JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION
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sandel@otterstedt.com
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Point Pleasant Fishing Club, rmazz1428@gmail.com
Newark Bait & Flycasting Club
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Surf Fishing Club of NJ, www.wsfcnj.org

A Saltwater Anglers Club

New Members Welcome

www.FISHHAWKSNJ.com

Meetings are at 7:30 PM on the first Thursday of the month at the Lacey Elks, Forked River, NJ

New Jersey Beach Buggy Association
PO Box 511, Seaside Park, NJ 08752
Buggy Membership Info: Ken Hollins 732-814-7021
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Manasquan Fishing Club
PO Box 513, Manasquan, NJ 08736
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Manasquan Woman's Club, 62 Main Street
www.manasquanfishingclub.com

JCAA NEWSPAPER DECEMBER 2026

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS' ASSOCIATION*
(Published on November 23rd, 2026)

"WORKING FOR MARINE RECREATIONAL ANGLERS"

JCAA REGULAR MEETING

November 24th, 2026, 7:00pm
Jersey Coast Shark Anglers Building
385 Herbertsville Rd, Brick, NJ 08724
or via Zoom, for link contact:
tothjohn@verizon.net **or** mtsport64@aol.com

NEXT JCAA BOARD MEETING
Thursday, December 10th

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOC.
PO Box 1191, Wall Branch Post Office
Wall, NJ 07719
Phone 732-506-6565 Fax 732-506-6975
Publisher Tom Fote, Editor Phil Celmer

This publication is printed and mailed one week prior to each regular monthly meeting of the Jersey Coast Anglers Association. One of the prime goals of JCAA is to get accurate information into public hands as soon as possible.

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JCAA General Membership Meetings are for club representatives and invited guests only. These meetings are not open to the general public. If you would like to attend as a guest, call the President at (732) 245-9445 or Tom Fote at (732) 270-9102 before the meeting date to ask permission.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

2026 OFFICERS

President	Mark Taylor	732-245-9445
1st V.P.	Stephen Machalaba	908-588-1426
2nd V.P.	Don Marantz	908-347-1434
Treasurer	Doug Tegeder	732-575-2661
Rec. Sec.	Karen Noe	732-245-2751
Cors. Sec.		
Mem. Sec.	John Toth	732-656-0139

Committee and Chairpersons listed on last page

IMPORTANT DATES

November 24th JCAA General Meeting
December 10th JCAA Board Meeting
December 29th JCAA General Meeting
January 14th JCAA Board Meeting
January 16th 40th Annual NJ Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar Series
January 26th JCAA General Meeting
February 11th JCAA Board Meeting
February 23rd JCAA General Meeting
February 24th-27th Atlantic City Boat Show
March 11th JCAA Board Meeting
March 19th-21st NJ Saltwater Expo @ NJ Convention and Exposition Center
March 30th JCAA General Meeting

JCAA Sportsperson of the Year Dinner November 14

By John Toth

On Saturday, November 14, 2026, 108 attendees enjoyed each other's company at the **JCAA Sportsperson of the Year Dinner** at the Spring Lake Manor. Stephen Machalaba, JCAA 1st Vice President, introduced Mark Taylor, JCAA President, as the Master of Ceremony of the event. The event started with the Pledge of Allegiance and distribution of door prizes. Danielle McColluch, Executive Director of the American Littoral Society (ALS) was introduced as the Keynote Speaker. Ms. McColloch spoke about the American Littoral Society's mission and mutual cooperation of working together with the JCAA on many shared issues. She spoke about ALS's Fish Tagging program and using the information derived from it. She also spoke about the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's recent meeting and the Menhaden Committees' decisions to vote against Menhaden conservation measures, and what actions may have to be taken.



The **JCAA 2026 Sportsperson of the Year Award** was presented to **William Distaso** of Sandy Hook Bay Anglers Fishing Club. Bill was chosen to receive the award based on the following nomination which was submitted by Tom Borkowski of the Sandy Hook Bay Anglers Fishing Club:

On behalf of the Sandy Hook Bay Anglers, it is my distinct honor to nominate Bill Di Stasio for the JCAA Sportsman of the Year award.

Bill has long been a pillar of our organization, having previously served as Club President and continuing his leadership today as our Sponsorship Coordinator. Beyond his formal roles, Bill acts as a tireless ambassador for recreational angling, community outreach, and philanthropic service. His dedication and generosity are highlighted across several key initiatives:

Philanthropic Leadership & Tournament Sponsorships

- Tournament & Non-Profit Fundraising: Bill actively recruits and networks with club sponsors, significantly enhancing our fundraising capabilities for community initiatives and charity events.
- Company Resources & Signage: He generously leverages his own company resources to design and produce professional signs, posters, and promotional banners for our benefit fluke tournaments and philanthropic endeavors.
- Captains Meeting Benefit Raffle: Prior to our annual benefit fluke tournament, Bill organizes and manages a dedicated raffle at the captains' meeting to directly fund our veterans' fishing programs.
- Community Contributions: Bill is instrumental in directing club contributions, when funds allow, to vital local non-profits, including The ARC, the Community FoodBank of New Jersey, and the Marine Mammal Stranding Center.

Dedicated Service to Veterans

- Fins 4 Freedom & Club Charters: Bill selflessly volunteers both his personal time and vessel for Fins 4 Freedom and club-organized veterans' charters, providing memorable on-the-water experiences for service members.

Public Outreach & Expo Representation

- Saltwater Anglers Expo: Bill dedicates significant time managing the club's presence at the expo in Edison, creating eye-catching booth visuals, promoting club activities, networking with industry sponsors, and raising awareness and funding for our veterans' charters.
- Interactive Community Engagement: He recently coordinated with expo organizers to run the interactive virtual fishing booth on behalf of the club, introducing and engaging the public with recreational angling.

Fellowship & Angling Spirit

- Community Building: Bill is a tremendous asset to the local fishing community, consistently welcoming new and existing anglers, inviting members and friends out on the water, and promoting sportsmanship and camaraderie across our region.

Bill Di Stasio embodies the very best values of sportsmanship, selfless volunteerism, and dedication to others. He is exceptionally deserving of being recognized as the JCAA Sportsman of the Year.



The **JCAA 2026 Youth Education Award** was presented to **Thomas Devine** of the Hi-Mar Striper Club. Tom was chosen to receive the award based on the nomination submitted by the Hi-Mar Striper Club of Middletown, New Jersey, of which Tom has been a member for many years:

"Tom", who serves as Hi-Mar Striper Club's Treasurer, has been successfully running Hi-Mar Striper Club's youth fishing trips and other events to promote fishing by youths for over a decade. This primarily consisted of fishing trips for youth groups on local fishing charter boats, the Bingo out of Leonardo and Ebb Tide out of Atlantic Highlands, or a free youth fishing event at a pond in Red Bank where fishing rods and reels were provided.

During this time period, Tom was running 3 to 4 trips a year for various youth groups including Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Boys and Girls Clubs, Boy Scout Troops and others. This involved making all of the arrangements with the groups, chartering the boats, arranging food and beverages, and organizing Hi-Mar club members to volunteer to assist and act as chaperones. Tom also organized fishing trips by the Hi-Mar Striper Club for veteran's groups during this same time period.

The Hi-Mar Striper Club truly believes that Tom Devine is deserving of the 2026 JCAA Youth Education Award. We thank Greg Kuchereski and Don Marantz for considering Tom Devine with this award.



A **JCAA Lifetime Achievement Award** was presented to **John Toth**, who has served as JCAA President multiple time and in many other capacities, including JCAA Sportsperson of the Year Dinner Committee Chairman. His nomination speech is below.

John Toth has been involved with the Jersey Coast Anglers Association (JCAA) since its early beginnings in the 1980's. He served as President for seven terms, Membership Secretary and as a Weigh Master for the JCAA Fluke Tournaments for over 15 years at Clark's and Hoffman's marinas. John is currently JCAA's Membership Secretary and the director of the committee that made this dinner happen.

John has provided testimony in Trenton to support additional funding for NJ' s Fish & Wildlife, taking Traps off the Reefs, Hooked on Fishing Not On Drugs, Menhaden Protection, and many other issues. Working with the NJ Outdoor Alliance (NJOA) John was deeply involved in stopping legislators trying to stuff New Jersey's Fish & Game Council with hardline animal rights activists which would have resulted in the death of fishing & hunting in New Jersey. Legislators who supported this legislation and these activists resulted in losing their elections. John was also involved in working with former DEP Commissioner Bob Martin to limit sand mining which would have destroyed fishing areas along the New Jersey coast.

John has written many articles concerning environmental issues, harmful fishing regulations, and numerous issues that have an effect on our recreational fishing industry. The purpose of these articles is to keep our fishing community aware of the issues that impact our ability to pursue the sport we all love so well. John Toth also serves on the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Advisory Committees for Striped Bass, Summer Flounder and Blackfish. John Toth is also a long-time member of The Saltwater Anglers of Bergen County and is currently President of that organization.

In recognition of his efforts and dedication supporting the JCAA and the recreational saltwater fishing community, the JCAA is presenting its Lifetime Achievement Award to John Toth. He truly deserves this award.

The dinner concluded with the awarding of many "tricky tray" prizes, donated by JCAA sponsors and individuals, listed on the attached list, the 505/50 Raffle and Silent Auction.

Thank you to the JCAA members that worked to make this dinner a success, including Dinner Committees Chairman, John Toth, Paul Haertel and Linda Haertel, Don Marantz, Mark Taylor, Karen Noe and Stephen Machalaba.

More Letters in Support of Ray Bukowski's Appointment to ASMFC Commission

New Jersey Outdoor Alliance
United Conservationist Foundation, Inc.
PO Box 481
Howell, NJ 07731
917-327-6324

October 29, 2026

The Honorable Mikie Sherrill
Governor of New Jersey
Office of the Governor
P.O. BOX 001
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Re: Recommendation for the Appointment of Raymond Bukowski to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) as the Governor's Appointee

Dear Governor Sherrill:

On behalf of the New Jersey Outdoor Alliance — United Conservationist Foundation, Inc. (NJOA-UCF), I am pleased to express our strong support for the appointment of Mr. Raymond (Ray) Bukowski of Brick, New Jersey, as your representative to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC).

NJOA-UCF is a grassroots conservation organization dedicated to protecting New Jersey's natural resources, promoting responsible stewardship, and advocating for the interests of those who value our state's fish, wildlife, and outdoor heritage. The conservation and sustainable management of New Jersey's marine fisheries are among our organization's important priorities.

Maintaining healthy, sustainable marine fish populations while balancing the interests of both recreational and commercial fishing communities along the Atlantic Coast presents significant and increasingly complex management challenges. Effective representation on the ASMFC requires extensive knowledge of fisheries management, a thorough understanding of the competing interests of both sectors, and demonstrated leadership in natural resource conservation.

We firmly believe Mr. Bukowski possesses these qualifications and is exceptionally well suited to represent New Jersey's interests.

Ray brings a unique combination of professional experience, regulatory expertise, and firsthand familiarity with both the recreational and commercial fishing sectors. His distinguished career with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection included service as **Assistant Commissioner for Compliance and Enforcement** and subsequently as **Assistant Commissioner for Natural Resources**, where his responsibilities included oversight of the Department's Marine fisheries Administration.

Through these leadership positions, Mr. Bukowski developed a comprehensive understanding of New Jersey's marine fisheries, the regulatory framework governing their management, and the importance Of balancing conservation objectives with the economic and recreational interests of the fishing community.

Equally important, Ray understands that effective fisheries management requires **fair, balanced, science-based decision-making that recognizes the legitimate interests of both recreational and commercial fishermen**. His experience, sound judgment, and demonstrated commitment to natural resource stewardship would make him a highly effective advocate for New Jersey within the ASMFC.

For these reasons, **NJOA-UCF respectfully recommends the appointment of Raymond Bukowski as New Jersey's Governor's Appointee to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.**

We are confident that his leadership, knowledge, and experience will serve your administration, New Jersey's fishing communities, and the long-term sustainability of our marine resources exceptionally well.

Thank you, Governor Sherrill, for your consideration of this important appointment.

Respectfully,



Anthony Pensabene
President
New Jersey Outdoor Alliance — United Conservationist Foundation, Inc.

AMERICAN LITTORAL SOCIETY
18 HARTSHORNE DR., HIGHLANDS, NJ 07732

October 29, 2026

New Jersey Governor Mikie Sherrill
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 001
Trenton, New Jersey 08625
Email: Mikie@mikiesherrill.com

Reference: Appointment of Raymond Bukowski to Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission as Governor's Appointee

On behalf of the American Littoral Society, I strongly endorse Raymond Bukowski for appointment as your representative to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC).

The Society partners with saltwater fishing clubs and fish-tagging members throughout New Jersey and facilitates the Menhaden Coalition, which brings together fishing, bird and wildlife conservation, scientific research, business, and coastal organizations. Through this work, we recognize the importance of effective representation that supports healthy fisheries, thriving marine ecosystems, and the New Jersey communities that depend on them. With enthusiastic support from colleagues in the fishing community, state agency representatives, and others engaged in fisheries conservation and management, Mr. Bukowski has the experience, knowledge, and judgment needed to represent New Jersey effectively on the Commission.

Mr. Bukowski's career with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection includes service as Assistant Commissioner of Natural and Historic Resources and Assistant Commissioner of Compliance and Enforcement. As Superintendent of Island Beach State Park, he managed public resources serving diverse user groups. His experience as a charter fishing captain brings practical insight into an industry that generates an estimated **$3.3 billion in economic activity and supports more than 20,000 jobs across New Jersey.**

Because he would bring valuable expertise, support varied interests, and will be committed to sustainable fisheries and responsible stewardship to the Commission, the American Littoral Society enthusiastically endorses Mr. Bukowski and urges you to appoint him as New Jersey's Governor's Appointee to the ASMFC. Thank you for considering our recommendation.

Sincerely,
Danielle McCulloch

Executive Director
American Littoral Society

Menhaden: It's Time to Feed the Ecosystem First

By Stephan Machalaba and Capt. Paul Eidman

For those of us who care about healthy bays, rivers and coastal waters, what happened at the recent Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) menhaden meeting matters. We both came away frustrated. The Board took some steps in the right direction, but stopped well short of what its own ecosystem-based science indicated was needed.

Menhaden do not exist in isolation. They are a critical part of the Atlantic Coast forage base, supporting striped bass, bluefish, tuna, whales, dolphins, ospreys, eagles and many other predators. Other historically important forage species, including Atlantic herring, alewife, blueback herring and American shad, are severely depleted. That makes the abundance and availability of menhaden even more important to the coastal food web.

The warning signs are increasingly difficult to ignore. Researchers monitoring ospreys along the Atlantic Coast documented serious reproductive problems in 2026, including critically low nesting success in parts of Chesapeake Bay associated with food stress. Poor reproductive performance and concerns about inadequate prey have also been documented on tidal waters from Virginia to Connecticut, including New Jersey waters.



When predators cannot find enough food to successfully raise their young, we need to pay attention to what is happening at the bottom of the food web.

That brings us back to menhaden management. ASMFC set the coastwide total allowable catch at 170,000 metric tons for 2027 and 155,000 metric tons for 2028. ASMFC describes these as reductions of 17% from the 2026 TAC and 34% from the 2025 TAC over the next two years. Yet the Commission also acknowledged that these levels still carry a high probability of fishing mortality remaining above the Ecological Reference Point target.

The Board also changed the Chesapeake Bay reduction fishery cap. Instead of the previous static 51,000-metric-ton cap, the new rule ties the Bay cap to 21.8% of the coastwide quota. That produces a Bay cap of 37,123 metric tons in 2027 and 33,847 metric tons in 2028. It is a meaningful reduction, but still not the stronger conservation action many anglers and conservation advocates supported.



The bigger issue is not simply the percentage printed on a quota sheet. The real conservation question is: How many more menhaden will actually remain in the water?

The fishery landed fewer than 147,000 metric tons in 2025, well below that year's quota. When experienced menhaden fishermen do not catch the full quota, that should at least raise serious questions about abundance and availability. Setting the 2027 quota above the amount actually landed in 2025 makes the headline reduction less meaningful than it first appears.

Menhaden are not simply another commodity. They connect our bays and estuaries to the ocean food web and transfer energy to predators that support recreational fishing, wildlife and coastal economies. At the same time, enormous numbers of whole menhaden are removed from the ecosystem for reduction into fish meal, fish oil and other commercial products, including animal and aquaculture feeds.

That is why we believe true ecosystem-based fisheries management should turn the usual equation around: first account for what the ecosystem needs, then decide what can responsibly be harvested.

Many of us fought for years to get ecological reference points incorporated into menhaden management. If the scientific process shows that greater conservation is needed to meet the ecological target with more certainty, the answer should not be to move away from the target because stronger action is difficult.



Public participation also deserves more weight. ASMFC reported receiving more than 48,000 comments on the 2026 menhaden actions. That level of engagement shows how strongly anglers, conservationists and coastal communities care about leaving enough forage in the water. The Commission must weigh the livelihoods of harvesters, but it should give equal seriousness to the recreational fishing businesses, charter and party boats, bait and tackle shops, marinas, tourism, wildlife viewing and coastal communities that also depend on a healthy forage base.

New Jersey anglers should pay close attention to how our representatives vote on these decisions and

ask whether those votes reflect the long-term interests of our fisheries and coastal ecosystem. Accountability matters, especially when the science, public concern and economic value of healthy predator fisheries are all on the table.

After decades of fighting for these fish, our goal is simple: stop managing menhaden primarily as something to harvest. Manage them as a foundation of a living coastal food web.

Feed the ocean first. Then decide what we can responsibly take.

Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar Series Celebrates 40th Anniversary in Atlantic City

Series presented by Bass Pro Shops & Mako Boats

The Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar Series brings its 40th Anniversary edition to Atlantic City's Resorts Hotel & Casino on Saturday, January 16. Hosting the 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. event will be George Poveromo, host of George Poveromo's World of Saltwater Fishing on Discovery & ESPN2. Nick Honachefsky, a noted writer, author, TV personality, and New Jersey fishing authority, will co-host.

Joining Poveromo and Honachefsky in Atlantic City will be:

- **Jorden Jurkiewicz** – Esteemed authority on targeting tuna within New Jersey's inshore, mid-shore, and offshore waters, as well as trophy striped bass, tautog, and fluke.
- **Captain Frank Branagan** – Specialist at fishing the offshore waters for mahi and tuna, and the nearshore/inshore grounds for fluke and striped bass with Branarchy Charters.
- **Captain Steve Spagnuola** – Cape May-based pro specializing in fishing the mid-shore grounds and canyons for tuna.
- **Jenni Sara Ackerman** – Innovative expert on the subtleties and tricks for catching tog, sea bass, and fluke.
- **Gary Caputi** – Renowned authority on fishing New Jersey's saltwaters, noted author, and outdoors writer.
- **Matt Upton** – Renowned authority on locating ocean-circulation features and water surface temperature breaks that hold gamefish, with Roff's Fishing Forecasting Analysis.
- **Captain Brian Williams** – Innovative Ocean City-based pro who specializes in fishing the local backwaters for striped bass, with Badfish Fishing Charters.
- **Captain Tom Daffin** – Premier trophy striped bass, fluke, wreck, and offshore fishing authority with Fishin' Fever Sportfishing.
- **Captain David Wicker** – Veteran bottom-fishing authority and marine electronics specialist.
- **Tom Pagliaroli** – Noted authority on fishing New Jersey's saltwaters and the host of Rack & Fin radio.

"The National Seminar Series is the nation's longest running and most popular educational course on recreational marine angling tactics and techniques," says Poveromo. "We're celebrating its 40th year with a three-stop, in-person tour, hence our Atlantic City date, plus a 13-episode televised edition."

"Its success is attributed to the vast amount of cutting-edge and pertinent how-to information on catching more and bigger game fish within the waters of the respective Seminar Series stop, be it inshore, nearshore, and offshore. Our faculty teams feature some of the very best saltwater anglers, and each session is supported by elaborate visuals, video bytes, technical- and action-oriented images, and on-stage demonstrations."

Courses for the January 16 seminar will encompass the how-tos and where-tos of catching the region's inshore, nearshore, and offshore saltwater game fish. The Seminar Series kicks off at 9:00 a.m. and will conclude by 3:00 p.m., with a one-hour break at noon.

Considered to be the best bargain in sportfishing, a seminar series ticket is only $75.00. The ticket price includes five hours of instruction from the best pros in the business, a brand-new 40th Anniversary textbook, a one-year subscription or extension to Salt Water Sportsman, one Roff's Ocean Fishing Forecast Analysis, Star brite boat care products, a bottle of OrPine Wash & Wax, a $10.00 discount card off any purchase of $75.00 or more from Bass Pro Shops, and chances to win thousands of dollars' worth of door prizes! The grand prize at the conclusion of the New

Jersey seminar is a Florida Keys fishing trip with a premier Florida Keys guide.

At the conclusion of the seminar, an After Seminar Party will be held inside the Bass Pro Shops in Atlantic City. Beginning at 4:00 p.m. and concluding at 7:00 p.m., seminar participants and a guest of their choice can enjoy socializing with many of the seminar faculty, Poveromo included. There will be complimentary food, soft drinks, and music.

How to Register:

To register, purchase tickets, or learn more about the seminar, please visit the national seminar series site at www.nationalseminarseries.com.

***About the Salt Water Sportsman's National Seminar Series**:*

In its 40th year, the Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar Series is the nation's longest running and most popular educational seminar on recreational marine angling. Featuring George Poveromo, SWS's Editor-At-Large and host of George Poveromo's World of Saltwater Fishing on the Discovery Channel and ESPN2, Poveromo will take the stage at each location alongside teams comprised of Salt Water Sportsman editors, nationally recognized anglers, and some of the region's top guides. Their job: Cover in explicit detail the how-tos and where-tos of catching the most popular game fish within a specific Seminar Series region, along with the latest rigging and fishing techniques.

President's Report

By Mark Taylor

December has arrived, marking the end of YR2026 and a year of challenges and battles for the recreational fishing community. These issues are likely to continue into YR2027, so we all need to get involved. JCAA will continue informing the community, as it has for many years, but we need clubs and individuals to take action to preserve the sport we love for future generations of recreational anglers and support the long-term health of our fisheries.

As many are aware, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission held its 2026 Annual Meeting from November 9 through 12. I recognized a few attendees who participated either in person or virtually. Like many others, I agree that the meeting did not go as most would have hoped, particularly regarding menhaden. JCAA has submitted numerous letters on behalf of the Association and its member clubs, and we will continue to do so. I understand that this kind of participation can feel overwhelming and may not suit everyone, but the discomfort will ease with time. As a community, we need to show up in strong numbers and take part. Every contribution matters, whether you support someone else's comments or share your own perspective. This is how the recreational community can make its voice heard loud and clear. Let us make a New Year's resolution to come together and speak up.

The 2026 JCAA Sportsperson of the Year Dinner took place on November 14 at a new venue: Spring Lake Manor, an elegant Victorian mansion in Spring Lake Heights, New Jersey. Chairperson John Toth and his committee did an outstanding job organizing the event. Those who attended enjoyed the evening, and anyone who missed it should make a point of attending next year. Special thanks to Danielle McCulloch, Executive Director of the American Littoral Society, who served as the guest speaker and gave a wonderful presentation. I look forward to working with Danielle and her organization. I have asked her to author an article about the organization and some of the projects it will be working on, for publication in the JCAA newspaper.

It is once again time for member clubs to elect the YR2027 Officers who will lead this outstanding Association for the coming year. The election will take place during the hybrid meeting on December 29. The process will be as follows: Each position will be announced, and clubs will be invited to nominate candidates. Clubs attending the meeting will cast one vote for each position. Votes will be tallied, and the candidate receiving the most votes will be elected. The process will then continue with the next position until all positions have been filled. JCAA welcomes fresh participation at every level, officer roles and including committees.

The Jersey Coast Anglers Association (JCAA) welcomes membership applications from saltwater fishing clubs that are not currently affiliated with us. If your club shares our commitment to excellence and is interested in joining this respected association, please contact me at mtsport64@aol.com, and I will guide you through the process. As members of the recreational fishing community, we need to work together and coordinate our efforts to achieve meaningful results and ensure our shared concerns are heard. The enduring principle "united we stand, divided we fall" remains highly relevant to our advocacy and management work.

To make participation more accessible, all general meetings are held in a hybrid format, allowing members to take part in our outstanding association regardless of their location or circumstances.

The Jersey Coast Anglers Association (JCAA) will have booths at the Atlantic City Boat Show (February 24–28, 2027) and the Saltwater Fishing Expo (March 19–21, 2027), and we are actively seeking volunteers to staff them. If you are interested in helping, please contact me at mtsport64@aol.com. It is essential for JCAA to maintain a visible presence at these events and connect with people who may not be familiar with current and emerging issues affecting the recreational fishing community. While the shows may seem far off, they will be here before we know it. It takes some time organizing the volunteer lists for each show, so please consider volunteering and let me know at mtsport64@aol.com as soon as you can. In the next few days, I will send each club representative the volunteer list, along with the show dates and shift times. I hope more people will step forward to support this outstanding association, which continues to defend recreational anglers' right to access the resource and promote sound, science-based management for a healthy fishery in the future.

Throughout the year, there are numerous meetings available for you to attend, both in-person and virtual formats. Greater involvement from individual anglers, fishing clubs, organizations, and associations is essential. I have compiled a list of relevant meetings in recent JCAA newspaper editions. Review these opportunities to identify which meetings align with your priorities and begin your involvement today. Should you require assistance, please contact JCAA, and we will be delighted to support your efforts.

Upcoming JCAA Meetings

The Jersey Coast Anglers Association (JCAA) has several important meetings scheduled for the coming months. These sessions provide opportunities for members and recreational anglers to stay informed, participate in discussions, and help guide the future of the organization.

- **December 10th at 7:30 pm:** JCAA Board Meeting This session will be held exclusively via Zoom, allowing board members and participants to join remotely.
- **December 29th at 7 pm:** This meeting will use a hybrid format to accommodate both in-person and remote participants and is open to recreational anglers. Attend either in person at 385 Herbertsville Rd., Brick, NJ 08724, or remotely via Zoom. An invitation to a Zoom will be sent to all club representatives prior to the meeting with an agenda. Your participation in these meetings is encouraged so you can bring back to your club the information discussed, stay connected, contribute to important discussions, and help shape the direction of JCAA. Please remember to add this date to your calendar and join us for meaningful engagement. Note: If there is any change the club representatives will receive an email.

Your participation in these meetings is encouraged. Whether attending in person or via Zoom, members and anglers alike can stay connected, contribute to important discussions, and help shape the direction of JCAA. Please remember to add these dates to your calendar and join us for meaningful engagement.

Upcoming NOAA Fisheries Meetings

- **Dec. 3, 2026 – 9 am to 2 pm Location – Holiday Inn Manahawkin, 151 Route 72, Manahawkin, NJ 08050 -** Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshops
- **Dec. 3, 2026 – 4pm to 6pm - Location: Barnegat Light Volunteer Fire Department, 907 Central Ave. Barnegat Light, NJ 08006 - In-Person Only Public Scoping Meeting -** Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan
- **Dec. 3, 2026 – 5pm to 7pm – Webinar -** RAPID National Angler Listening Session 1
- **Dec. 3, 2026 – 8pm to 10pm – Webinar -** RAPID National Angler Listening Session 2
- **Jan. 5 to 7, 2026 – 8pm to 10pm – Webinar Location: Hilton Philadelphia, 201 S Christopher Columbus Blvd Philadelphia, PA 19106 -** RAPID Mid-Atlantic Regional Workshop

Upcoming ASMFC Meetings

- **Nov. 30, 2026 – 1:00pm to 3:00pm – Webinar -** Spot Stock Assessment Subcommittee Catch Composition Working Group
- **Dec. 2, 2026 – 9:00am to 11:00am – Webinar -** Spot Stock Assessment Subcommittee Environmental Working Group

- **Dec. 7 to 11, 2026 – Location: Beaufort Hotel, 2440 Lennoxville Road, Beaufort, NC 28516 -** South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
- **Dec. 7, 2026 – 1:00pm to 3:00pm – Webinar -** Atlantic Striped Bass Stock Assessment Subcommittee Check-In
- **Dec. 8 to 10, 2026 – Location: Hotel Viking, Newport, RI -** New England Fishery Management Council
- **Dec. 11, 2026 – 1:00pm to 3:00pm – Webinar - Location: Maine Department of Marine Resources, Marquardt Building, 32 Blossom Lane, Room 224, Augusta, ME -** Northern Shrimp Section and Advisory Panel
- **Dec. 14 to 17, 2026 – Webinar - Location: Westin Annapolis, 100 Westgate Circle Annapolis, MD, 21401 -** Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
- **Dec. 14 to 17, 2026 - 9:00am to 4:00pm – Webinar - Location: Surfside Beach Oceanfront Hotel, 15 South Ocean Boulevard, Surfside Beach, SC -** Cobia Benchmark Stock Assessment Workshop
- **Jan. 26 to 28, 2027 – TBD -** 2027 Winter Meeting

Upcoming MAFMC Meetings

- **Dec. 3, 2026 – 10:00am to 11:00am – Webinar -** Recreational Sector Separation Amendment FMAT/PDT
- **Dec. 15 to 17, 2026 – 10:00am to 11:00am – Webinar - Location: Westin Annapolis, 100 Westgate Circle Annapolis, MD, 21401 -** December 2026 Council Meeting (Annapolis, MD)

Upcoming NJMFC Meetings

No meetings scheduled for December

It is abundantly clear that a single commission or council overseeing our fishery management convenes multiple times monthly. The Recreational Community must gain awareness and participate actively before the sport we value is lost.

On a much brighter note, the Jersey Coast Anglers Association Board and club members wish you and your families a safe, joyful holiday season filled with unforgettable memories that last a lifetime.

JCAA New Ad Program

By Tom Fote

The full-page ads in our newspaper cost $1,000 for the year and we are pleased to announce **Engel Coolers** as our first full-page ad under our new ad program.

These ads can be for tackle stores, fishing clubs and any other individuals who would like to advertise in our newspaper. It is easier to change a full-page month to month so if your tackle store is running a special sale, you could have a new ad for that specific event for the month before and the month of. Clubs can list their tournaments, flea markets or any other event by just submitting a new ad to replace the existing one. If you have any questions, contact Tom Fote at (732) 270-9102 or email at tfote@jcaa.org. This does not replace the $500 or $250 business ad already in place. We are hoping to use the ad money to pay for the operation of the newspaper. We hope that you will solicit ads and get your club to take an ad. It is a great way to publicize your club and get new members. We will also have a link to the sponsors' webpages. Please call me if you have any questions. Mark also has put together some forms that will be ready by the next newsletter.

Fisheries Management & Legislative Report

By Tom Fote

NOAA Fisheries and the RAPID National Steering Committee Workshops and Listening Session

Below there is an article on listening sessions to get better recreational data. You should have at least one member from each club on the call to find out what is going on. I am hoping every member of the JCAA Board and all of our club representatives with be on at least one of these sessions. The last time we tried to fine tune the recreational statistics, we did very little to change the quotas to reflect that we were catching more fish than NOAA thought we were catching. Because of the membership of the MAFMC and ASMFC being mainly commercial representatives, every motion that reflected the actual catch, which would indicate recreational quotas should increase, were voted down. The biggest problem is that we are still dealing with

data that we don't trust. Anything that can make the data more trustworthy would be great. Read the notice below and plan to attend.

Menhaden Decision

I was disappointed that NJ ASMFC Commissioners did not vote for conservation of menhaden. New Jersey's commissioners voted against the 15% reduction. They also voted in support of the Virginia reduction fishery. I am wondering if they were directed how to vote by the Governor and Senator Gopal. I know when I was the Governor's appointee, I was told to vote in favor of Virginia's reduction fishery. I had no choice but to vote that way since I was representing the Governor. At the General JCAA meeting, I will recommend we send a letter to Governor Sherrill and Senator Gopal expressing our disappointment at the vote and asking if they directed that vote. Virginia made comments about the workers at the reduction plant and how their jobs were in jeopardy. I didn't hear anyone from NJ discuss the loss of work for party boats, charter boats, tackle stores and other industries connected to the recreational industry with the consequences of the loss of menhaden stocks. I also didn't hear how the other commercial entities in NJ felt about this since we know about Lunds support of the reduction boats. That was evident when they controlled the Governors appointee seat.

I could say much more but Jim Hutchinson, Jr. from the Fisherman Magazine has a YouTube post that discusses the vote in a comprehensive way. Please check it out.

JCAA Supports Ray Bukowski for Governor's Appointee to ASMFC

Last month JCAA decided we cannot support another commercial lobbyist as the Governor's Appointee to ASMFC. There were four letters in support of Ray Bukowski for Governor's Appointee included in the last JCAA Newspaper and there are two more in this edition. There will be many more from the NGO community. These groups agree with JCAA that we don't need another commercial lobbyist or a supporter of Virginia's Menhaden Reduction fleet or an employee of one of the biggest commercial fishing businesses in NJ as the Governor's Appointee. That business has been a major supporter of Virgina's foreign owned reduction fishery for decades. The two commercial representatives I worked with while they were the Governor's Appointee showed they could not be independent and represent all the user groups of NJ both recreational and commercial. **This is a recap of what I wrote last month about this job.**

The commercial fishermen misrepresented to the Governor that this is a commercial seat but that is not true. I replaced Dave Hart in 1991 when he retired at 94 after serving over 40 years. He was a charter boat captain. I served for almost 23 years as the Governor's Appointee as a recreational person. The three times I was replaced was by John Connell (charter boat captain), Erling A. Berg (employee of a commercial business) and Jeff Kalin (lobbyist for Lunds Fishery). Their total years of service. John Connell served 6 years. The two commercial appointees served a total of less than 6 years between them. Clearly there is no historical precedent to appoint a commercial representative as the commercial sector had lying about. Please read the letters, find out about Ray's qualifications for this seat, and write your letters to the Governor and the DEP Commissioner.

Menhaden NJ Bill S3423/A4946

These bills were introduced by the Senator Moriarty in the Senate and by Assemblyman Cody D. Miller and Assemblywoman Heather Simmons in the Assembly. Before I discuss these present bills, I need to go over history of how we arrived at the current regulations.

When I first walked into JCAA representing Berkeley Striper Club in 1982, Joe Mellio the President of JCAA was discussing pushing the menhaden reduction boats out of state waters and getting the big bait boats away from the beach. At that period of time, these boats were allowed as close to the beach as the boats could manage. Because of the suction hoses on the reduction boats, they could decimate mile long schools of bunker in a short period of time. They were also getting a bycatch of other species of about 4%. The 4% might seem like a small number but that is 4% of the millions of tons that they were harvesting. The bycatch includes striped bass, bluefish, weakfish and any other species chasing the menhaden. The second problem is this practice ruined the recreational fishery from the beach and boats for striped bass, bluefish, and weakfish. Those species just disappeared once the bait was gone. This fight happened even before I was active in JCAA. The Director of Fish and Wildlife in that time period owed his job to the reduction boats and he also pressured the NJ State Federation of Sportsmens Clubs to drop out of JCAA. When I was Vice President, met with George Howard, the new Director of Fish and Wildlife, and he changed the Division's policy on this issue.

When I was appointed to the NJ Marine Fisheries Council in 1988, the first issue I took on was to develop a compromise to get the reduction boats out of state waters and the bait boats further off the beach. I was chairman of a committee to deal with this issue. The compromise was that the reduction boats would be one nautical mile off the beach and the bait boats would be .6 miles off the beach.

When I took over as Vice-President and then Legislative Chair for JCAA, I dealt with 2 issues, making striped bass a gamefish in NJ and getting reduction boats completely out of state waters and moving the bait boats further out. I cannot believe that the easiest task was making striped bass a gamefish which happened in 1991while I was still president and menhaden is still a work in progress in NJ.

The menhaden issue dragged on continuously with JCAA and the Federation working together. When RFA and JCAA formed a menhaden alliance with Len Fantasia in charge, we managed to get a bill passed that finally put the reduction boats out of state waters. At that period of time there were still huge schools of big bunkers in NJ's waters, both federal and state.

In 2026, we don't have any large bunkers inshore, with only 6 inches or smaller fish. That is almost coastwide until we get to Massachusetts. Further South they are experiencing the same issues as NJ. We need to do something about this. This is not the time to relax the regulations to allow the bait boats to use suction in state waters and along the beach.

A big part of the compromise in the original bill was that the bait boats were only allowed to brail using nets to get the fish from the purse seine net. This compromise has worked for years. Now the commercial industry is trying to break the compromise and into state waters and be able to suction. A lack of bunker has created the worst fishing we have ever seen. We cannot allow this change. JCAA was not worried about this bill until the sponsor went committee shopping and moved the bill to the Commerce Committee in the NJ Senate. JCAA must not fight this bill. The sponsors of the bill are listed below. I have contacted the Senator and am waiting for a call from his staff. In the meantime, we need fishing clubs to begin writing and calling. Our friends in the NGO community that deal with ospreys, whales and other species that depend on menhaden as their main diet, have committed to working with us to stop these bills. I hate to say this, but for a change NY is ahead of us on conservation. New York figured out 7 years ago that the menhaden fishery in state waters was not sustainable, so they banned the commercial taking of Atlantic menhaden using purse seines. **New York Environmental Conservation Law § 13-0333** in April 2019 which **prohibits the commercial taking of Atlantic menhaden using purse seines** in New York's marine district. (**Assembly Bill A2571**, partnered with **Senate Bill S2317**). This law was enacted to protect the local marine ecosystem, as menhaden (a small forage fish) serve as a vital food source for whales, dolphins, striped bass, and predatory birds.

Maybe JCAA and our partners should be putting in a bill to do the just the same. The greedy industry has pushed us in that direction. We will need a sponsor to do this. Menhaden needs your help. The sponsors of the bill and their contact information is below so please write them to voice your concerns about these bills and the use of fish pumps in state waters. I will be sending this issue of JCAA Newspaper to them and all the members of the Senate Environmental Committee. Go to NJ Legislative home page to get the committee names and addresses.

Senate Bill S3423
Primary Sponsor: Senator, Paul D Moriarty
4th District Office
129 Johnson Road, Suite 1
Turnersville, New Jersey 08012
(856) 232-6700

Assembly Bill 4946
Primary Sponsor: Assemblyman Cody D. Miller
4th District Office
129 Johnson Road, Suite 1
Turnersville, New Jersey 08012
(856) 232-6700

Assemblywoman Heather Simmons, Heather
3rd District Office
711 North Main Street
Glassboro, New Jersey 08028
(856) 226-3530

Striped Bass

Below is the report on Maryland's Young of the Year Striped Bass Reproduction Index. I was hoping with the colder winter that the numbers would be higher. The striped bass seemed to be more spread out and that is a good sign. But we still are not correcting any of the problems in the Chesapeake Bay. It will be interesting to see what the new stock assessment says.

Maryland Striped Bass Reproduction Index Higher for 2026 but Below Average for Eighth Straight Year

Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources
10/19/2026

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) 2026 juvenile striped bass survey recorded a young-of-year index of 5.5. Although it marks the eighth consecutive year of low spawning success for striped bass, this is the highest index recorded since 2018. The survey tracks the reproductive success of Maryland's state fish in Chesapeake Bay.



DNR fisheries biologists sampling a site on the Nanticoke River with a seine net as part of the annual juvenile striped bass survey. Photo: Joe Zimmermann/Maryland DNR

During this annual survey, fisheries biologists sample 22 sites located in four major striped bass spawning areas: the Choptank, Nanticoke, and Potomac rivers, and the upper Chesapeake Bay. Biologists visit each site three times per summer, collecting fish with two sweeps of a 100-foot beach seine net. The index represents the average number of 3-inch or smaller juvenile striped bass caught in 132 sweeps of the net. The survey, one of the longest-running continuous fish surveys in the United States, has been conducted in Maryland's Chesapeake Bay since 1954.

This year's survey captured 723 juvenile striped bass. The highest performing areas were the upper Bay and Choptank River. Although striped bass catches were below average, the fish were more widely distributed than in recent years, indicating suitable habitat throughout the nursery areas. The long-term average index for the survey is currently 10.8, while the index was 4.0 in 2025 and 2.0 in 2024.

"We are encouraged to see some improvements to the numbers of juvenile striped bass this year, while it wasn't as robust as we would like," said Maryland DNR Fishing and Boating Services Director Michael Luisi. "Ongoing low recruitment is anticipated to impact rebuilding of the coastwide striped bass population. Results from coastwide juvenile indices will be incorporated into the ongoing work to produce the benchmark stock assessment expected to be completed in 2027."

Biologists captured nearly 72,000 fish of 61 different species while conducting this year's survey. Fishing license, tackle, boat, and marine fuel purchases fund DNR's fish conservation work. Positive findings from the survey include two important forage species that were documented in abundance during the survey. Young Atlantic menhaden were found in abundance, while Atlantic silversides were found in the highest numbers in over a decade. These species are vital to the ecology of the Bay as a food source for many other species of fish and wildlife. Another encouraging finding was above-average reproduction of American shad in the Potomac River and upper Chesapeake Bay; however, the survey does not evaluate the larger, adult populations of these species.

Efforts to rebuild the Atlantic Coast population of striped bass to previous high levels have been underway for several years and are ongoing. Through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, Maryland and other states that border the Atlantic Ocean have implemented management measures, including reductions to catch limits, tighter slot limits, and season closures. Continued low levels of reproduction will influence future conservation measures under consideration by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

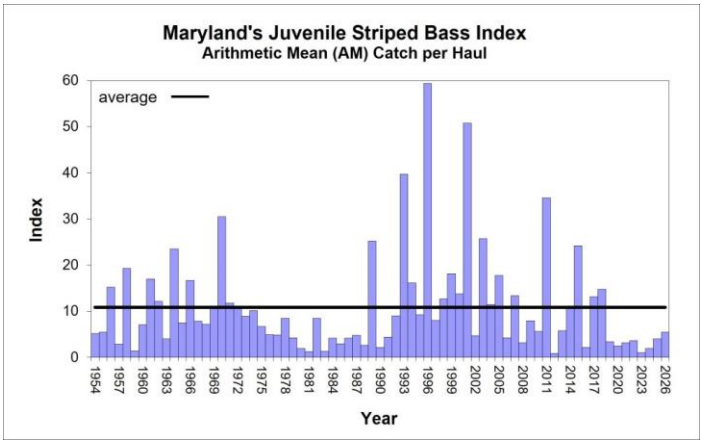
Recent population estimates indicate healthy adult populations of striped bass, despite the downturn in juvenile spawning success. A rebuilt adult population should reproduce successfully when conditions like river flow, temperature and food availability are favorable for striped bass eggs and larvae.

Multiple factors affect striped bass spawning success in the Chesapeake Bay. Cold winters and wet springs tend to be beneficial for spawning, and while Maryland experienced a cold winter, the prolonged regional drought and resulting low river flows may have led to unfavorable conditions for striped bass eggs

and larvae. High river flows increase spawning habitat, allow eggs to remain suspended in the water column, and bring larvae closer to food sources. Other variables, including a shortened spawning period, could also influence spawning success.

These consecutive below-average year classes will likely become more apparent among the adult population of striped bass in the coming years, as the juveniles reach maturity. A benchmark stock assessment for the coastwide population of Atlantic striped bass is underway and expected to complete peer review in spring 2027. The stock assessment will evaluate the condition of striped bass from Maine to North Carolina and inform future management actions.

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science conducts a similar survey in the southern portion of Chesapeake Bay.



The juvenile striped bass index, representing the average number of 3-inch or smaller juvenile striped bass caught in each sweep of the net for each year of the survey, from 1954 to the present.

NOAA Fisheries and the RAPID National Steering Committee Workshops and Listening Session

NOAA Fisheries and the RAPID National Steering Committee have announced new opportunities for partner and public engagement as part of the Recreational Angler Partnership Improvement Directive (RAPID), including two national angler listening sessions this December and eight regional workshops across all fishery management council regions in early 2027.

RAPID is NOAA's collaborative initiative to remodel recreational fisheries data collection. The initiative was launched in response to stakeholder feedback calling for regional flexibility and more reliable catch estimates to inform stock assessments and fisheries management.

Listening Session and Workshop Schedule:

- National Angler Listening Sessions (virtual):
  - Session 1: Dec. 3, from 5 to 7 p.m. ET
  - Session 2: Dec. 9, from 8 to 10 p.m. ET
- Mid-Atlantic: Jan. 5–7, in Philadelphia
- South Atlantic: Jan. 11–13, in Charleston
- New England: Jan. 20–22, in Boston
- West Coast: Feb. 2–4, in San Diego
- Caribbean: Feb. 8–9, in Puerto Rico
- Western Pacific: Feb. 23–25, location forthcoming
- Gulf of America: March 1–3, in New Orleans
- North Pacific: Details forthcoming

During the regional workshops, state, U.S. territory, regional, and federal partners will discuss technical elements and improvements to the current data collection processes and systems. Workshop plenary sessions will be livestreamed, and limited seating will be available for interested members of the public to observe workshop discussions and provide public comment.

The partners leading RAPID are committed to meaningfully engaging the recreational and non-commercial fishing community, including private anglers, charter captains, and guides, to ensure that those who contribute fisheries data have a voice in shaping the future of recreational data collection. As a lead-up to the regional workshops, two virtual national angler listening sessions will provide background on RAPID and offer a space for comments, feedback, and questions. Key angler takeaways from these sessions will be shared with the RAPID regional planning teams and incorporated into the regional workshop discussions.

Verbal and written public comments will be collected at the listening sessions as well as public comment portions of the workshops. Written comments can also be submitted online via the RAPID web page and through the regional workshop event pages for the duration of the regional workshop schedule. All comments will be reviewed and considered by the

RAPID planning teams and compiled as part of the regional workshop summaries.

The more participation we have throughout this process, the more closely the resulting framework will match the unique fisheries data needs in each region.

Collectively, workshop discussions will inform regional action plans and a redesigned framework for recreational fisheries data collection that:

- Identifies strategies to strengthen the quality and quantity of recreational fishing data
- Refines the national survey and data standards for data quality, transparency, and access
- Provides the regional flexibility to maintain (with improvements), supplement (new data), or replace (new surveys) existing systems while preserving nationally cohesive elements

RAPID and the Administration's Executive Order 14430, (Restoring American Saltwater Angling and Recreation) which was announced Sept. 17, 2026, are closely linked. RAPID serves as the catalyst to achieve the recreational fishing data improvement goals outlined in the E.O. Together, RAPID and the E.O. will result in an improved recreational data collection system founded in partnership and collaboration. Additionally, RAPID serves as an important step in fulfilling the Administration's Executive Order 14276 (Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness) mandate to modernize data collection and analytical practices that will improve the responsiveness of fisheries management. In response to this EO, RAPID supports NOAA Fisheries priority action.

JCAA Membership Report

By John Toth

First of all, I want to **Thank** all of our clubs that have already paid your 2026 dues and sponsorships!!

2026 is rapidly coming to a close and a number of clubs still have not paid their dues. Please pay your club's dues to keep your JCAA membership active. The following are checks we have already received from clubs to date:

Clubs:

- Spring Lake Live Liners - $300
- Seaside Heights Fishing Club - $100
- NJ Beach Buggy Assoc. - $300
- Hi-Mar Striper Club - $500
- Surf Kings Fishing Club - $100
- Salt Water Anglers of Bergen County - $100
- Belmar Fishing Club - $100
- Manasquan Fishing Club - $300
- Beach Haven Marlin & Tuna Club - $50
- Delaware Shad - $150
- Fun Under Boats (FUB) - $50
- NJ Council of Diver's Club - $50
- Menhaden Defenders - $100
- Sandy Hook Bay Anglers - $300
- Berkeley Striper Club - $300
- Forked River Tuna Club - $500
- Fish Hawks - $50
- Village Harbour Fishing Club - $50
- Hudson River Fishing Association (HRFA) - $50
- Bi-State Shad Fisherman's Association - $300
- Newark Bait & Fly Casting - $150

Sponsorships:

- Paul Shafer - $259
- Susan Gene Geld - $50
- Barnegat Animal Clinic - $100
- Adam T. Piaseki - $50
- Fins on Feathers - $50
- In Memory of Tom Ortman - $100
- Linda/Charles Jules - $100
- John Zingis - $50
- L. Raymond Hunphreys, Jr. - $100
- Jon Brunetti - $100
- Louis Schott - $100
- Joe Palumbo - $500
- In memory of Dan Ulbin - $100
- Joe Blaze - $500

Our next JCAA General Membership Meeting will be held on **November 24th, 2026**, at the Shark Anglers Building in Herbertsville. It will be done as an in-person meeting and by ZOOM starting at **7:00 p.m.**

I can be contacted at tothjohn@verizon.net or at (732) 656-0139 if you have any questions.

Youth Education Report

By PJ Novello

WHO IS PJ NOVELLO?

Hi, I am PJ Novello. First off, I want to say how excited I am to help write the youth education section for JCAA! A little about me, I am 21 years old and live in Jackson, NJ. I currently work as a recruiter for the US Army National Guard in Freehold, NJ.



I started fishing with my dad off Island Beach when I was four years old and fell deeply in love with fishing. I have fished up and down the northeast everything from mountain trout streams, bogs, roadside ponds, lakes, and the Atlantic Ocean. I have fished from the surf and from boats. I consider myself an all-around sportsman from hunting and fishing. I attribute that to my dad introducing me to flyfishing from a young age. He got me involved with the Atlantic Saltwater Flyrodders, which is an educational club in Seaside. The Atlantic Saltwater Flyrodders and it teaches you about all aspects of saltwater flyfishing. one thing I am extremely happy about is being able to help kids with this sport and that I can give back to this great community!

SUPPORT LOCAL TACKLE DEALERS

Some big news this month was the opening of another big box outdoors store. While this is great you must keep in mind the smaller independently owned mom-and-pop shops. These mom-and-pop shops are the people that support local tournaments, fishing shows, high school fishing teams, and clubs but most importantly, you the angler. One thing we tend to overlook when we talk about the big box stores is the fact that the big box stores do not provide equipment maintenance. They don't do rod repairs, reel services or spooling. These mom-and-pop shops are also very knowledgeable about what's going on in our fishery such as weather reports, tides, what lures and bait are working. So basically, these mom-and-pop stores can tell you what you need to know to actually catch fish! One of my favorite things to do is check out their bargain bins. You never know what you will find.

During the holidays, please stop by your local tackle shop. Doing this supports these shops and is needed more now than ever. Tip: Shop locally and visit our tackle dealers list for veteran discounts.

THOMAS DEVINE, HI-MAR STRIPER CLUB 2026 JCAA YOUTH EDUCATION AWARD

This year, Thomas Devine from the Hi-Mar Striper Club received the JCAA 2026 Youth Education Award at the JCAA Sportsperson of the Year Awards Dinner.



Thomas Devine takes great pride in helping children and families learn about our natural resources. His work creates opportunities for children and families to enjoy fishing for years to come. We were proud to present Thomas Devine with the 2026 JCAA Youth Award in recognition of his years of hard work.

The following is a list of past recipients: 1996 - Newark Bait & Flycasting Club, 1997 - Dr. Eleanor Bochenek, 1998 - Manasquan Fishing Club, 1999 - New Jersey Beach Buggy Association, 2000 - Tom Fote, JCAA, 2001 - Friends of Island Beach State Park, 2002 - Shore Surf Club, 2003 - Rosemary Beales, Marine Education, 2004 - Shark River Surf Anglers, 2005 - Absecon Saltwater Sportsmen, 2006 - Hudson River Fishermen's Assn., 2007 - HiMar Striper Club, 2008 – Paul Harris, NJBB Association, 2009 – Berkley Striper Club, 2010 – Al Lorenzo, Saltwater Anglers of Bergen County, 2011 – New Jersey Chapter Trout Unlimited, 2012 – Jeff Johnson/Father-Time

Organization, 2013 – George Foreman, Association of Surf Angling Clubs, 2014 – Don Marantz, Newark Bait and Fly Casting Club, 2015 – Tim Burden, New Jersey Beach Buggy Association, 2016 – Carl Bruger, Hudson River Fishermen's Association, 2017 – NJ State Federation of Sportsmen Clubs, 2018 – Boating Education and Rescue, 2019 – Liz Jackson, NJ DEP Fish and Wildlife, 2020 – Covid Year, 2021 – Tim Brennan, Brick Memorial High School, 2022 – Ken Rylak, Fish Hawks Saltwater Anglers Club, 2023 – Paul and Joyce Lenzo, Forked River Tuna Club 2024 – Ken Hollins, New Jersey Beach Buggy Association, 2025 – Bill Morgan, Berkeley Striper Club. 2026 – Thomas Devine, Hi-Mar Striper Club

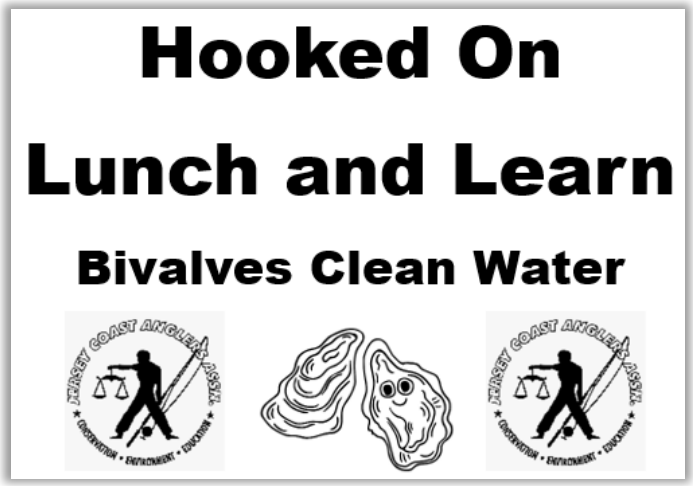
VETERAN OUTREACH

Karen Noe is doing an excellent job of connecting veterans at local fishing shows and community events. Karen talks to veterans about getting outside and learning about the Play HOOK-e from PTSD fishing program.



LUNCH AND LEARN FOR KIDS

If you are a JCAA member club and would like a copy of the new Hooked on Lunch and Learn "Bivalves Clean our Water" flip chart game, send us an email. The JCAA Bivalves Clean our Water activity is for middle school students. The game is designed to teach students about the parts of a clam, oyster, mussel and how these creatures help our planet. It is a fun learning experience for students and students can color their favorite mollusk.

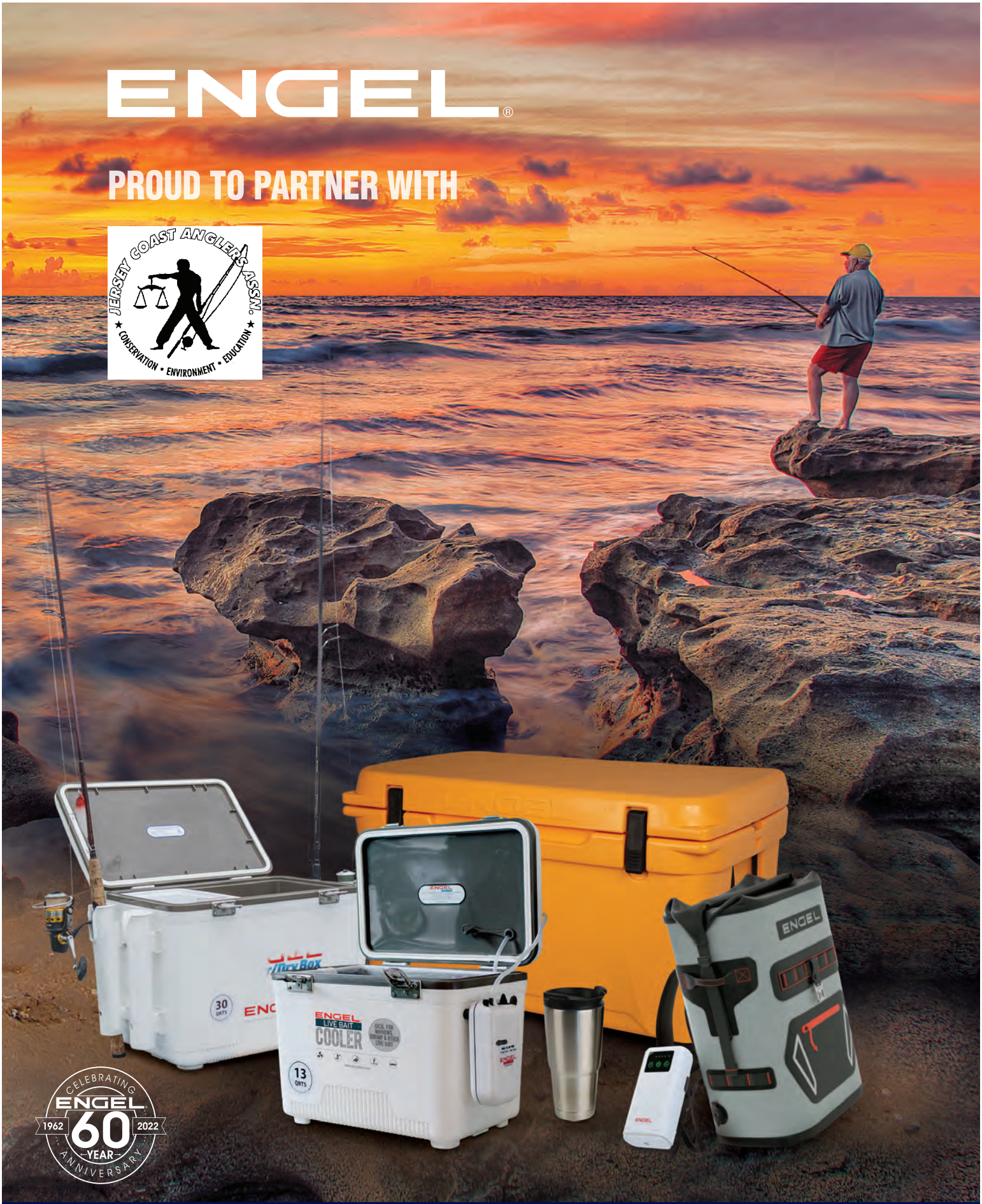


DISABLED VETERAN FREE MOBILE SPORTFISHING PERMIT

We remind all eligible disabled veterans to apply for an IBSP 2027 Mobile Sportfishing Permit to drive on the beach. **Do you qualify for a free Disabled Veterans permit?** NJ residents who were honorably discharged with a service-connected disability may qualify for a free Mobile Sport Fishing Vehicle Permit. The disabled veteran must be the registered owner of the vehicle. Please call or email the office if you think you qualify, and we will send you an application.

Alternatively, you may come in person to the Island Beach State Park Office, open 7 days per week between 9am and 4pm. The following documentation is required to apply: Valid NJ Driver's license, Vehicle registration (must be registered to the veteran), DD-214 showing honorable discharge, and any documentation showing a service-connected disability, i.e., award letter.

If you plan to fish on the beach, you must also register for a Free NJ Saltwater Recreational Registration Card. It is suggested new beach drivers take a beach safety driving course. NJBBA offers a beach driving course at this link For more information about permits and hours contact: Island Beach State Park, (732) 793-0506. Visit VVA Chapter 12 for Play HOOK-e veteran news and discounts.



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*Testing conducted by Yamaha at Yamaha's test facility on a Grady-White® 257 Advance/300 hp, with each boat rigged for maximum performance. REMEMBER to always observe all applicable boating laws. Never drink and drive. Dress properly with a USCG-approved personal floatation device and protective gear.

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We need the support of your club and its members

Your club should be a member of JCAA and make a difference for only $50 a year. Your club will have a voice in all JCAA positions that affect your fishing future. Your club will receive up-to-date information on vital issues each month. Look for club membership link on the JCAA home page or complete application below.

Club Membership Application

Club Name: _____

President's Name: _____

Pres. Address:
Street_____

City _____

State _____**Zip**_____

Ph. # _____

Fax # _____

Please make check **$50** payable to **JCAA**

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For more information call JCAA at (732) 506-6565

Individuals can join JCAA as an Associate Member

Membership is now free! Sign up as an Associate Member and receive monthly JCAA News that gives you the most up-to-date news about Fisheries Management and Environmental Issues. If you would like to support the goals of JCAA, please contribute if you are able. Look for the **Subscribe** button on the JCAA home page or complete application below.

JCAA Associate Member Application

Date _____ New ___ Renewal ___

Name _____

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If contributing, please make check payable to JCAA

COMMITTEES & CHAIRPERSONS

Legislative	Tom Fote	732-270-9102
Operations Manager	*Open*	-
Office Manager	Karen Noe	732-245-2751
Fluke Tournament	Frank Macalik	732-754-5345
Access	Paul Eidman	732-614-3373
Blackfish	Paul Haertel	973-943-8201
Blue Claw Crab	*Open*	-
Lobster and Clam	Frank Macalik	732-754-5345
Bluefish	Paul Haertel	973-943-8201
Habitat	Paul Eidman	732-614-3373
Pelagic Species	*Open*	-
Forage Species	Paul Eidman	732-614-3373
Striped Bass	Tom Fote	732-270-9102
Science & Research	*Open*	-
Website	Philip V. Celmer	jcaa@jcaa.org
Youth Education	Greg Kucharewski	732-429-9637

If you would like to receive JCAA Email alerts email your Name, Club, if you belong to one, and your interest to tfote@jcaa.org or just go to the JCAA site and subscribe from there.

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7:30 PM

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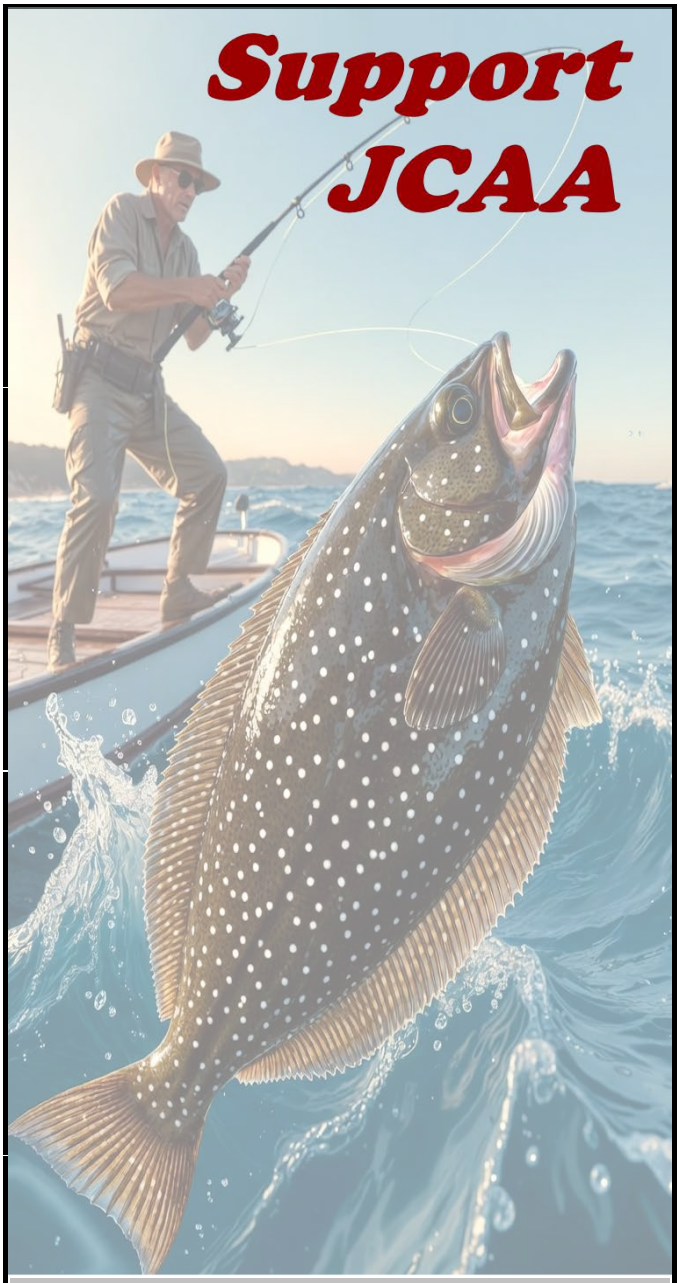

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