

Freeport Tuna Club, Inc.

TUNA TOWER NEWS

APRIL 2018

www.ftcfishing.com



EDITOR: CAPT. JOHN J. JUTT, SR.

Co-Editor ~ Capt. Paul Hilton

Contributor ~ Mike Sullivan

N E X T G M

THURSDAY, APRIL 12 AT 7:30 PM

FREEPORT YACHT CLUB

Alan Bregman, owner/operator of Sea Tow Freeport
will be discussing local navigation changes

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I would like wish all the Freeport Tuna Club members and family a happy Easter and happy holidays.

I'd like to thank the board of directors for a successful awards dinner. I would also like to thank Bob Benziberg along with Joe DiSalvo for organizing a great game dinner. And I would like to thank the membership for providing a great service and helping out with this event the club is only as good as its members.

April's GM we have a speaker from Sea-Tow. And for the second part of the evening is NIGHT AT THE RACES. You can have some fun betting on horse races. Members had a good time last year and requested it again this year so we asked the company to come back for some entertainment. So crack open your piggy banks, bring your wives or dates and come down for a night of gambling, laughs and food and fun at the Freeport Yacht Club. Last month we had a great turn out at the GM, I look forward to seeing more members show up to enjoy a night out with friends.

We also have some great charter boat fishing trips coming up for members interested. Kenny Donowski has organized these trips for the membership and has done a great job. Dates and times will be posted.

Once again I am looking for members who are interested in being part of committee.

Thank you, *Matthew Cardone*



A NIGHT AT THE RACES

AT APRIL'S GM

FISHING REGULATIONS IN THE SPOTLIGHT



When I sat down to write last month's report, it sure looked like we would see an early spring and nice weather in March. Boy, was I wrong! The March lion brought in a series of nor-easters with snow, flooding, and cold. Now it's April, and still no lamb in sight. Not good for fishing, but if you like skiing in the north-east the season was resurrected as areas of the Catskills had up to 6 feet of snow in March and experienced mid-winter conditions. I can tell you the skiing was really good. What seemed like the promise of an early spring is a memory, and the weather is still unseasonably cold. A quick glance at two of our weather buoys show chilly sea surface temps of 40.5 and 41.5 degrees. The season is underway, it should only get better.

Unfortunately, rather than fishing... people are talking about changes to our fishing regulations. Let's start with a change that seemed to blindsides so many. Namely, the NOAA/HMS Fisheries decision to enact emergency regulations to address the over-fishing of North Atlantic shortfin mako sharks (our common mako). The decision was based on an ICCAT study that determined the stock is "overfished with overfishing occurring." Commercial fishing for mako is essentially shutdown, with recreational "emergency" measures as follows:

Shortfin Mako Recreational Measures

Recreational minimum size limit of 83 inches (210 cm) FL for shortfin mako sharks.

The recommendation requires the release of all shortfin mako sharks in a manner that causes the least harm, while giving due consideration to the safety of crew members. Therefore, this emergency rule implements the following measures (right off the web site):

1. *Fishermen that hold an HMS Angling or Charter/Headboat permits, and fishermen that hold Atlantic Tunas General category and Swordfish General Commercial permits when participating in a registered HMS tournament are encouraged to practice catch and release of all shortfin mako sharks.*

Fishermen that hold the above permits may only land a shortfin mako shark (male or female) if the shark meets the following minimum size: 83 inches (210 cm) FL.

FL is fork length. Most length to weight charts show mako of this length to be in the 240 lb class. On Long Island, we don't encounter too many that size. These measure are in effect for at least 180 days from March 2, 2018 and will be replaced by a plan currently under development. In my opinion an increase in FL was called for, but this seems extreme. If permanent, these measures may well change the landscape of shark and shark tournament fishing in the north east. Literally forever. We'll see what happens

Another species front and center in the spotlight is the black seabass. Most would agree that the seabass population has never been better. But scientists seem to have a problem agree-

ing on how many fish there are versus how many are caught. Many changes have been proposed, all are far more restrictive than what we had in 2017. The battle is on, stay tuned on this one too. Good news on Fluke is that the bag limit will increase to 4 fish per angler, 19" or greater. Season opens May 4th through September 30th.

Enough regulatory chatter, what can we fish for right now? How about blackfish! NYDEC recently changed the regulations and we once again, although limited, have a spring fishery. The season opened April 1st, anglers are permitted 2 fish 16" or greater through April 30th. This comes at a cost as the fall season will be shorter than last year. Initially, it looked like the bag limit would be reduced, however the 4 fish bag limit has been maintained (except in Long Island Sound, they did go down to 3). I took a short boat ride/exploratory trip March 31st with my pail of ripe last year's clams. I hit some local pieces, one wreck in 65' had some life, and I did catch and release a blackfish. Other wrecks I tried, even a little deeper were void of life. The ocean is cold, but can change quickly. And so it begins

The flounder season kicked off April 1st, and is open through May. The only catch reports I saw or heard were from the western North Shore. Look for early season action in Jamaica and Raritan bay, with fishing improving as the weather (hopefully) improves and the water warms up.

Local and Montauk cod are very slow. Hopefully, Montauk will perk up and a spring run will develop. Long range wrecks to our south east are producing some decent cod and pollock for party boats. We'll see if that can hold up.

Many anglers eagerly await the striped bass opener on April 15th. Early season opportunities exist to the west and possibly in our back bays. Looking for a repeat of last year's great bass season. Plenty of fish, nice mix on the size, everybody caught and had fun, that's what it's all about.

A Sheepshead Bay party boat has located mackerel and will begin hitting them hard. On my recent trip out of Jones I marked no bait or macks whatsoever. It would be nice if the fish show up locally. It's a nice diversion and early season rod bending opportunity. They were here hot and heavy last December.

That's it for now, boats are starting to splash, the season is on! Please share your results with our membership. Please send reports and pictures for inclusion in your club bulletin. Thanks to all who contribute.

Email your reports to pilton@optonline.net;
or text/call me at 516.721.8907

Sincerely

Paul Hilton

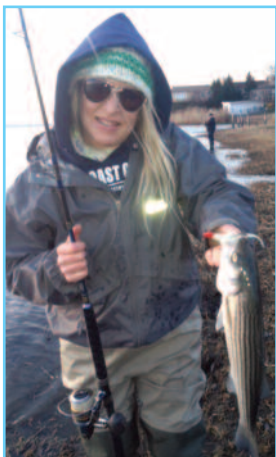
F/V Emily S

STRIPER DIARIES

In our quest to follow the migration, my next stop with Pete Cefai is Little Neck Bay. This body of water is relatively large, and has two (2) good areas to fish. For those that want easy access, you can park for free at Bayside Marina. From there, you can walk down to a sandy beach, or for our athletic members, you can hike down a rock jetty. Once at water level, you wade in chest high. Fishermen beware.... the tide swing is huge and the water rushes in quickly. Be mindful of how far you have waded out, or you will have a difficult time getting back safely.



As we approach on Opening Day, we arrive at midnight. I figure we will canvass the area alone in the dark with headlamps before the rest of civilization wakes up. There is a passageway to hike into an area known as "The Creek." This area can be challenging to fish. At high tide, most of the marsh is covered. Beware of huge sink-holes that can be dangerous and have you in knee



deep water quicker than you can say "Oh - - - ." At dead low tide, the water completely drains out, and with the proper gear you can walk across the canal to a marsh bank. From there, you can hike back to the train trestle where big stripers are known to feed. Beware of the tide changes, as I have seen big burly men get stuck and have to swim across with Van Staals. Don't try this at home.

After we park, we gear up with waders, korkers, and headlamps - - heck we are not sure what to expect. The walk in can be challenging at

night and probably best to go with a buddy. As we peak over the top of the hill, the water is glistening from the light of the moon. It's time to set up. Light spinning gear works best with bucktails and soft plastics. We fish all night without a tap. Maybe it's too early, water too cold, no bait for the stripers to feed on. All the thoughts that run through your head when you aren't catching.

As daylight breaks, the marsh begins to get crowded. Luckily we already claimed "our spot." All of a sudden I see splashes. I see swirls. Could it be fish? I toss my soft plastic over and over again. Finally, my line goes tight. I shout out "I'm in." From there it was 20 minutes of heaven - lock and load schoolie bass. Then just like that it was over. We fished until noon. Maybe we should have left when the bite ended at dawn. But it was opening day, and we had high hopes of just "one more bass." As we drove home, we realized what a great trip we had. We hadn't hoped for much, yet landed several small bass for the memory book. After all, life is just a series of memories. Some good, some not so good. But today was a good day.

Our next stop will be Jamaica Bay. Until our next adventure. Tight lines.

Capt. Barbara Solomon
F/N Legal Limits

ENTERTAINMENT

APRIL 12TH MEETING

Alan Bregman, owner/operator of Sea Tow Freeport will be discussing local navigation changes including dredging operations. He will also be reviewing the Tow Business in general and what to do if you find yourself in a "Salvage" situation. An additional discount will be offered for new and renewing members.

Charlie will be Emceeding a "Night at the Races". Last year's Horse Race was a blast. Bring your best luck and some cash.

MAY 10TH MEETING Jeff Dement, Fish Tagging Program Director for American Littoral Society will be providing an in-depth review of the benefits, how tos and results of fish tagging and our local fisheries. A retired ironworker and avid angler, Jeff is in contact with many clubs, charter boat captains and individual anglers from Florida to Maine. His presentation is both informative and entertaining. Whether or not you support fish tagging, come on out and learn something about this process and get engaged in the conversation!

JUNE 14TH MEETING Chris Laporta, Coordinator, Marine Access & Artificial Reef Programs for the DEC will be discussing marine access and the DEC managed reefs. We have TEN reefs within reach of Jones Inlet, from Shinnecock to Rockaway. This talk could improve your catch and your knowledge of our local reefs.

Regards, *Bruce C. Forster*
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PROPERTY MANAGER'S REPORT

All FTC members are encouraged to join us for our property cleanup days:

SATURDAY 05/19/18 AT 9AM: we will be pressure washing the marina docks. Bring a pressure washer if you have one.

SATURDAY 06/02/18 AT 9AM: this is a general cleanup day. Bring a pair of gloves.

Spring is here and the yard is really packed with boats stored for the winter. All boat owners will need to do some advanced planning when prepping and moving their vessels. Chris Squeri will need about a weeks' notice if you are moving your vessel off the property or need other yard adjustments to work on your boat. The best way to reach Chris is to text him at 516-377-7720.

REMEMBER - NO USED SHRINK WRAP IN THE DUMPSTER!

Please be considerate of your fellow members when getting your boat ready for the new season. Let me or another member of the property committee know if you have questions or concerns.

Again - if all the stars align and checks clear we will have **A FULL MARINA** this year. I want to welcome a new vessel to our marina owned by new members Rob and Dee Cincotta. Please welcome them to the club and our marina! Thanks to all the members of the Property Committee and others who help get the word out about our great club and marina. **The second payment for a summer slip is due in April.** There are a few outstanding invoices due so please send in your payment as soon as possible. The 3rd and final payment will be due on or before May 31st. Please send proof of current insurance with you payment if you have not done so this year.

My cell number, email address, and work phone number are below:

Capt. Alan Evelyn

C: 917-750-8710 | W: 516-299-2523 | alan4ftc@gmail.com

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Fellow FTC member,

By the time you read this the water will be on at the property. The camera system has been installed and is up and running. For all of you with smart phones all of the system information, re: wi-fi numbers, passwords, apps etc. will be available.

Just a reminder to all of those with boats on the property... you're responsible to clean-up and put away blocks and cribbing when your done. One last reminder, **DON'T THROW SHRINK WRAP IN THE DUMPSTER.** There is a recycling area in the town marina up the block.

Thanks in advance, your property committee,

*Alan Evelyn, Bob Sabella
Don Granger, Charlie Goldstein*



GOOD & WELFARE

It is again with heavy heart that I report the passing of Cathy Malzone (née Mazzilli), the daughter of my best friend and brother Sil Mazzilli. Cathy fought a hard battle with cancer and never gave up the until it overcame her. Our hearts and prayers go out to Sil and his wife Camille and their son Frank.

Jeff Squeri 516-652-5981

DERBY, AWARDS & CONTESTS

Awards Chairman: Ray Geiger | Committee Team: Bob Benzenberg, Harry Sbaschnig & Bill Morrogh



Thanks to all of you that came down last month's GM to attend our annual awards night and especially to Bob "Arrow Tooth" Pandy for his invaluable assistance. You all proved, once again, why we are the best fishing club - bar none. For those winners who were unable to pick up their awards, I will bring them down to this month's GM.

BREAKING NEWS... BREAKING NEWS... BREAKING NEWS... BREAKING NEWS

We will be having a Spring Blackfish Derby this month April 1st - April 30th, courtesy of the fisherman's friend, the NYS DEC. The current/accurate NYS marine regulations dated March 30, 2018 are located at: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7894.html>

It's not a bad idea to have these either bookmarked or copied as a pdf on your phone to assist those lost souls asking on channel 68 for regs later this season or to settle any wagers while afloat.

We will have the Bragging Board wiped and awaiting your catches by the time Captains and Anglers night starting (hopefully) this month.

The following derbies are open and will be awarded at our June GM:

BLACKFISH (3 lb min)	April 1st - April 30th
COD (6 lb min)	March 10th - May 6th
FLOUNDER (1.5 lb min)	April 7th - May 13th

We will be posting updates and info in our Fishing Reports section on our website as the season moves along. Remember, you must be a registered member of our site in order to view this section.

Best Fishes! *Ray Geiger*

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PLEASE REMIT UPON RECEIPT. THANK YOU!

- MEMBERSHIP