

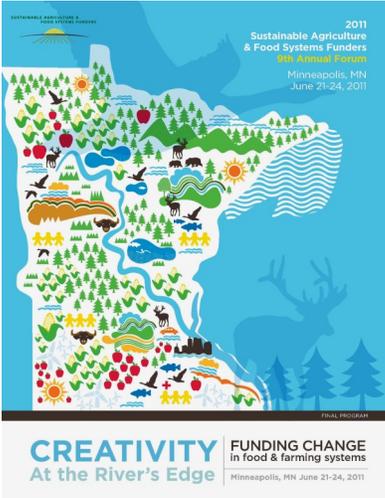


# FISH HOUSE NEWS

Ocracoke Working Watermen's Association (OWWA)  
5th Edition ▪ End of Summer Report 2011

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## OWWA Asked to Speak at Sustainable Food Conference



Hardy Plyler took time out from fishing this summer to travel to Minneapolis, MN to speak at the Annual Sustaining Agriculture and Food Systems Funders (SAFSF) conference. Representing the watermen, he spoke about the importance of retaining small coastal fisheries, the challenges watermen face, their valuable role in the economy and more importantly their role in supplying fresh seafood to the public. This was the first conference where fishing was discussed. Traditionally the focus has been on farming. Providing healthy sustainable harvest should combine the fishing and agricultural industries. Feedback from the conference states – *“The fisheries workshop was excellent because it brought in citizen activism,*

*revival of historic sustainable harvest, improved economy for whole community, and increased supply of healthy foods”.*

## Tours at the Fish House Continue

The fish house still ranks high on the list for educational tours. The largest group returning each year is Graham Elementary in Alamance County. Students visit the fish house and then the Watermen's Exhibit. This year the students were shocked to see themselves in a collection of photos in the education section of the Watermen's Exhibit. “Yes,” the teachers said “Learning about the coast and the ways they make a living by fishing is important. So educating young people with tours is how the fish house helps.” Well said.

## OWWA Says Goodbye to Captain Jette Carr

Anyone who knew Jette is familiar with this description: Who else could sew a wedding dress, fix a diesel engine, take you off-shore fishing, cook a gourmet meal from the catch while listening to rap music all in the same day? Capt. Jette was a commercial fisherman(woman), a charter boat captain, won countless fishing tournaments and sailed half way around the world to New Zealand, Australia and even made a transatlantic crossing. Jette helped OWWA at the NC Seafood Festival and we miss her. She was a natural with people and there was always a crowd listening to her talk about fishing and pound nets. Sadly Capt. Jette passed away November 11, 2010. A memorial service was held at the fish house and watermen's exhibit last April - it was a beautiful day with family and friends. An area of the Watermen's Exhibit has been dedicated to Jette.

## SAFSF Workshop Description

### **Investing to Strengthen, Diversify and Sustain our Fisheries, Farmers and Food Systems**

Our nation's fisheries and farms are critical components of food systems and value chains and face a wide range of integrated regulatory, financial and environmental challenges. This workshop session will:

- 1) share creative strategies for financing land- and water-based food system initiatives—from concept to scale.
- 2) engage participants in exploring opportunities to invest in more holistic food system structures.

## New Faces at the Fish House

Meet Brian Fulcher (right) and Matthew Parsons (left). Brian is fulltime at the fish house and is the grandson of Murray Fulcher former owner of Southpoint Seafood until he retired in 2003. Matthew is the grandson of Roy and Elizabeth Parsons and part time during the busy fishing seasons.



## Ocracoke Watermen at NC Seafood Festival 5<sup>th</sup> Year in a Row

OWWA will again have an educational space at this year's 25<sup>th</sup> Annual North Carolina Seafood Festival September 30 – October 3, 2011 on the Morehead City Waterfront. Since 2006 OWWA has been happy to have the opportunity to educate the public about fishing on Ocracoke – past and present. Fishing is the root of many North Carolina coastal cultures. As an industry, fishing brings healthy food to the table and sustains jobs in the traditional workplace. To promote locally caught, OWWA and Ocracoke Seafood worked with NC Sea Grant to develop Ocracoke Fresh, a branding campaign which seeks to highlight the benefits of freshly caught seafood.

The purpose of the NC Seafood Festival's 'Cooking with the Chefs' is to educate the public about local seafood and the watermen who harvest it. The Chefs event brings visitors face to face with fresh seafood, local restaurants and great recipes.

This year the island's own, Jason's Restaurant will be a featured restaurant preparing mini flounder sandwiches.

Jason's cooking time is 6:00PM on Saturday October 1, 2011.

Festival information can be found at [www.ncseafoodfestival.org](http://www.ncseafoodfestival.org)



2010 Festival Photo—Pat Austin explains how a pound net works. At the OWWA booth each year, people show an interest in Ocracoke's fishing heritage and how watermen work on the water today.



## Mid-Summer Report

June marked five years since the fish house re-opened under community ownership as the Ocracoke Seafood Company. Since then, a whirlwind of change has taken place at the fish house. Much of the old building has been torn down and replaced with new, cleaner, more reliable facilities. I'm pleased to announce that the fish house is now self-sustaining and monetarily sound.

Currently, the fishermen are mostly catching Spanish mackerel in pound nets and flounder in gill nets. While the wholesale market can be rather slow at this time of year, the retail market is doing a fine business at the moment.

Earlier this year, fishermen had to contend with a bill in the NC legislature that would have prohibited the commercial harvest of striped bass, speckled trout, and red drum; despite the fact that there is no scientific data that supports this action. While these species aren't targeted by commercial fishermen, they are often caught as a lucrative bycatch. Had this bill passed it would have created ripple effects further restricting commercial fishing because new measures would need to be instituted to control the bycatch of these newly prohibited fish. This would just contribute to the myriad of regulations that are slowly strangling the commercial industry. Fortunately, due to the strong outburst of public opinion, and legislators friendly to the needs of the industry, the bill has been tabled for this legislative session, but the bill will certainly resurface again in the future.

*Morty Gaskill age 16  
(Shown above)*

**The day before the storm was set to hit, the fish house purposely cranked up the ice machines and put a sign out front.**

**"Free Ice — Compliments of Hurricane Irene!"**



## New Additions to the Exhibit

Dot Dudley donated four of her late husband Darrel's models to the exhibit this summer. Darrel is better known on the island as "Bell". Shown below is a model of the mail boat Aleta, a two masted schooner and an oyster dragger.



Interested in learning more about how America's Coasts are vital to our nation's economy?

Go to [www.ocracokewatermen.org](http://www.ocracokewatermen.org) and read Jobs & Dollars: BIG RETURNS from coastal habitat restoration.

## Sustainable Island Living Conference in Maine to Talk About Working Waterfronts

The fourth annual Sustainable Island Living Conference, hosted by the Island Institute in downtown Rockland on October 14, 15 and 16, 2011, will feature a trio of nationally known experts along with informative sessions on economic development, leadership, and civic engagement. Each year, the conference brings year-round island and coastal residents together with regional and national experts to discuss strategies for sustainability and economic vitality in remote communities along the Maine coast.

Barbara Garrity Blake, will be presenting a report on the status of Working Waterfronts in NC including her updated fish house report, the Catch group umbrella development and all the community work taking place through Salt-water Connections. They are working on parallel initiatives related to a national coalition of working waterfronts, branding programs for local seafood and continued community work on their islands. Barbara is a Cultural Anthropologist, author, 3-term Governor Appointee to the NC Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC), Chair of the Coastal Habitat Protection Plan Steering Committee, Co-chair of the MFC's Habitat and Water Quality Committee, member of the Waterfront Access Study Committee.

## Thank You Summer 2011 Volunteers!

There is no better way to spend a hot summer day than being at the Watermen's Exhibit. Always a breeze, activity on the harbor, otters pay a visit at dusk and hour's worth of reading on Ocracoke's maritime history. Our volunteers this season were Morty Gaskill, Frances Miller, Hunter O'Neal (below) and Norma Sigal. The Exhibit is located on the docks at the Community Square in the former Will Willis Store & Fish House, a National Register Property.

## Mark Your Calendar 6th Annual Oyster Roast and Shrimp Steam & Van O'Neal's Fish Stew

Last week in December 2011  
At the Fish House 2:00PM-5:00PM

At 5:00PM Dessert and Hot Cider Around the Old Wood Stove at the Ocracoke Working Watermen's Exhibit  
Keep checking website for details.  
[www.ocracokewatermen.org](http://www.ocracokewatermen.org)



Photo by Susse Wright



**OCRACOKE SEAFOOD COMPANY - 2010 END OF YEAR SALES REPORT**

	<u>Fresh Seafood brought into the Fish House</u>		Total Seafood Purchased From Fishermen	End of Year Total Retail & Wholesale (includes T shirts, condiments, ice etc.)	# of Fishermen Working Out Of Fish House
	Ocracoke Fishermen	Non-Ocracoke Fishermen			
2005	N/A No Fish	House Available	\$00.00	\$00.00	0
2006	\$263,591.15	\$31,135.95	\$294,727.10	\$383,589.92	31
2007	\$288,041.55	\$113,721.88	\$401,763.43	\$557,622.61	22
2008	\$125,446.58	\$105,656.30	\$231,102.88	\$543,495.24	32
2009	\$280,402.14	\$80,303.11	\$360,705.25	\$587,733.96	39
2010	\$550,290.40	\$77,290.40	\$627,580.00	\$921,454.33	41



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**2011 OWWA Raffle Treasures**

OWWA has received two gifts for their 2011 raffle. A ship in a bottle by shipwright artist Jim Goodwin (left) and a blown glass Spanish Mackerel by artist Adam Kaser (right). Raffle tickets are available at the fish house. All proceeds benefit the Ocracoke Working Watermen's Association. Drawing to held at the December Oyster Roast!



The Pirate Brigantine *Ranger* was the 12-gun flagship of Charles Vane from May 1718 to November 1718. Jim Goodwin has been a geologist and an educator, but now devotes his time to preserving this maritime art form and giving demonstrations at museums and maritime festivals. Jim's Ships in Bottles are featured in "The Lovely Bones" a film based on the Best Selling novel by Alice Sebold.

Blown glass Spanish mackerel by glass artist Adam Kaser. Adam blows each piece freely, without the use of molds, using traditional glassblowing methods that are thousands of years old. He creates each piece at the end of a five-foot long metal blowpipe, constantly spinning and reheating the viscous mass as it has been done for millennia.

