

Coastal Markers



Volume 10, Issue 3

NEWSLETTER OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

Winter 2007

Secretary of State Presents Tidelands Check

Mississippi Secretary of State Eric Clark presented the Commission on Marine Resources (CMR) with a check for \$2,327,556 to be used for Fiscal Year 2007 Tidelands Funds projects at a ceremony held Nov. 29 at the Maritime & Seafood Industry Museum Schooner Pier Complex in Biloxi. The money is from tideland lease revenue collected on the Mississippi Gulf Coast last year—the first full year of lease collections after Hurricane Katrina.

“Tidelands lease collections are indispensable to rebuilding the infrastructure of the Gulf Coast,” said Secretary of State Eric Clark. “This year we collected less money than in the past due to the impact of the hurricane on our largest leaseholders. However, I’m confident that as rebuilding continues we’ll see this annual return increase.”

The Tidelands Trust Fund Program consists of funds derived from the lease



Secretary of State Eric Clark presents the FY2007 Tidelands check to the CMR. DMR Executive Director William Walker accepts the check on behalf of the CMR. From left, Secretary of State Eric Clark, Mississippi State Representative Michael Janus, Mississippi State Representative Randall Patterson and DMR Executive Director William Walker.

rentals of tidelands and submerged lands. Revenues collected by the Office of Secretary of State are appropriated by the state legislature and administered by the Commission on Marine Resources (CMR).

Since 1990, the Secretary of State’s Office has collected more than \$60 million in tidelands leases.

Traditionally, the Mississippi Legislature appropriates the lease revenue for specific projects. This year, the Legislature authorized the required annual payment for the purchase of Deer Island and other projects to be determined by the Commission on Marine Resources.

“While the funds collected this year are reduced from years past, \$2.3 million is a lot of money,” said DMR Executive Director William Walker. “This money will allow us to make our annual payment toward the purchase of Deer Island and to continue to match federal dollars coming into coastal Mississippi. For every dollar of Tidelands money used as match, three to 10 dollars of federal money is generated.”

Rebuilding Mississippi’s oyster reefs



The DMR, with the help of commercial oyster harvesters, continues its efforts to rebuild oyster reefs ravaged by Katrina.

See page 5 for full story.

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**Mississippi Department
of Marine Resources**

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**Visit the DMR online
www.dmr.state.ms.us**

Director's Notes

Dr. William Walker



Restoration and rebuilding of our marine resources are in full swing along the Mississippi Gulf Coast as we move ahead into this New Year charged up by the great strides we're making working hand in hand with our partners, on the local, state and federal levels. Through the hard work of DMR staff, more than 500 fishermen are helping to restore shrimp, oyster and fish habitats.

The New Year also brings welcome news for residents still rebuilding from Katrina. The DMR has extended the permit waiver to allow rebuilding and repairing of previously permitted private piers, boathouses, and other waterfront access structures without a new permit until Dec. 31, 2007. The dimensions, location, and impacts of the previously permitted hurricane damaged structures must be no greater than those that existed pre-Hurricane Katrina.

We're also celebrating the second printing of our full-color poster "Saltwater Fish Common to Mississippi," and to encourage residents to buy a recreational saltwater fishing license, the DMR has teamed up with Coast artist Marty Wilson to do a poster signing at our headquarters in Biloxi on Jan. 29 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Everyone who stops by the DMR license lobby and either purchases a license or shows their valid 2007 Mississippi recreational saltwater fishing license, will receive a DMR saltwater fish identification poster, hand-signed by the artist.

The poster features Marty's artwork and depicts more than 30 saltwater fish common to Mississippi waters. An avid fisherman, Wilson grew up at his father's fishing camp on Point Cadet in Biloxi. The poster includes a brief description of each fish, including scientific name, peak season, habitat, average size and characteristics.

Can't make the event? Just buy a recreational saltwater fishing license at the DMR office in Biloxi any time between Jan. 22 and Feb. 28 (Mon-Fri, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.) and you'll receive a poster signed by the artist, while supplies last.

Executive Director

Thanks!

Thanks to those DMR employees who contributed to this issue of Coastal Markers:

**Marcia Garcia
Dale Diaz
Kerwin Cuevas
Scott Gordan
Kristina Broussard
Dr. Fred Deegen
Mai Dang
David Ruple
Jennifer Buchanan
Amy Taylor
Frank Wescovich
Bradley Randall
Dr. Mark Woodrey
Marian Dicas
Chris May**

Celebrate the Gulf

A Marine Education Festival



**March 31
10 a.m.- 4 p.m.
Memorial Park
Pass Christian**

*Fun for all ages
A FREE family event
Hands-on Exhibits*

**Hope to see
you there!**

Mississippi Gulf Coast... *On the move* *Let's get it right!*

Providing Tools
for
Smart Growth
and
Sustainable
Development

8th Annual

Coastal Development Strategies Conference

SMART GROWTH

Elected
Officials Free
With completed
registration
form

May 9-10, 2007

IP Hotel and Casino Resort Spa - Biloxi, Miss.

The conference is considered to be the *premier* smart growth conference on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources' Comprehensive Resource Management Plan (CRMP) and partner, the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce, are proud to host this conference. Over the past years the conference attendance has increased as we present a variety of topics, speakers, strategies and tools to protect our environment, our economy and our quality of life in Southern Mississippi.

The main focus for this annual conference is to continue our work as a region of decision makers to balance the conservation efforts and economic development as we proceed with planning, designing and building safe, healthy and livable communities for Southern Mississippi.

This conference is for you! The multidisciplinary event draws elected officials, city and county staff, contractors, developers, bankers, planners, realtors, engineers, landowners, industry, students, federal and state agencies, county boards of supervisors, lawyers, private and corporate entities, environmentalists, resource managers and others committed to building the Gulf Coast. Join us!

For information contact:

Mississippi Dept of Marine Resources

Tina Shumate
(228) 523-4122
Tina.Shumate@dmr.ms.gov

Marcia Garcia
(228) 523-4124
Marcia.Garcia@dmr.ms.gov

Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce

Katie Sandoz
(228) 604-0014
KatieS@mscoastchamber.com

Register Early!

Networking opportunities - Come meet old friends or make new friends as we address together the changes, challenges, opportunities, concerns and issues of our region. Innovative ideas, insights, case studies to address growth.

- ◆ Educational – A Coastal Decision-maker Workshop
- ◆ National and local speakers
- ◆ Exhibitors from across the region
- ◆ Cost - \$125 Conference Fee** \$80 Students
2 breakfasts, breaks, 2 lunches and evening reception
**Pre-registration deadline - April 27, 2007
After April 27 - \$155
On-Site - \$175
- ◆ **Wednesday, May 9** - National and local speakers, breakout sessions
Networking Reception
- ◆ **Thursday, May 10** - Speakers, breakout sessions



Registration forms available at:
www.dmr.state.ms.gov
www.mscoastchamber.com



Mississippi's Gulf Coast: Where opportunities for conservation of our natural resources and economic development of the region are a common goal.

8thth Annual
Smart
Growth
Conference

Coastal Development Strategies Conference

May 9-10, 2007

IP Hotel and Casino Resort Spa/Biloxi, Miss.

Registration Form

Please Print

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Business Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Phone: () _____ Fax: () _____

Do you have any dietary or physical constraints that we should be aware of? _____

CONFERENCE FEES (fill in the blank)

Deadline for pre-registration is April 27, 2007.

Regular Registration - \$125

After April 27 - \$155

On-site registration - \$175.00

Student Registration - \$80.00

TOTAL CONFERENCE FEES SUBMITTED \$ _____

A separate registration form is required for each registrant.

METHODS OF PAYMENT – Chose #1 or #2

Follow the instructions.

1. Check or purchase order

Print registration form and mail with payment to:
MS Department of Marine Resources/CRMP
Conference Registration
1141 Bayview Avenue
Biloxi, MS 39530

2. VISA/MasterCard (phone, fax or mail using credit card)

By phone: (228) 604-0014

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m

By fax: (228) 604-0105

By mail: Download registration form, mail with
VISA/MasterCard Number to:
MS Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce
11975E Seaway Rd.
Gulfport, MS 39503

Card Type: VISA MasterCard

Card No: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Registration is not complete until payment is received. When your payment is received you will receive a confirmation.

Conference fees include 2 breakfasts, refreshment breaks, 2 lunches, 1 evening reception and conference materials.

Hotel Accommodations: IP Hotel and Casino Resort Spa
Reservations: 1-888-946-2847
Be sure to mention: Coastal Development Strategies Conference – Smart Growth

Do you have questions?

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tina.shumate@dmr.ms.gov

Marcia Garcia (228) 523-4124
marcia.garcia@dmr.ms.gov

Katie Sandoz (228) 604-0014
KatieS@mscoastchamber.com

Refund/Cancellation Policy:

All changes or cancellations must be made in written form and received no later than April 10, 2004. Mail or fax requests to: MS Department of Marine Resources, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, MS 39530. Fax Number: (228)523-4179

No refunds will be granted after April 10, 2007.

Pre-registration ends April 27, 2007. After this date the registration fee is \$155.00. On-site registration is \$175.00.

We urge you to register early!

No admittance to conference site or activities without a badge.

**This conference is presented by the
Partners for Smart Growth in Southern Mississippi**



DMR, oyster harvesters work to repair reefs

The DMR Shellfish Bureau has been working with Mississippi commercial oyster harvesters to relay oysters from Biloxi Bay and Graveline Bayou to oyster reefs in the western Mississippi Sound to replace reef material lost during Hurricane Katrina. The project began Nov. 13 and was completed Jan. 10. About 75,059 sacks were planted on the Katrina-damaged reefs. Eighty-two Mississippi oyster boats participated.

Oysters were tonged out of Graveline Bayou and transferred to the DMR vessel *Conservationist* in Biloxi Bay. Oysters were dredged and placed on a barge. The oysters were then deployed to the oyster reefs in the western Mississippi Sound.

“We have received a lot of praise about this project from the fishermen,” said DMR Biological Program Coordinator Bradley Randall. “It was successful because we were able to put our fishermen to work and we will reap the benefits in the future. This project along with the spring cultch plants is a huge jumpstart in the recovery of our oysters resources.”

The oyster relaying project is part of a five-year oyster recovery plan funded through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Hurricane Katrina Disaster Grant. The first phase of this plan took place in the spring and fall of



Commercial oyster harvesters relayed oysters from Biloxi Bay and Graveline Bayou to a barge. The oysters were then deployed on reefs in the western Mississippi Sound.

2006, with the planting of oyster shells and other suitable reef material to attract larval oysters. Placing live adult oysters adjacent to these areas during the oyster relaying phase will increase the opportunity to

attract larvae. The oysters harvested during this project will not be used for personal or public consumption. They will be used solely as broodstock for future spat recruitment.

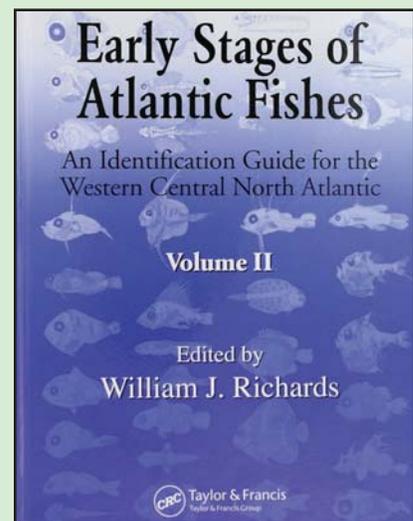
Coast scientists contribute to fish ID guide

Several coast fisheries biologists contributed to the recently published “Early Stages of Atlantic Fishes: An Identification Guide for the Western Central North Atlantic,” edited by William J. Richards. This comprehensive two-volume masterpiece includes descriptive information on the eggs, larvae and juveniles of all 214 fish families known to occur in the Atlantic Ocean stretching from North Carolina to the equator, including the Gulf of Mexico.

Joanne Lyzckowski-Shultz, Pam Bond and Glenn Zapfe with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s National Marine Fisheries Service in Pascagoula, Bruce Comyns and Nicole Cotton at The University of Southern Mississippi’s Gulf Coast Research Laboratory and David Ruple with the DMR’s Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve contributed several chapters in the book. More than 70 international larval fish experts authored various chapters in the book. In addition to fish descriptions and meristics, illustrations are included to aid the user with identifications.

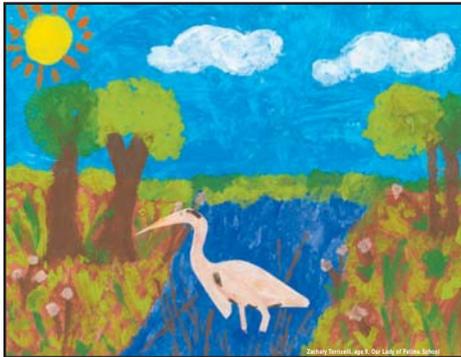
Knowledge of the early life history stages in fishes is critical to the management of the coastal and oceanic fish species. An ability to identify smaller fishes and eggs help scientists determine critical habitats that fish use for spawning and as nursery areas.

For information on obtaining the book, please see www.crcpress.com.



Grand Bay NERR Manager David Ruple contributed to the new fish guide.

2007 Marine Information Calendar



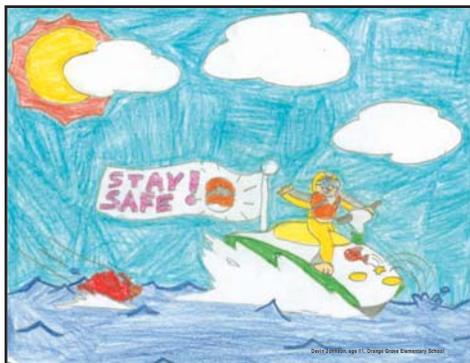
January



February



March



April

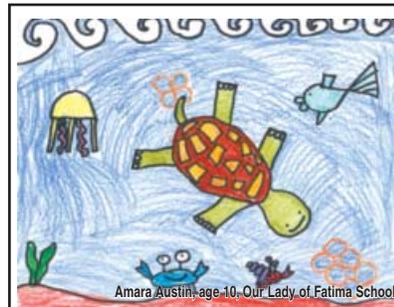
The DMR has announced the winners of the “Preserving and Enjoying Mississippi’s Coastal Resources” 2007 Marine Information Calendar art contest.

In an effort to generate an interest in and promote the awareness of the value of our coastal resources, the DMR held an art contest for third-, fourth-, fifth- and sixth-grade students in Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties. Students were asked to create artwork illustrating the contest theme: “Preserving and Enjoying Mississippi’s Coastal Resources.” The winning artwork appears in the 2007 calendar.

“This year’s DMR Marine Information Calendar features the artwork of third-, fourth-, fifth- and sixth-graders all along the Mississippi Gulf Coast,” said DMR Executive Director William Walker. “More than 990 students from 37 schools mailed in art contest entries, showing their continued interest in and dedication to the preservation and enjoyment of our coastal resources.”

The front and back covers feature the winning artwork of:

- **Amara Austin**, age 10, of Our Lady of Fatima School
- **Kirstyn West**, age 9, of North Bay Elementary School
- **Lindsey Reynolds**, age 11, of Bayou View Middle School
- **Logan Salter**, age 10, of Second Street Elementary School
- **Noah Lafferty**, age 10, of St. Martin Upper Elementary School
- **Antonio Lepoma**, age 11, of Vanclave Upper Elementary School
- **Megan Cole**, age 9, of Vanclave Upper Elementary School
- **Merritt Baria**, age 10, of Second Street Elementary School
- **Dante Johnson**, age 11, of Orange Grove Elementary School



Amara Austin, age 10, Our Lady of Fatima School



Kirstyn West, age 9, North Bay Elementary School



Logan Salter, age 10, Second Street Elementary School



Noah Lafferty, age 10, St. Martin Upper Elementary School

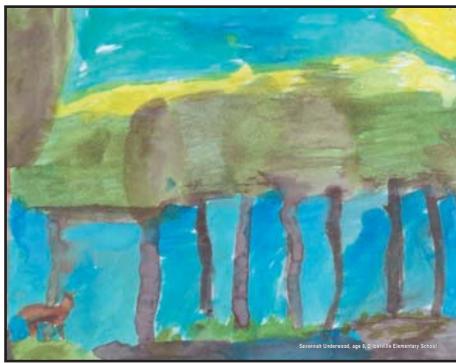
Preserving and Enjoying Mississippi's Coastal Resources

Mississippi Department of Marine Resources

2007 Marine Information Calendar

Tidal Calendar • Sunrise & Sunset Times • Moon Phases • Size & Possession Limits

The cover of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources 2007 Marine Information Calendar features the winning artwork of third-, fourth-, fifth- and sixth-grade students.



May



June



Art Contest winners announced



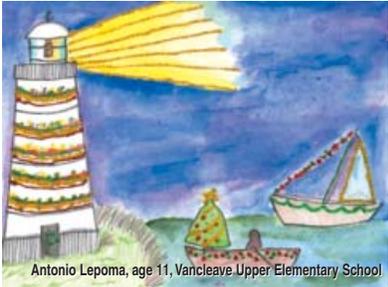
North Bay Elementary School



Lindsey Reynolds, age 11, Bayou View Middle School



Van Upper Elementary School



Antonio Lepoma, age 11, Vanclave Upper Elementary School

Mississippi's Coastal Resources

Calendar of Marine Resources Information

Permits • Reef Coordinates • MS Saltwater Fishing Records • Boating Safety

2007 Marine Information Calendar features artwork of six



and possession limits, boating safety information, Mississippi saltwater fishing records and marine debris information.

Calendars are available to the public free-of-charge, while supplies last, and can be picked up at the DMR office, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, and at many bait shops and other businesses in the three coast counties. For more information, contact the DMR at (228) 374-5000.

The calendar also features the winning artwork of:

- January: **Zachary Torricelli**, age 9, of Our Lady of Fatima School
- February: **Holly McKenzie**, age 9, of East Hancock Elementary School
- March: **Trent Gill**, age 10, of North Bay Elementary School
- April: **Devin Johnson**, age 11, of Orange Grove Elementary School
- May: **Savannah Underwood**, age 8, of D'Iberville Elementary School
- June: **Zachary Keel**, age 11, of Pass Christian Middle School
- July: **Bailey Trosclair**, age 10, of D'Iberville Middle School
- August: **Christina Miller**, age 11, of Bayou View Middle School
- September: **Takeydra Jones**, age 11, of Beauvoir Elementary School
- October: **Bianca Quade**, age 11, of North Bay Elementary School
- November: **Khristian Belken**, age 9, of St. Martin East Elementary School
- December: **Sasha Hansen**, age 11, of Three Rivers Elementary School

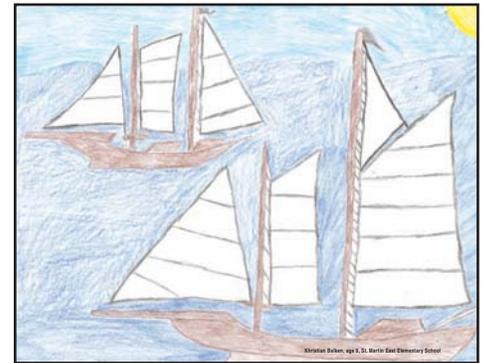
The calendar, which was printed through a grant from the federal Sport Fish Restoration Program, highlights DMR programs and contains tide information, sunrise and sunset times, moon phases, reef coordinates, size



September



October



November



July



August



December



GNDNERR hosts invasive plants workshop

The Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve's (GNDNERR) Coastal Training Program (CTP) partnered with the Mississippi Coastal Plains RC&D Council and the Jackson County Soil and Water Conservation District to host the workshop, Identification and Management of Invasive Terrestrial and Aquatic Plants Common to Coastal Mississippi, at the Gautier Convention Center on Nov. 16-17, 2006. The workshop targeted land managers, city public works staff, and road crews in Jackson County.

The workshop taught participants how to identify and manage common terrestrial and aquatic invasive plants, including alligator weed, Chinese tallow, cogon grass, giant salvinia, hydrilla, kudzu, torpedo grass, tropical soda apple and tropical spiderwort.

Invasive plants have a negative



GNDNERR Stewardship Coordinator Chris May demonstrates herbicide application equipment for workshop attendees.

impact on the natural biodiversity of the ecosystems in which they are found. Left unmanaged, these species outcompete native plants and may ultimately impact local economies by having a negative effect on industries such as agriculture, silviculture, and ecotourism. The best way to manage invasive plants is through early detection

and rapid response. Guest speakers at the workshop included regional experts in invasive plant identification and management who shared case studies that focused on the management of cogon grass and giant salvinia, which are two critical invasive plants in Jackson County.

Workshop participants visited the GNDNERR and participated in on-site management demonstrations of the treatment of Chinese tallow, cogon grass and

torpedo grass.

The GNDNERR's Stewardship Program has been actively working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to control the spread of cogon grass and intends to manage Chinese tallow later this year.

Permeable paving at reserve to help with run-off

During the past five years reserve staff have worked with a number of partners to improve public access for visitors. A boat ramp and fishing pier were constructed on Bayou Heron that are heavily utilized during the year. While dramatic improvements were made to the ramp and new piers were constructed, the dirt parking area remained relatively unchanged.

Recently, the Grand Bay National Wildlife Refuge secured funding to improve the parking area. In an effort to accomplish this in the most environmentally friendly way possible, the refuge was able to install permeable paving over the entire parking area. Rather than run-off directly entering nearby Bayou Heron, it will now be filtered through gravel, underlain with plastic pavers before entering the coastal waters.

In addition to the parking area at the boat ramp, permeable paving was also installed at two new parking access points along Bayou Heron Road and the Oak Grove Birding Trail. Pavers were used both on the quarter-mile long trail and at the trailhead parking area. For more information on access to the reserve, please contact the NERR offices at (228) 475-7047.



Permeable paving was installed at the Oak Grove Birding Trail to filter run-off before it enters Bayou Heron.

DMR continues restoration of storm-damaged fishing reefs



The rebuilding of Mississippi's artificial reefs began last fall when the DMR distributed approximately 500 concrete culverts (from the front beach drainage system in Harrison County) on Fish Havens 1 and 2, located about 25 miles south of Biloxi.

The DMR began restoration efforts on the artificial reefs damaged by Hurricane Katrina in October 2006 by distributing approximately 500 concrete culverts (from the front beach drainage system in Harrison County) on Fish Haven 1 and Fish Haven 2. These reefs are located about 25 miles south of Biloxi. Hurricane Katrina damaged about 80 percent to 90 percent of Mississippi's nearshore and offshore artificial reefs on Aug. 29, 2005.

The culverts, which were replaced after being damaged by Hurricane Katrina, were donated by the city of Pass Christian.

The state lost about 80 percent of its 16 offshore reefs and 44 nearshore reefs during Hurricane Katrina.

"We would like to thank Mayor McDermott and the City of Pass Christian for giving us the culverts and letting us store them at Pass Christian Harbor," said DMR marine fisheries biologist, Kerwin Cuevas. "These concrete culverts will help replace essential reef fish habitat that was lost due to Hurricane Katrina."

The reefs will provide a hard bottom that will diversify habitat and, therefore, increase fish species diversity and richness. Matthews Marine of Pass Christian is the contractor deploying the reef material.

The culvert project was funded through

the Tidelands Trust Fund. The DMR will continue its efforts in Summer 2006 to restore and enhance Mississippi's artificial reefs using grant money from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) funds.

Marine Patrol Citation Totals

(January-December 2006)

Shrimp	12
Crab	54
Oyster	9
Commercial Net Fishing	8
Live Bait	2
Miscellaneous Seafood	3
Recreational Fishing	456
Boat and Water Safety	233
Marine Litter	6
Miscellaneous	59

Sound Advice

Lt. Frank Wescovich



You may have seen this same advice in my column in previous years. The information given below is so vitally important this time of year that it is worth repeating.

Winter is upon us and has brought the usual cold and damp weather to our area of the Gulf Coast. With this cold weather comes a whole new realm of problems. Being out on the water this time of year can be significantly more dangerous than other times. If you don't prepare, you could find yourself in some serious difficulty. Please, for your own safety and the safety of others, try to work the following tips into your winter boating plans. They should make your winter outings much safer and more enjoyable.

1. First and foremost, wear your life jacket. Drowning remains the number one cause of death in boating accidents.

2. Dress for the anticipated weather. Hypothermia will creep up on you before you realize what is happening. It can happen even on our unseasonably milder days that we have been experiencing.

3. Have your boat properly equipped. Prudent boat operation in cold weather requires much more equipment than warm weather operation. Make sure you take it with you, because when you get cold and need it, it is too late.

4. Keep abreast of the weather. Although winter weather doesn't usually change as fast as it does in the summer, the changes that do occur are usually not for the better.

5. Know your boat and its capabilities and limitations. A boat that was marginally suited for ventures to the offshore islands in the summer is def-

See **SOUND ADVICE**, page 10

Seafood Safety Corner



During the months of July and August, the Mississippi Shellfish Sanitation Program underwent the Fiscal Year 2006 US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) processing and shipping

element evaluation. FDA Specialist Miles Motes from Mobile, Ala. conducted this evaluation. The

purpose was to ensure compliance with the National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP). Thirteen certified oyster processing facilities were selected for joint inspections by FDA and the DMR Seafood Technology Bureau (STB) staff. Files chosen for review included regulatory forms from October 2005 to June 2006.

The Annual Program Evaluation Report (APER) summarized the findings of the processing and shipping element evaluation. This report also included responses from state personnel, action plans for the correction of deficiencies and program accomplishments. The Seafood Technology Bureau successfully passed the FDA evaluation and is in compliance with the NSSP Model Ordinance requirements.

Bureau personnel have been assisting the Shellfish Bureau with the Stewardship Program and the Shrimp and Crab Bureau with the Restoration Program. For the Vietnamese community, STB employee Mai Dang has assisted with translation for registration. STB Seafood Officer's Jeff Davis and Ron Jordan have been working on the DMR vessels counting oyster sacks

and completing trip tickets.

In September and October, the annual Biloxi Seafood Festival and Gautier Mullet Festival were held. Brochures and pamphlets regarding seafood safety as well as educational materials and oyster cookbooks were distributed to the public by the STB staff. Cynthia Harris, intern for the STB mentoring program, assisted during the events. Other volunteers included Sally Richards, Debbie Belk, Melanie Lane and Veronica Spears of the DMR Finfish Bureau and Iris Lofland of the DMR Office of Fisheries.

In October, Ruth Posadas, Kristina Broussard and Mai Dang, STB personnel, participated in the Nile Tilapia Rodeo at Custom Pack, Inc. This event was developed by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP). Custom Pack, Inc. is a local shrimp, bait processing, and aquaculture facility. Hurricane Katrina flooded various ponds owned by Custom Pack, Inc. One particular pond contained tilapia, an introduced and invasive species to this area. During the flood, many tilapia as well as other species of fish were washed into the surrounding ponds. In order to prevent the continuous increase of invasive species in the surrounding ponds, Rotenone was sprayed into each pond to kill the fish. Once the tilapia perished, they floated to the top of the water where they were collected and identified.



Kristina Broussard

SOUND ADVICE, continued from page 9

initely not a wise choice for the same trip in the winter.

6. Be sure to have some form of reliable communications onboard. VHF radiotelephone is the first choice and cellular phone would be a good second choice. Remember when you call for help on a VHF, you can be heard by anyone listening in range. On a cell phone, you only call one person and the range is usually marginal at best.

7. File a float plan. Tell a reliable friend, neighbor, or relative where you are going and when you plan to return. Don't deviate from your float plan. Notify the party when you do return so that they don't file an erroneous report on your behalf.

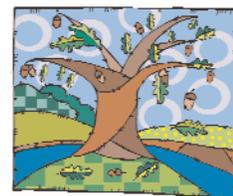
8. Let common sense rule. Try to recall previous trips and any difficulties or problems you may have encountered. Try to correct these problems before you venture out this time.

Remember: Wear your life jacket. Life jackets save lives. Safe boating is no accident.

Lt. Frank Wescovich oversees the DMR's Boat and Water Safety Program. He can be reached at (228) 523-4126.

Be a sponsor or an exhibitor at this year's Smart Growth Conference!

Call Tina Shumate: (228) 523-4122 or Marcia Garcia: (228) 523-4124



**May 9-10, 2007
IP Hotel & Casino Resort Spa
Biloxi**



DMR Seafood Officer Jeff Davis helps a Mississippi oyster harvester complete his daily trip ticket after counting the number of sacks onboard. Commercial oyster harvesters participated in a program to relay oysters to repair hurricane-damaged reefs.



Take a Bow

Recognizing employees' commitment to excellence

Grand Bay NERR staff participate in symposium

Several staff of the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (GNDNERR) recently attended the Alabama-Mississippi Bays & Bayous Symposium held November 27-29, 2006 in Mobile, Alabama. A partnership between the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program and Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium, the goal of the symposium was to bring together scientists, coastal zone managers, and the public to share information on the status of the northern Gulf of Mexico. Presentations and posters were made in four areas including water quality, living resources, habitat restoration, natural hazards, and coastal development.

Several staff members of the GNDNERR were directly involved in sharing information at the symposium.

Jennifer Buchanan, the education coordinator, was a co-chair of the water quality session, helping to organize speakers and lead discussions about potential outreach and education opportunities.

The GNDNERR Stewardship Coordinator, Chris May, made an oral presentation on a collaborative project to map the distribution and determine the abundance of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV), or seagrasses. Chris and Dr. Cho, from Jackson State University, demonstrated that coverage of SAV beds can decline rapidly, which has implications for mapping this important coastal resource.

Christine Walters, the GNDNERR System-wide Monitoring Program Coordinator, and Dr. Mark Woodrey, GNDNERR Research Coordinator, were

co-authors on two poster presentations highlighting the utility of water quality data collected through the System-wide Monitoring Program. In a poster with Dr. Kevin Dillon, from the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, they conducted a preliminary analysis of data from 2004 and 2005 and found that the Grand Bay NERR is a fairly pristine, marine-dominated estuary. Along with colleagues from the University of Georgia, Dr. Woodrey also presented the results of a three-year project focused on the ecology of marsh birds nesting in coastal Mississippi marshes. They found Clapper Rails to be the most common nesting bird in both the Grand Bay and Lower Pascagoula River marshes.

Seafood Officers complete AFDO HACCP training



Kristina Broussard



Mai Dang

DMR Seafood Officer Kristina Broussard completed Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) training on Aug. 9, 2006 in Brunswick, Ga. and Sanitation Control Procedures training on Sept. 19, 2006 in Baton Rouge, La.

DMR Seafood Officer Mai Dang completed AFDO HACCP training on Dec. 7, 2006 at MSU Extension Center in Biloxi.

The training will help the seafood officers provide technical assistance to seafood processors.

Happy Anniversary!

These anniversaries mark employees' years of service with the Department of Marine Resources and the state of Mississippi.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| (1/1/90) Dale Diaz | (2/1/89) Steve Breland |
| (1/1/95) Rita Duvernay | (2/1/90) Tom Van Devender |
| (1/1/95) Doug Drieling | (2/1/99) Jeff Clark |
| (1/1/95) Kerry Endris | (2/1/06) Jeff Grant |
| (1/1/95) Olin Gunter | (2/12/04) Willa Henriksen |
| (1/1/95) Rocky Southern | (2/15/06) Jennifer Clark |
| (1/1/99) Rhonda Price | (2/25/02) Karen Carron |
| (1/1/00) Melanie Lane | (3/1/90) Rusty Pittman |
| (1/1/00) Andy Ryals | (3/1/98) Amy Taylor |
| (1/1/00) R.T. May IV | (3/1/02) Jeff Davis |
| (1/1/00) Jeffery Payne | (3/1/02) Jan Welker |
| (1/1/03) Jamie Herring | (3/1/02) Janet Morgan |
| (1/10/00) Diane Roth | (3/12/01) Evelyn Thompson |
| (1/13/05) Gretchen Waggy | (3/15/04) Patrick Webb |
| (1/15/98) Jan Boyd | (3/17/99) Leo Christie |
| (1/16/85) Donnie Armes | (3/25/02) Debbie Belk |
| (1/29/01) Ruth Posadas | (3/26/01) Jimmy Sanders |
| (1/29/01) Wesley Devers | |

We thank them for their dedicated service to the management of our marine resources.



Mississippi Department
of Marine Resources
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Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

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Celebrate the Gulf:

A Marine Education Festival

March 31 @ Memorial Park, Pass Christian

DMR Calendar

February 13

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, Mississippi State University Coastal Research and Extension Center, 1815 Popp's Ferry Road, Biloxi, 9 a.m.

February 22

Comprehensive Resource Management Plan Meeting, D'Iberville City Hall, 10383 Automall Parkway, D'Iberville, 10 a.m.

March 20

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, Mississippi State University Coastal Research and Extension Center, 1815 Popp's Ferry Road, Biloxi, 9 a.m.

April 12

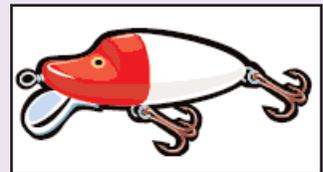
Comprehensive Resource Management Plan Meeting, D'Iberville City Hall, 10383 Automall Parkway, D'Iberville, 10 a.m.

April 17

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, Mississippi State University Coastal Research and Extension Center, 1815 Popp's Ferry Road, Biloxi, 9 a.m.

Doc's Fishing Tip

Fishing the shallows is usually not productive during the winter months. This season is different though. Mild temperatures have fish behaving more like they would in the spring, so casting a Zara Spook, Mirrolure Top Pup, Norm Bait or other floater might bring unexpected results.



— Fred Deegen, Ph.D., Deputy Director

Biloxi Bay Potato Salad

- 1 lb. small to medium boiled Mississippi Gulf Shrimp, cleaned and peeled
- 6 to 8 medium potatoes, boiled (don't overcook)
- 5 to 6 green onions, chopped
- 2 stalks celery, finely chopped
- 4 to 5 eggs, boiled and chopped
- 1 c. sweet relish
- 1 tbsp. prepared mustard
- 1 c. salad dressing
- Cajun seasoning to taste
- Salt and pepper to taste



Boil potatoes whole, peel and cut into pieces, but not too small. Mix all ingredients and serve. Great served with gumbo.

Recipe by Irvin Jackson.

Reprinted from "Get Hooked on Mississippi Seafood" recipe cards.