter Boat Association Scholarship fund.

"Ron truly loved the Michigan Charter Boat Association," his wife Carol said when contacting MCBA regarding Ron's gift to the scholarship fund. "The organization meant everything to him. It was such a big part of his life."

Capt. Dubsky was a recipient of the MCBA Award, the highest honor bestowed on a member for outstanding dedication, leadership and service to the organization. 9

MCBA Port Captains

Do you know that the MCBA has a Port Captain structure? Each port in Michigan with one or more Captains is entitled to have a MCBA Port Captain member representing him/her. Port Captains are important to the MCBA.

The Association describes their duties as follows:



The purpose of a Port Captain is to facilitate communications between the members and the leadership of the Association. In other words, to communicate the needs and concerns of the membership to the leadership in a manner that will allow the leadership to act in a timely manner.

Port Captains may also be asked to represent the Association when the leadership cannot. Also, they may be asked to help with membership and other local MCBA matters.

Being a Port Captain can be interesting and personally rewarding if you are dedicated to the charter profession. It doesn't take a lot of time, or require any special skills. All that's needed is a desire to be helpful to your fellow Captains and your Association.



Captain Ron & Carol Dubsky

A member of the MCBA Board of directors represents each area of Michigan. Each Board of Directors member is responsible for finding and appointing Port Captains for the ports in his/her area. Keeping them all filled with willing volunteers is difficult and time consuming.

Does your port have a Port Captain? Do you know who he/she is? If your port doesn't have one, would you be willing to become your port's Port Captain?

One of the responsibilities of a Port Captain is to attend the annual meeting, if at all possible. In order to encourage members to become Port Captains and to encourage that they attend the Annual Meeting, the Board of Directors has arranged to provide lunch on the annual meeting day, and to pay mileage

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From the Helm . . .



After going through two hard winters, it was a nice break this year in the weather department. As I write this President's report for the Cannonball, we have nice, early spring weather arriving this year. At this time of year my thoughts are of years past with the stellar brown trout fishing along Lake Michigan's shoreline. Those days may never come back but there is some improvement over the last two years. Catch rates are on the way up again, especially from Manistee north to Leland. Let's hope that trend continues this spring.

There is other good news just out this last month. Michigan DNR Fisheries are planning on hatchery renovations at some hatcheries to increase steelhead planting numbers starting next year. That's a good thing considering king salmon numbers are down in both lakes Michigan and Huron.

Aquaculture or fish farming remains the hot button issue for the MCBA board. We have had some good news in that our legislators have decided that Great Lakes net-pen aquaculture is not a good thing for our fishery and the pollution it brings to Great Lakes waters. Coming up on the 8th of April there is a "Sea Food Summit Meeting"

hosted by Michigan Sea Grant. Morning topics will include marketing fish from fish farming and starting up your own fish farm business. Afternoon topics, of real interest to me, are types of net pen operations and the future of aquaculture around the Great Lakes. For all of us in the charter fishing business we need to understand the types and construction of these net pens. Future legislation depends on us making the right decisions by trying to keep these open flow net pens out of the Great Lakes waters.

Our fall annual workshop meeting and banquet will be located at the Treetop's Resort in Gaylord, MI. The MCBA board thought that maybe our U.P. Captains would find this location better suited for them this year. Of real interest to them will be the old Enbridge oil pipeline that runs across the Straits of Mackinaw. This is right in our back yard captains. An oil leak or spill could wipe out fishing in northern Lake Michigan and Lake Huron, so this year we have a speaker from Enbridge Co. to address the public's worries should that line ever rupture.

I hope everyone has a great 2016 season, and just maybe salmon fishing will improve this year. Maybe the warmer winter will benefit alewife survival enough so that we'll see greater numbers of salmon this spring.

"Stay safe out there Captains"

Kind regards,

Capt. Eric Andersen - President 8

(Continued from page 1)... **Port Captains**

to each Port Captain who attends the Annual meeting.

If you are interested in being a Port Captain, ask the Board of Directors member from your region if there is one, and if not, volunteer. We can use your help. 8



The next issue of the Cannonball Gazette will be published in March. Submissions **must** be in by **May 15, 2016**

Send photos and news items to: larry@saginawbay.com

"CANNONBALL GAZETTE"

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Illegal Charters

by Donna Wesander

Fishing season is here and with it, the potential of illegal fishing charters. I was reminded of this issue recently while reading a Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) press release in February 2016. A Marquette man had been arraigned in two counties (Arenac and Mackinac) on a total of 26 charges related to alleged waterfowl and charter operation violations; charges included operating an unlicensed and uninspected charter boat. The charges were the result of a two year undercover investigation by detectives from the Michigan DNR Law Enforcement Division's (LED) Special Investigations Unit. While this case involved illegal waterfowl hunting from a boat, it is important to note the concept is the same in regards to fishing charters. LED also investigates illegal fishing charters, such as in 2010, when four men in southeastern Michigan were charged with fish and game violations. The fishing-related charges were operating unlicensed fishing charters, illegal sale of sport-caught fish, possession of a fish species out of season, and retaining foul-hooked fish. Sentencing associated with those charges included fines, costs, restitution, revocation of fishing licenses for two of the men (three & two years); one of the men spent 30 days in county jail, forfeited two boats, fishing equipment, and a large quantity of fish.

I have been told from charter operators that they suspect illegal charter activity in their area. Something can be done about intentional illegal charters. It may take a little time (sometimes even a couple years) for action to occur because LED is collecting evidence and want to make sure the evidence will lead to a conviction. Anyone with information regarding the illegal take of any Michigan fish and wildlife or the illegal operation of unlicensed charters is encouraged to call the DNR's Report All Poaching hotline at 800-292-7800; those providing tips can remain anonymous. Just a reminder, if a complainant decides to remain anonymous, officers cannot contact that person afterward if they need more information. Therefore it is very important to provide as much information as possible at the time of the complaint so the LED officer can pursue the investigation. In all complaint cases, adequate information is required for LED officers to do an investigation; the more information the better (e.g. MC numbers, make and color of boat, person's name if known, vehicle driven, location, time and date of illegal activity, etc.).



Monthly Reporting: The annual packets to operators for the monthly charter fishing reporting to DNR will be sent out the end of March. Packets are sent only to those who report through the mail on paper forms. Operators who report online can access their account at any time; please remember to use the non-fishing month feature to check off early months when you were not actively fishing. If you are using paper forms but would like to change from mail to reporting online, please contact me and I will set up your online reporting account. An operator cannot use both methods to report, one option must be selected. My contact information: Donna Wesander, DNR Fisheries Charter Reporting Program, email wesanderd@michigan.gov or phone 231-547-2914, ext 223.

Have a safe and successful fishing season. 8



S. Lake Michigan

By Captain Ron Westrate
MCBA Director



As the spring nears, Michigan lawmakers are working on legislation aimed at the aquaculture proposals for the Great Lakes. There are presently a couple of bills that would prohibit aquaculture operations in the Great Lakes and all connecting waters.

Most lake shore residents don't like the idea of farming fish that could potentially transmit disease to wild populations or could cause other problems that would damage the sport fishing industry. A major supporter of aquaculture is the Farm Bureau and there are several Republican representatives who are pushing a package of bills that would form a "regulatory framework" for the aquaculture industry. Whatever decision that is made, should be based on science and not politics and not on state financial profits.

On a more positive note, the perch fishing appears to be on the road to recovery. Reports for the southern Lake Michigan harbors report lots of tiny young of the year perch. Lake Michigan biologist Brian Breidert stated "We've heard similar reports from Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. They were seeing record-like spawning successes, too." Researchers estimated that last year's yellow perch spawn to be the second largest recorded since they started doing annual perch studies in 1985.

Before you get too excited and rush out to buy a second perch boat, remember that these 1 1/2 in. perch

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SECRETARY'S REPORT

By Captain John Giszczak



Captain / Mates!

The 2016 fishing season is just around the corner. If you have not sent your membership application in yet time is not on your side.


The MCBA website is starting to get lots of hits from people looking to book a trip on your boat! There is still time to get in on the action – don't delay join today.

Please make a copy of your application (even if you have to take a picture with your phone) in the event your application gets lost in

the mail, plus it's good proof for the I.R.S.

Now is the time to check your listings. Be sure they are correct. If you do need something changed or corrected, start on the MCBA home page, click on "Members" at the top right of the home page, then click on "Web Updates" in the banner on the "Members" page. Fill out the Form. Your questions, concerns, or changes will go directly to the webmaster and it may take only a matter of minutes to fix your problem.

If you need help or have questions please call the 800#. If you have to leave me a message, please speak slowly/clearly, your message is digitally recorded and sent to me via email. 8

 Visit MCBA Industry News & Events: www.fishmcba.com/members

(Continued from page 3) . . . **Directors Port Report**

need another four years to reach maturity and spawn and be a part in the fishing harvest. Breidert stated that when we had the 1985 massive perch spawn, it sustained the perch fishing for many years. So the outlook appears to be very good. 8



Central Lake Michigan

By Captain George Freeman - MCBA Director

The annual Ludington Regional Fishery Workshop was held Saturday, January 9th at West Shore Community College. This was a new location and seemed to work well for the workshop. Dan O'Keef Southwest District Educator, Michigan Sea Grant, conducted the meeting. The morning started with a presentation on mass marking of Great Lakes Chinook Salmon and Lake Trout by Charles Bronte, senior fishery biologist, U.S Fish & Wildlife Service. Next Dan O'Keefe shared some findings from the Salmon Ambassadors Program. The next presentation was given by Jim Diana, director of Michigan Sea Grant, on aquaculture in Michigan – future directions and challenges. Afterwards the audience was polled using Turning Point software about their thoughts on future aquaculture projects in Michigan. The vast majority of the people polled were against net pens being placed anywhere in the Great Lakes. A very good hot lunch was included and during the lunch break the Ludington Charter Boat Association held its big tackle raffle using the proceeds to help fund LCBA projects. Thank you to Captain Gary Smith for heading up this year's raffle. After lunch Chuck Madenjian, Research Fishery Biolo-

gist, USGS Great Lakes Science Center talked about the status and trends of prey fish in Lake Michigan 2014 followed by Dan O'Keefe's presentation on mud snails, rock snot and other invaders. Something new in this year's workshop was a discussion led by MDNR personnel utilizing an audience response system and Q & A to help fishery managers understand what charter captains, anglers, and conservationists would like to see in a Lake Michigan Management Plan. The workshop was well attended and very informative.

Any Captain or Club in the Central Lake Michigan region (Muskegon thru Ludington) that would like to provide news for the Cannonball please call me at (877) 456-3474. 8



Northern Lake Michigan

By Captain Bill Winowiecki - MCBA Director

A mild winter with an early spring should get the charter season off to an early start. I hope to get out and try for some of the brown trout which have been hanging around the east coast of Lake Michigan the past couple of years.

Aquaculture has been the biggest issue that could affect our future fishery. The past few months I've spent many hours on the phone, sharing emails and in meetings trying to educate myself and others on how to stop this monster before it gets out of the cage. It could possibly destroy our fishery and the Charter Industry.

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(Continued from page 4) . . . **Directors' Report**

I want to thank Captain Tony Radjenovich for stepping up to the plate. He really has dug deep into the aquaculture issue and the people involved.

He attended the MCBA Fall Conference in Traverse City, and the Ludington Sea Grant meeting, where he was first introduced to Sea Grants Director Jim Dianna who is the biggest pusher of Net Pen Farming and aquaculture in our state.

Tony asked some very effective questions which caught Jim very much off guard. Since then Tony has researched aquaculture, contacted legislators, written letters to the editor, and worked with other fishing groups in our state. He has the attitude that this isn't going to happen on my watch! He's been great to work with!

The Tribal Decree negotiations are creeping up on us faster and closer every day. The MCBA is a member of the Coalition to Protect Michigan Resources. The reason the MCBA joined the coalition is to share legal fees, and to have our opinions heard at the Tribal negotiations.

A problem is developing fast for MCBA. We need to build what we would call a "War Chest" to fund our part of the legal fees. We need the representation of Steve Schultz and Chris Patterson on the front lines. They've been there for over 30 years. The MCBA Board has decided on adding a space on the membership application asking for donations to fund our War Chest.

The Tribes will drag out these negotiations to try and bankrupt the Coalition. With the Casino's, they have unlimited funding. This is where the MCBA is starting to raise money. We are looking for other ways to raise funds. Raffles, private donations or any other suggestions will be looked at and appreciated.

The Tribal decree will affect 70% of our membership, and will drag on for at least for four years.

Please consider an annual donation until the 2020 negotiations are settled.

Hope you have a successful and safe summer **8**



Upper Peninsula

By Captain Brian Helminen - MCBA Director

Commercial Use, Fuel Tax Refund

After the first summer of chartering (six years

ago), I asked my accountant about getting a refund for the gas tax that I was paying to the State of Michigan. I can't remember his exact answer, but the bottom line was, I had to pay it. He said the refund is just related to agriculture, so I dropped

the subject and forgot about it. At the last MCBA meeting in Traverse City, I found out that we really don't have to pay the gas tax in the end if we talk to the right people and file the right papers. (This is one good reason, among many others, to attend the member meetings in October.)

I made the phone call and asked to have the form faxed to me and was told they usually don't fax the form. When I told her my receipt was only a week short of being too old for submission, she relented and faxed me the form. I happened to have two qualifying receipts, so after mailing in the faxed form with my original receipts, I was able to get a \$85.50 refund for 450 gallons. Thinking back, I burned roughly 1500 gallons per year x 6 years = 9000 gallons x .19 = \$1710 that I paid in extra fuel taxes.

Here's the real scoop on the Commercial Fuel Tax Reimbursement:

- All of us Charter Captains definitely qualify.
- The present amount is 19¢ per gallon of fuel.
- There is a six month window to request reimbursement from the date of your gas receipt. They are strict to the day of filing. If you are one day late getting it in the mail, they won't accept it.
- ORIGINAL fuel receipts need to be mailed along with the completed yellow claim form. Copies of receipts are NOT acceptable.

Each time you send in a claim form with receipts, the State will send you a refund along with a new, yellow fuel reimbursement form to use for your next claim for fuel tax reimbursements. It would make sense to mail the form with your receipts twice per year with the length of boating season we have here in Michigan. This way you will never be up against the six month window, like I was when I mailed them in February.

One thing to be aware of - Any refund you get is

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(Continued from page 5) . . . **Directors' Report**

INCOME to you, since you probably claimed the original purchase as an expense. The state is likely to watch for this, so don't invite an audit by not claiming the income.

It's easy and worthwhile so if you're not already claiming the refund, make the call to 517-636-4600 and tell them you are a Michigan charter boat operator and want to get set up for the Commercial Fuel Tax Reimbursement. They'll get your contact information and mail a form to you to get started.

If needed, here is the address:

Motor fuel refund Section
Michigan Department of Treasury
P.O. Box 30709
Lansing, MI 48909-8209 8



Northern Lake Huron

By Captain Rick Konecke - MCBA Director

Cisco rehabilitation was one topic at the last lake Huron Citizen Advisory meeting. This is what they had to say.

Restoring cisco in Saginaw Bay would provide an additional prey base for walleye. Historically, cisco were a main food item of walleye which reduced predation pressure on yellow perch and allowed more perch to survive to be adults. There are cisco in northern Lake Huron, but the population is a remnant of what it was and for many years, cisco have been rare below the Straits.

Spawning cisco do not migrate far from their spawning sites so they have been slow to establish other populations throughout Lake Huron. The plan is to establish spawning populations in Saginaw Bay and other sites by stocking them until enough adults are present.

The Fish and Wildlife Service, will collect eggs this fall during mid-November in the Les Cheneaux Islands and Drummond Island areas. Only a few eggs will be taken this fall, with full scale collections taking place in 2016. The idea of importing cisco from Lake Superior is under review. The Lake Superior strain of cisco is a different strain of cisco from the strain that occurs currently on the shoals in northern Lake Huron but it is very similar to the strain that existed in much of the Main Basin and Saginaw Bay before collapsing. Possibly testing new strains like was done with lake trout rehabilitation program will assist in establishing cisco wild reproduction in most of Lake Huron. For example, the most successful naturally reproducing strain of lake trout in Lake Huron is the

Seneca strain that originated from outside the Lake Huron watershed in Seneca Lake New York. Discussions are occurring to determine if the Lake Superior strain will be stocked in Lake Huron. 8



Southern Lake Huron

By Captain Ken Deaton - MCBA Director

2016 Lake Huron Regional Fisheries workshops

Dates and locations as follows:

- Bay City (April 19, 6-9 p.m.) -- Knights of Columbus (KC) Hall, 360 S. River Rd (M-13), Bay City, MI 48708
- Ubly/Bad Axe (April 21, 6-9 p.m.) -- Ubly Fox Hunter's Club, 2153 Ubly Rd, Ubly, MI 48475
- Cedarville (April 26, 6-9 p.m.) -- Clark Township Community Center, 133 E. M-134, Cedarville, MI 49719
- Alpena (April 27, 6-9 p.m.) -- NOAA Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center, 500 W. Fletcher St., Alpena, MI 49707 8



Lake Erie & Lake St. Clair

by Captain Henry Walters - MCBA Director

Hi everyone!

The need for regulation of professional guides and outfitters who provide services to anglers and hunters has come to my attention. Michigan has been recognized by numerous fishing, hunting and conservation groups. In growing numbers, these groups are calling for registration, training, and insurance standards for the protection of clients.

State land use permits are currently required by the Michigan DNR for fishing and hunting guides conducting commercial operations on state lands and waters. Guides who obtain the use permit are given the option of having their contact information posted on the DNR website. Each guide is issued a wallet sized ID card and commercial use stickers for any vehicles used while providing services. There are currently no fees, training, testing, or insurance requirements associated with hunting guide permits. Fishing guides must meet specific qualifications and reporting requirements, carry insurance, obtain a department-issued inland pilots license or United States Coast Guard operator license, and pass a boat

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inspection.

Commercial guiding permits are currently issued with no oversight and virtually no regulation. This situation is hurting Michigan's reputation as a destination for fishing and hunting for people from out of state as well as in-state fishermen and hunters who engage the services of guides and have no assurance of a quality experience, personal safety, or even an ethical pursuit of fish or game.

Michigan lags far behind other states in the area of commercial guiding regulation although often cited as a premier destination for fishermen and hunters. Michigan has an abysmal track record when it comes to the commercial guiding business. States like Maine, Montana, Alaska, Wyoming, Idaho and others known for their fishing and hunting have recognized the value of appropriate regulations for commercial outfitters and guides, and Michigan can benefit from catching up with these other states.

Stricter regulations are needed in the near future. On another note, Asian Carp could cause some Lake Erie fish to decline. If they successfully invade Lake Erie, Asian Carp could eventually account for about a third of the total weight of fish in the lake and could cause declines in most fish species, including prized sport and commercial fish like Walleye. According to a new computer modeling's study, however, most of the expected declines in Lake Erie will not be as extreme as some experts have predicted according to the Food Web study by U of M Hongyan Zhang and colleagues from other American and Canadian research institutions. A few fish species including small mouth bass would likely increase.

The invasive carp would likely affect Lake Erie's food web in two main ways: they would likely compete with native fish by eating their food, and juvenile Asian Carp would likely become food for fish eating fish. According to the study, walleye, rainbow trout, gizzard shad, and emerald shiners could all decline. Small mouth bass stood to gain the most.

Previous predictions of Asian Carp impacts in the Great Lakes have ranged widely. Some experts say Asian Carp could dominate the Great Lakes fisheries and food webs, while others suggest the effects would likely be minor because much of the Great Lakes is not a suitable habitat for Asian Carp.

"We don't know how these two Asian Carp species are going to do in Lake Erie, so we have to incorporate that uncertainty into our model projections" said co-author Doran Mason a research ecologist at GLERL. The team has shared its Lake Erie results with the Great Lakes resource managers to help

inform decisions related to Asian Carp. Lake Erie may be more vulnerable to Asian Carp due to its proximity to waters where Asian Carp exist, the adequate food, and the availability of suitable spawning habitat. The same research team is now working on modeling studies to predict Asian Carp impacts in Lakes Michigan, Huron, and Ontario, as well as a study of the regional economic impacts associated with Asian Carp in Lake Erie. Right in the middle is Lake St. Clair without even a mention?

Well, talk to everyone later when it's closer to launch date! 8



Lake Michigan

By Captain Tony Radjenovich
MCBA Port Captain - Leland

Hello Captains



When I first heard Professor James Diana, the Michigan Sea Grant Director, first talk about net pen aquaculture in the Great Lakes and was given the opportunity to question the process which was provided to the Michigan Quality of Life Group, I knew fish farming in the Great Lakes was bad for Michigan. Since then I have contacted and sent messages to multiple State Senators and Representatives, met with Senator Stabenow's area Manager and talked to directors and representatives from many of the States conservation organizations. Most agree that fish farming in the Great Lakes is bad for Michigan. I studied the economics of the current fishing and tourism activities we have on the Great Lakes and compared them to the proposed economy that fish farming in the Great Lakes was suggested to bring. Irresponsible fish farming came up short. I studied the health and ecology risks posed then compared the proposed adaptive management methods of mitigation. Again irresponsible fish farming came up short. At this time, I'm cautiously pleased that net pens in the Great Lakes won't be allowed for the time being.

The Michigan Quality of Life Group, which is made up of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Department of Environmental Quality and Department of Natural Resources, made public on March 9, 2016 that they do not recommend net pen aquaculture in the Great Lakes at this time.

Their reasons for doing so were as follows and I quote: "Given the ecological and environmental risks and uncertainties, as pointed out by the Science Panel and with further information provided through public input, commercial net-pen aquaculture would

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(Continued from page 7) . . . **PORT CAPTAINS REPORT**

pose significant risks to fishery management and other types of recreation and tourism. Furthermore, both collaborating management interests and tribal nation interests would likely not agree to Michigan moving forward and pose a significant challenge in any attempts to do so."

I don't believe that the fight to keep net pen aquaculture out of the Great Lakes is won. For one thing, there are still bills in both the Michigan House and Senate supporting net pen aquaculture in the Great Lakes. Secondly, the old State Au Sable River hatchery use permit is currently being contested so the owner won't be allowed to send tons of untreated waste into the river. We need their permit to be revoked. If revoked, this will be a second loud message to our legislators that irresponsible fish farming is bad for Michigan. Furthermore, the promotion of net pen aquaculture is currently on the agenda of an upcoming meeting supporting its use. We need you to support Michigan House Bill 5255. Bill 5255 will tighten up the language in the current state law on aquaculture to not allow any waters connected to the Great Lakes to be used for fish farming. House Bill 5255 does allow for responsible, fully enclosed fish farming.

The waters of Michigan are a very special resource that we all must do our best to protect and respect. I'm proud of the diligent and tireless efforts the MCBA Board and many members provided to get the current decision of the State to not pursue Great Lakes aquaculture. Thanks to all of you for all your hard work. Now it is almost time to get on the Lakes and fish. Good luck to all I hope everyone has a safe a productive year. 8



Show Chairman

Captain Rich Haslett—Vice President

248-542-1563

taloncharters@gmail.com

Sport Shows

The attendance from our first two shows have increased this year. We have one more show to do in Grand Rapids and hope for a great turnout also. I want to thank the following Captains for donating a charter for our 2016 shows: Capt. Brady Anderson (Storm Hawk Charters), Capt. Dan Golden (Fire Plug Charters), Capt. Doug Karakas (E-Fish-N-Sea Charters), Capt. Kevin Roberts (Fish Stalker Charters), Capt. John King (Halcyon Charters) and Capt. Bill Myers (Delta Dawn Charters). We give away two donated charters per show and have a list started of Captains willing to donate for the 2017 season. If

you would like to help MCBA at these shows by donating a charter, please give me a call or e-mail me to add you to our list.

I want to thank the following people who took time out of their busy schedules to help run the booth and simulator at the three shows we attend; Capt. Kevin Roberts, Capt. Eddie McMillion, Capt. Mike & Pam Nelson and Capt. Doug & Mary Karakas. A job well done by all!

New this year at the shows... we began selling the MCBA Cookbooks. 8

LAKE HURON CITIZENS' FISHERY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

By Capt. Terry R. Walsh - Past President



The LHC FAC has recommended and the DNR Lake Huron manage team has put in place an aggressive cormorant reduction plan to begin in 2016. "The two-year cormorant diet study has demonstrated the impact the birds are having on Saginaw Bay's forage base, yellow perch, and walleye," Basin Coordinator Todd Grischke said. "We will be recommending a 50-percent reduction this year with a long range goal of 90-percent."

Effective cormorant control is one of three major goals for restoration of the highly desirable yellow perch, which is currently experiencing an all-time historic low population. The other two goals are a reduction of small walleye numbers (new walleye regulations of eight in possession and a 13-inch minimum size limit have been implemented), and the removal of commercial, small-mesh trap nets for yellow perch from Saginaw Bay.

"Serafin Fisheries has agreed to begin pulling some of his Saginaw Bay yellow perch nets in return for a commercial harvest permit for whitefish in the waters off Harbor Beach," Grischke said. "This is a two-year pilot study. If successful, Mr. Serafin has agreed to permanently remove his yellow perch nets from Saginaw Bay in return for a permanent license to harvest whitefish in the waters off Harbor Beach. Two years from now we would like to have all commercial nets for yellow perch removed from Saginaw Bay."

An extensive study has also been under way to restore what was once normal reef spawning structure in Saginaw Bay. "The problem historic walleye spawning sites now face in the bay are two-fold," biologist Dave Fielder said. "There's excellent rocky, rubble-strewn structure for spawning in the northern

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part of the bay, but the water is too cold up there when walleye are actively spawning. The inner bay has the best temperatures for spawning fish, but its historic sites have been badly degraded by siltation."

Two remnants of the bay's spawning reefs still remain: the North Island Reef and the reef off Duck Island. Coreyon Reef was a highly productive spawning site but is now covered by too much silt and sediment to be effective.

"What's interesting about Coreyon Reef," Fielder said, "is walleye are still showing a preference for this reef over the other two. Therefore, we have reef restoration plans being implemented for Coreyon Reef, possibly as early as October of 2017 if permits and funding come through."

Currently, Saginaw Bay's walleye recruitment depends entirely on river spawning. Effective spawning reefs would serve as a backup should the river systems suddenly stop providing reliable year classes.

Originally a dreaded invader and a perceived threat to Great Lakes sport fish, the round gobies have become anything but. "Gobies have become the new alewife," said Randall Claramunt from the Charlevoix Fisheries Research Station. "Every predator in the Great Lakes eats gobies. They are the reason our fisheries are still as good as they are because all other forage prey have been in a steady decline for years and some have reached historic lows. Except for salmon, our sport fish are thriving on gobies."

Some experts had predicted gobies were in a state of decline. Not so says Claramunt.

"Gobies live and spawn in the rocky bottom structure of lakes," Claramunt said, "and current trawling methods used to assess bait fish populations aren't working for gobies, as the nets cannot get close enough to the bottom. They go right over the gobies, which quickly hide in the rocks. We are going to have to develop a new means to assess goby populations before we can have a good understanding how strong their populations really are. Once we do, I think people will be amazed how strong a forage base they present." 8

USCG LICENSE RENEWAL HELP:

Lt. Commander, USCG (retired) Charles "Chuck" Kakuska a Maritime Licensing Specialist, has been assisting our members for the past 10 years. We recommend him and appreciate his continued services to our association.

Give him a call at (734)847-1723
email: SEAKSLic@aol.com
for help with your USCG renewal. 8

MCBA Cookbooks

Most everyone knows that MCBA has a new cookbook. We began selling them last August for a \$15.00 donation and want to report that the sales have been going very well. We started offering them this year at the sport shows we attend and have been getting great reviews. I want to thank Sue Winowiecki for taking some with her to the Ludington Sea Grant meeting. Sue was able to sell 11 that day. I also want to thank Pam Nelson and Mary Karakas for selling these books at the sport shows. To date we have sold over 300 books.

We found that these books are easy to sell to your customers that charter you. How often do you get asked "What is your favorite fish recipe?" or "How do you cook your fish?" If you have a few of these books on your boat it's easy to pull one out and show them all the recipes we have collected. Within this book there are over 120 fish recipes alone. If you would like to purchase some of the cookbooks and help out your organization, please contact me.

Captain Rich Haslett - 248-542-1563

taloncharters@gmail.com 8



A Retiree's View over the Transom

By Captain Jim Fenner

As I write this article in March, I am in the south of Florida. But even as a retiree in the sunny south, I hear loud and clear the huge problems that we are facing that loom over all of us who love the Great Lakes. First, the one that is generating the most publicity, and is (maybe) our greatest immediate danger is the prospect of Aquaculture (caged fish) in the open waters of Michigan. I say maybe, because today's headlines could easily be replaced with even more catastrophic headlines should one or both of the crude oil pipelines under the straits burst today or tomorrow. That would put aquaculture and the other looming issue (the begin-

(Continued on page 10)

nings of the tribal negotiations) right out of our minds for a very long time.

If you love the lakes, and if you care about the environment, and to an important, but in my opinion, lesser extent, if you make a living on the lakes, you need to become an involved and active participant in confronting all of these issues. All are extremely serious and pressing. Each has a constituency of powerful persons and companies who for reasons of profit and otherwise, do not share our views regarding the stewardship of the Great Lakes.

In the past I've written about the end of the season, our MCBA conference, even the ice cover. Now I feel the need to be even more serious. We must confront these three issues, immediately and collectively, forming alliances with like-minded organizations, speaking clearly and forcefully together, we must confront and vanquish the opposition with the facts, and with the votes we need in the legislature.

I hope when spring comes and we all get out our boats (even little ones, like my new one is) we will have these issues under control, and we can all return to launching, rigging and fishing. But if they are not resolved, as is likely, we cannot afford to let our attention wane. For if we do, we will surely lose and pay the price in the long run.

We have recently learned that the state does not now support Caged Fish Aquaculture. But that is not sufficient. Legislation making it illegal must be passed. Also, currently there is legislation being considered to increase vigilance over these pipelines, but that is also not sufficient. They must be turned off. Nothing less will remove the danger.

We must be vigilant to the extreme as the new consent decree is hammered out. Our fishery has suffered in many areas under the terms of the current decree with its lax enforcement rules. We should not agree to another decades long decree with such weak tribal law enforcement terms.

We all have an overwhelming interest in seeing our lakes and our fishery protected and well managed. We all need the MCBA to be strong and to be actively involved in confronting these issues. Finally, I want to return my focus to the MBCA. I look forward to every MCBA newsletter and all the in-between correspondence. Through the MCBA we can now quickly organize and share the information needed to confront the issues we face.

When spring arrives, I'll be back, and if the fish are biting, I hope to catch a few for myself, but while I'm doing it, I will also be focusing on these

important issues. I hope you will be also.

One thing is for sure; I intend to stay in touch with my friends and former colleagues in the MCBA. The retired member category is the way I do it. Keep this in mind for your own future. When it warms up a little, look for me around the docks.

Hope to see you there. 8

2016 SOUTHERN LAKE MICHIGAN FISHERIES WORKSHOP

April 21, 2016

Time: 7:00 P.M. – 9:30 P.M.

Where: South Haven Moose Lodge

1025 Wells Street

South Haven, MI 49090

Questions about the program?

Contact: Dan O'Keefe - (616) 994-4572
okeefed@msu.edu 8

Governor's Budget Items Relative To Fisheries

Invasive Species: \$1 million one-time General Fund to design an innovative solution to prevent invasive carp from entering Michigan waterways.

Fish Harvest Reporting: \$600,000 (\$300,000 General Fund; \$300,000 Game & Fish Protection Fund) to create a real-time electronic system for state-licensed commercial and tribal fishers and wholesale dealers to report harvest and transaction information. Federal, state, and tribal governments use this information to establish harvest levels and regulations of commercial and recreational fish within the Great Lakes. A recent Lean Process Improvement project found that 95 percent of the current 945 day process could be eliminated by improving the reporting systems for commercial harvest and wholesale transactions.

Fish Production: Capital outlay planning authorization for a \$12.2 million project to improve fishing experiences by stocking more and larger steelhead, walleye, northern pike, and muskellunge through critical infrastructure improvements at Thompson State Fish Hatchery and the Little Manistee River Weir. The planning authorization is contained in the Department of Technology, Management and Budget recommendation. 8



MCBA Annual Membership Meeting October 21, 22 & 23, 2016

Working With You For A Better Charter Industry

The 2016 Annual Michigan Charter Boat Association Business Conference will be held over the weekend of October 21, 22 and 23, 2016 at The Treetops Resort in Gaylord, MI.

The Association has made arrangements with the hotel for a special room rate for those who wish to stay overnight for one or two nights. Call them; **use this Group Toll Free Number: 855-261-8764 to secure your room reservation**, and ask for the MCBA special rate (Inn Standard: \$79, Inn Deluxe: \$99, Lodge Business King: \$139, Lodge Queen: \$139, Lodge Queen Deluxe: \$139) the address is 3962 Wilkinson Rd Gaylord, MI 49735

The fall conference is a great way to catch up on what's going on and to enjoy a day or two away from the regular home routine. Bring your spouse or significant other, too. There are lots of things (shopping for the upcoming holidays) to do in the area.

The Annual Conference will begin on Friday evening with a social gathering in the hospitality room (6: PM - till?). This informal gathering will provide an evening long opportunity to mix with MCBA officers and board members; maybe some DNR personnel or Sea Grant staff, and of course, other captains from all over the state. There will be FREE snacks, pizza, pop and adult drinks.

Of course, attendance at this event is strictly optional, but it is a great way to start your weekend at the MCBA conference. And you might get a chance to talk to someone in the DNR who needs

to hear your issue. However, you don't need to attend the Friday evening session to enjoy the conference main event.

The main event will begin early Saturday morning, with coffee and Complete Deluxe Buffet Breakfast (included with your registration) during registration. The program begins at 9:00 AM. Various Speakers and panels will present information about issues of interest to our captains. There are question and answer sessions at the end of each presentation. The program for this fall's conference agenda is located here.

On Saturday evening we will have a dinner at the hotel, followed by a short program including the Annual MCBA Awards and our honored dinner speaker (to be announced). After the short program, there is a spirited tackle raffle, usually raffling off some of the best current tackle from the best companies.

For those who stay over and we encourage you to do so, Sunday morning brings the official annual business meeting after coffee, juice, and BREAKFAST BUFFET (Free to all members & spouse). The meeting will cover all the current business of the Association and will end following the election of officers. Normally, the meeting is over by 10:30 AM or so, and folks begin to check out to travel home or take in local events.

We offer our annual business meeting as a benefit to our members for the sake of working together. We hope you will attend to learn more from your Association and what we have to offer your charter business. Why not take a little time off from your normal schedule and take in an interesting, informative and relaxing weekend for fun and camaraderie with fellow captains. 8

The Merchant Mariner Certificate

Suitable for Framing is presently available at:

<http://homeport.uscg.mil/mmcert>



Mariners who hold or have held a valid Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC) can download, save, print and proudly display the new certificate.

Users are reminded that the certificate, which is to be used for display purposes only, is not authorized as a substitute for a valid MMC and will not substitute for the MMC where the requirement to post a credential exists. There is no fee for downloading the certificate. 8



Email fishing reports and pictures to:

Fishing@FishMCBA.com

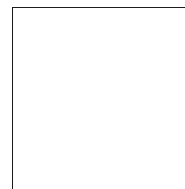




Michigan Charter Boat Association
3396 Anna Drive
Bay City, MI 48706

'In God We Trust'

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MCBA
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
AND
BUSINESS MEETING
October 21, 22 & 23, 2016
in Gaylord
Hope to See You There!
Meeting will be held at the
TREETOPS RESORT
IN GAYLORD, MICHIGAN
(855) 261-8764

*Learning to Make
Our Charter Businesses
Even Better!*

THE MICHIGAN CHARTER BOAT ASSOCIATION IS A FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED
NOT-FOR-PROFIT 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATION, AND RECOGNIZED FOR
TAX-DEDUCTIBLE GIVING BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

Charter Fishing Boat 4-Sale

- ♦ 1990 310 Cherokee Chief (31 ft. with pulpit) and trailer
- ♦ Equipment and tackle included
- ♦ Twin 350 Crusader motors replaced 2014
- ♦ Cabin - v-berth, galley and full head
- ♦ Dry dock inspection due 2018
- ♦ Dockside inspection due 2016
- ♦ Inside storage since owned (2002 - 2016)

Asking \$22,500

For Information Contact: Mike Kelley

517-290-4260 - kelleysketch@yahoo.com 8

50th Anniversary of Michigan's Salmon Fishery

April 2, 1966, was when the first of 850,000 Coho salmon were planted in the Platte River in Benzie County. The eggs were obtained from Oregon. April 2, 1966 was a snowy day. Dr. Howard Tanner, then State Fisheries Chief, under the directive of DNR Director Ralph MacMullan, wearing a tie and overcoat, took a microphone on a makeshift stage on the banks of the Platte River flowing into Lake Michigan southwest of Traverse City. Dignitaries sat on card table chairs behind him for a brief cere-

mony before a state legislator picked up a ceremonial golden bucket and dumped a load of finger-sized cohos into the river.

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of Michigan's Pacific salmon stocking program the Department of Natural Resources hosted a celebratory event at the Platte River State Fish Hatchery on April 4th, 2016. 8

Chinook Pier Charter Docks

The City of Grand Haven has three Charter Slips available for the upcoming season. For more information contact Char Seise, Community Affairs Manager for the City of Grand Haven at **616.842.2550** or go to the City website: <https://goo.gl/vUmUui> 8

God Bless America And Our Troops

FINAL NOTICE

2016 Membership Renewal
Available Online

@ fishmcba.com/members

Credit cards processed by PayPal
All major credit cards are accepted

Your Drug Program Expired
12/31/15

Stay Compliant - Renew Today!