



HARBOUR LIGHT

OFFICIAL VHFC NEWSLETTER October 2023

Editor: Ed Valitutto VHFC Website: <http://www.vhfishingclub.com>

***VHFC meets the second Friday of each month from
April through November***

***Location: Manahawkin Community Center
775 East Bay Ave Manahawkin, NJ***

Doors open at 7:30; Meeting begins at 7:45 PM

Next meeting: 13 October 2023

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello VHFC Members,

Wow, finally the winds and rains have abated! That was a tough period to go through with very limited opportunity to go out fishing. The number of FOM entries and Reports are very low this month indicative of the lack of fishing due to the weather. And yes, it was a sad end to the fluke season which closed on September 27th. Oh well, that's September but at least we have been fortunate to avoid any direct hurricane impact - at least so far. But remember, the Atlantic hurricane season officially runs from June 1 to November 30 so it is far from over.

October 1st welcomed the opening of seabass with some good fishing as the waves settled down. ***On The Water*** reported for our area "Great sea bassing over the past week as the weather and sea conditions finally cooperated for anglers with most boats reporting solid limits of fish along with some porgy and triggerfish. The yellowfin tuna bite regained some of the steam that occurred prior to the week long NE winds. The canyons are living up to the red hot month of October with solid yellowfin and mahi. Bluefin tuna have also been around the 10 to 15 mile

range off of Island Beach State Park. Surf fishing was slower, but the water began to clean up later this week and catches of out-of-season fluke, bluefish, and some striped bass were reported."

Just a reminder, the **Seabass limit is 10 fish at 12.5 inches from October 1 - 31 and then increases to 15 fish at 12.5 inches from November 1 through December 31. Tog remains at 1 fish until November 15 then increases to 5 fish November 16 through the end of the year.**

This is also the season that surf fishing comes into play. Migrating stripers can make an appearance at any time and offer great fishing opportunities along with bluefish for those days when the waves & winds make boating difficult or you just want to spend a few hours on the beach, The LBI Surf Fishing Tournament opened on Saturday October 7th and full details are provided later in the Newsletter.

Starting tomorrow, there are only 84 days until we'll all be singing that famous Scottish poem set to music, *Auld Lang Syne*! So make the most of the remaining days of autumn and enjoy the great outdoors. Once again, I look forward to seeing everyone at our next meeting.

Lastly, be sure to take a photo of your catch for our FOM / FOY awards and submit a report of your success for others to enjoy.

Ed

UPCOMING NEAR TERM EVENTS

October 13 Friday - General Membership Club Meeting

October 18 Wednesday - Club Dinner at *Kostas Grill*

OCTOBER MEETING - Our guest speaker is Jim Hutchinson Sr. Jim is a renowned local fisherman who knows Barnegat Bay and our ocean area very well after living here and fishing for many years. Jim has written many fishing articles for various magazines and newspaper publications. Jim's topic is "Crabbing our local waters".

MANDATORY WINTER PFD WEAR - New Regulation 13:82-1.4(f) - Starting this November, no owner or operator of a recreational vessel less than 26 feet, including rowboats, canoes, kayaks, and stand-up paddleboards shall permit its operation between November 1st and May 1st, unless each person on board such vessel is wearing a securely fastened United States Coast Guard-approved wearable personal flotation device of an appropriate size while such vessel is underway. A person inside the cabin of a cabin vessel shall be exempt from this requirement.

In short, **A USCG approved life jacket is required to be worn at all times, outside of a cabin on a boat under 26 feet during the cold-water months, while in motion, from 1 November to 1 May.**

The goal of this legislative update is to prevent hypothermia deaths, and to decrease the risks placed upon first responders during winter search and rescue operations on the waters of New Jersey. In almost every instance of a vessel related drowning, the victim was not wearing a life vest.

New Jersey's coastal features are unique in regard to our offshore fishing, inlets, and tidal bays which result in a greater average recreational vessel size when compared to inland states with similar PFD regulations. This new regulation is in the best interest of the safety of operators and passengers on all New Jersey's waterways.

NEW JERSEY JCAA & FISHING REGULATIONS by Phil Simon - Lately there has been an uptick in the rhetoric surrounding the soon to be constructed wind turbine farms that will be situated along the NJ coast. A lot of it is a re-telling of old arguments about what the impact of the construction and placement of the wind turbines will have on marine life, including marine mammals and fish. Stories of how the current survey efforts by the turbine manufacturers are causing deaths to whales, presumably by sonar devices or other survey methods utilizing sound that disrupts the navigation of the mammals causing them to beach. Unfortunately, these stories almost always come from people and organizations who had already staked out their positions firmly against the turbine farms, and so far, there is really no data to support their claims. Also, there is not much independent data to remove the possibility that the survey methods are in fact having a detrimental effect, and the counterclaims usually come from those with a stake in seeing the projects continue. So, we are left to make our own judgments without really having any facts in hand. It should be noted however that when recent dead whales were examined by scientists, more than half were found to have succumbed to ship strikes or net entanglements, while many of the remaining dead whales were too decomposed to make a cause of death determination. So the issue remains unsettled!

One piece of pro-turbine propaganda that I see often is that the 330 turbines will attract sea life and thus provide us with new fishing opportunities. Indeed, this has been the case with the turbines off Block Island, but then that is a small farm of less than half a dozen sites. To "stock" 330 new sites off NJ would require an enormous uptick in recruitment of fish to the stocks of summer flounder, black sea bass, bluefish, and others. Where are these new fish coming from? Overall recruitment among the various species has been in crisis mode now for several years, due to a number of causes including climate change. More fish would have to come from more fry surviving to maturity. Unless our coastal estuaries show a sudden improvement, and climate change somehow disappears, these numbers will not increase. You should take with a grain of

salt any predictions of new fishing opportunities created by the wind turbines. Let's see what happens.

As best as I can tell, the NJ turbine projects are continuing full steam ahead, with reports of construction equipment being assembled on the coast already seen in local publications. The first turbines could come online as early as 2025. As best as can be told there are no contingency plans in place if there develops a significant negative impact of the turbine sites to fish migrations or other possible events. It's a go/no stop plan. What could possibly go wrong?

The Mid-Atlantic Marine Fisheries Council just held its full meeting in NYC this past weekend, but a summary of what was decided has not yet been issued. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission will be holding its next meeting in mid-October. I hope to be able to summarize major decisions from both meetings in the next newsletter.

DOCKSIDE SCARE by Ed Valituttto - A week ago Friday after the rains finally subsided, I noticed my boat was sitting low in the bow. I have a SeaPro 239 with a 300 hp engine and bow mounted trolling motor. I have had water problems before and after several sealing attempts, I now use white duct tape to seal my front and rear deck hatches. The boat does not have scuppers and the only deck drainage is via a grating across the stern. Upon closer look, my deck at the bow had 5" of standing water that decreased to 0" at the console. But there was enough water to tilt the boat forward and prevent any from reaching the stern drain.

I lowered my motor to shift some weight aft and started the engine. It took about 20 minutes using a push broom to move the water to the drain. I then decided to open the bilge hatch blocked when the motor is up. To my shock, it was filled with water to the top. I then cut the duct tape and opened the rear hatch to my battery compartment. This was also filled to the top, completely submerging the batteries and fuses! I quickly called Causeway Marine and borrowed a sump pump.

Thirty minutes later, the water was drained and CM determined that my bilge was dead and replaced it. How my batteries still worked and how the rain water got below decks is a mystery. Bottom line - **Be sure to verify that your bilge is functioning especially during prolonged rains!**

ANNUAL LBI SURF FISHING CLASSIC - The 69th Annual Fall Surf Fishing Tournament is 9 weeks of fall fishing on Long Beach Island with over \$25,000 in prizes.

This tournament is exciting for all anglers with cash and other prizes awarded for five varieties of fish. Striped Bass lead the way with prizes also available for Bluefish, Kingfish, Tog and Red Drum. This year's tournament dates run from October 7 through December 10, 2023.

Once again, the Classic has daily, weekly, three three-week segments, and grand prizes for striped bass, kingfish, and bluefish. There are also prizes in each three-week segment for the largest tautog and red drum weighed in.

There are a pair of new prizes for 2023. There is a \$500 Grand Slam prize for the angler weighing in the most individual species. Four is the minimum number needed, and the total weight of the fish will break a tie. This year there will also be a Surf Master "Catch and Release" award. This will be awarded for the largest overall striped bass landed and released determined by total length. A picture of the fish is necessary before the bass is safely released.

Surf City Bait and Tackle in Surf City, Jingles Bait and Tackle in Beach Haven, and Fisherman's Headquarters in Ship Bottom are the official weigh-in sites. Registration and regulations are available at all three.



Register now for your commemorative LBI Surf Fishing Classic hat (available while supplies last). You will also receive a decal for your car, rules with a list of prizes and your own personal Derby Entry Badge. **Entry fees are \$30 for adults, and \$15 for junior anglers ages seventeen and under. Full details at [LBI Fall Classic](#).** For all the latest daily weigh-ins and to see who has the largest fish to date, go to [Live Weigh-In Results](#). There are already several weigh-ins for bass, tog and kingfish!

ANNUAL DINNER by Ed Valitutto - Our last club event for this year is our annual dinner. Once again, Bill Dabney has done all the leg work and coordinated our dinner event for Wednesday October 18th at Kostas Grill in Tuckerton. Kostas serves Greek cuisine - see [Kostas Menu](#) and is BYOB. Everyone will pay for their own selections off the menu. VHFC will provide sparkling wine for the occasion and new this year, VHFC will provide appetizer platters for your enjoyment. No space problems but let Bill know if you will attend so he can coordinate with Kostas Grill. So far, we have about 20 participants. Bill's info: dabney372@outlook.com or 609-709-5093.

2023 FOM CONTESTS - Please see the following table for all FOM contests. There are presently 11 **Open contests shaded in blue**. 9 Contests closed this month. **Congratulations to all this month's Winners shaded in green.** Our 4 Young Angler contests closed with Bill Figley's grandchildren **Mila Ellis** (13" Kingfish) and **Hunter Mayo** (9" Blowfish) winners along with my grandson **Braddock Cline** (18 3/4" Fluke). No Entry was made for White Perch. Adult winners included **Brian Leary** (26 3/4" Bluefish), **Pat Presutto** (31 1/2" Surf Only Bluefish), **Marty Friedrich** (22 1/4" Blackfish) and **Cheri Hebert** taking double honors (25" September Fluke and 22 1/2" Surf Only Fluke).

2023 Bill Figley Young Angler FOM Awards (4)

1	1 April - 30 September No Entry to Date	White Perch
2	1 June - 30 September Hunter Mayo 9"	Blowfish
3	1 June - 30 September Mila Ellis 13"	Kingfish
4	2 May - 27 September Braddock Cline 18 3/4"	Fluke

2023 Regular FOM Awards (26)

1	15 March - 30 June Dave Puzak 37 3/4"	Striped Bass
2	15 March - 30 June (Surf Only) Pat Presutto 37 3/4"	Striped Bass
3	15 March - 30 September Brian Leary 26 3/4"	Bluefish
4	15 March - 30 September (Surf Only) Pat Presutto 31 1/2"	Bluefish
5	15 March - 30 June Dave Spendiff 14 1/4"	White Perch
6	1 April - 30 June Tyler Leary 27 1/4"	Weakfish
7	1 April - 31 October Dave Puzak Leads 11"	Blowfish
8	1 April - 31 October Phil Kaplan leads 13 3/4"	Kingfish
9	1 April - 31 December Ron Nachmann leads 37 1/2"	Red or Black Drum

10	1 - 30 April & 1 Aug - 30 Sept Marty Friedrich 22 1/4"	Blackfish
11	2 May - 30 June John Barrett 24 1/2"	Fluke
12	2 May - 27 September (Surf Only) Cheri Hebert 22 1/2"	Fluke
13	17 May - 19 June Bill Figley 21 1/4"	Seabass
14	1 - 31 July Marty Friedrich 24 1/2"	Fluke
15	1 - 31 July Marty Friedrich 20 1/2"	Seabass
16	1 July – 31 October Nick Della Fave leads 10 1/2"	White Perch
17	1 July – 31 October Steve Scharaldi leads 19"	Weakfish
18	1 - 31 August Alan Goracy 24"	Fluke
19	1 - 31 August Brian Leary 18 1/4"	Seabass
20	1 - 27 September Cheri Hebert 25"	Fluke
21	1 Oct – 31 Dec	Bluefish
22	1 Oct – 31 Dec (Surf Only)	Bluefish
23	1 Oct – 31 Dec	Striped Bass
24	1 Oct – 31 Dec (Surf Only)	Striped Bass
25	1 Oct – 31 Dec	Blackfish
26	1 Oct – 31 Dec	Seabass

2023 FOM ENTRIES - Here's our list of recent 2023 entries since last month's Newsletter. Go to [VHFC Standings](#) for the complete list of entries.

09-02-23	Blowfish	9 1/2"	Larry Gonnello	
09-02-23	Fluke	25"	Cheri Hebert	Barnegat Inlet
09-04-23	Blowfish	11"	Dave Puzak	Near Barnegat Lighthouse
09-04-23	Fluke	19 3/4"	Dave Puzak	
09-06-23	Fluke	19 1/2"	Pat Presutto	Holgate surf
09-07-23	Fluke	21 1/2"	Pat Presutto	Holgate surf
09-10-23	Fluke	22 1/2"	Cheri Hebert	Double Creek Channel
09-10-23	Weakfish	20 1/2"	Cheri Hebert	Double Creek Channel
09-10-23	White Perch	10 1/2"	Nick Della Fave	Home Lagoon
09-13-23	White Perch	9 3/4"	Bill Dabney	Home Lagoon

10-01-23	Blowfish	10 3/4"	Bill Figley	Holgate
10-03-23	Seabass	19"	Pat Presutto	Wreck 12 miles out
10-03-23	Seabass	17 1/2"	Bill Figley	AC Reef

Be sure to check out the following photos!



Caesar Pesarini and Bill Dabney put together that impressive catch of White Perch. The largest was 10" but still not good enough to top Nick Della Fave's 10 1/2" entry. White Perch is open until 31 October.



Dave Puzak is holding a 13" Catfish caught off his dock on Patty Lane. Dave's been there since 1987 and has caught perch, eels, snappers, baby flounders, bass and almost an otter but never until now a cat(fish). Sorry Dave, No FOM for cats!

VHFC 2ND ANNUAL BOTTOM FISHING TRIP by Ed Valitutto - After weeks of strong winds and high seas, all was calm on October 3rd for our second annual bottom fishing trip on the *Super Chic*. Moored at the old *Carolyn Ann III* dock at Viking Village in Barnegat Light, everyone arrived on time for our 6:00 AM departure. Once outside the inlet, seas were calm and we knew we lucked out with a 'bluebird' day. Our first stop was 10 -12 miles due east and we were fishing by 7:30. Winds were so calm that anchoring was not feasible. Instead, Capt Ted let the boat drift with an occasional small adjustment using the engines.

Once our baits hit bottom, a ravenous hoard of sea bass and small bluefish attacked our baits. Unfortunately, there were a lot of small seabass despite early reports of many large fish before the season opened. The captain said this was due to all the turbulence the passing storms brought that made the bigger fish seek deeper water. Nonetheless, we still caught a lot of fish of several species including sea bass, 1 - 2 lb bluefish, nice sized triggerfish, several dinner plate porgies, out of season fluke, a half dozen bonita, line tangling chub mackerel and one large eel!

Due to all the throwbacks, we didn't get back until 2:40. It was a long, fun day with some fine filets brought home for the table.

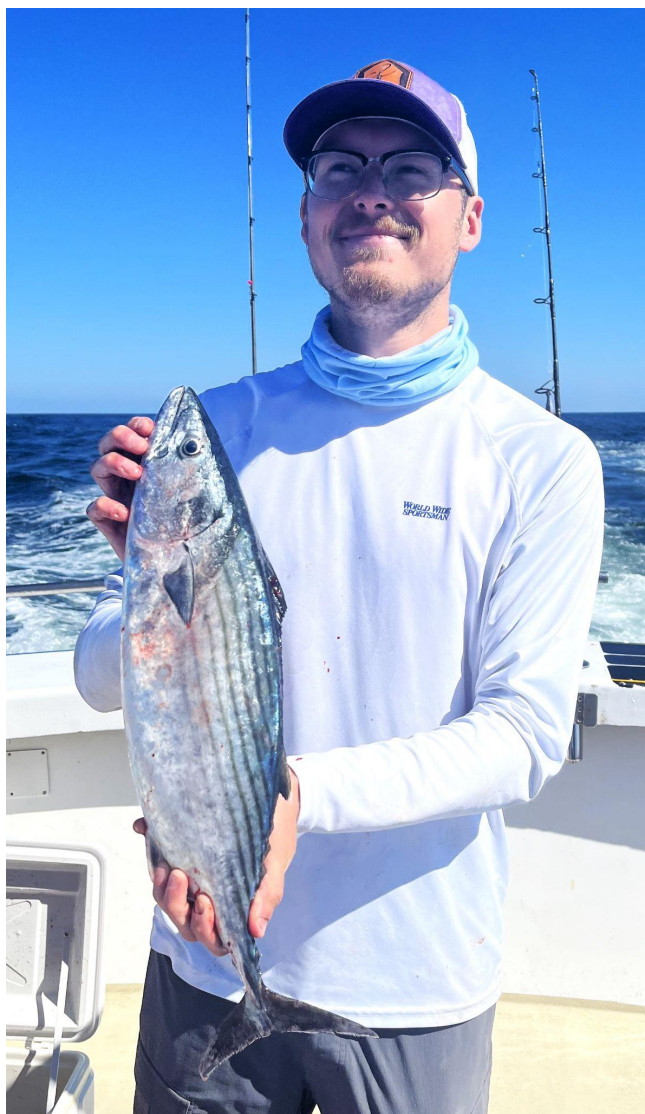


Everyone's focused on catching the 'big one'. Notice the calm blue ocean!



Pat Presutto is all smiles with his first fish of the day that was also the biggest sea bass. Pat's fish was 19" and earned him an FHQ award. Pat also caught and released three flounder.

Bill Dabney's step-grandson Kevin Ball was an absolute bonita slayer. Kevin had three of the six bonita caught including the one shown which earned him an FHQ award for heaviest 'other' species. The big triggerfish didn't even come close to his bonita!





That's Pat Presutto, Jerry Nichols and Ed Valitutto enjoying the ride out.

MONTHLY RECIPE HOT CRAB DIP - Originally submitted by Jim Hutchinson Sr - Since Jim is our guest speaker next week, I thought his Hot Crab Dip recipe would be appropriate.

Ingredients

- 1 Lb crab meat *
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 8 oz cream cheese
- 1 small onion minced
- 2 scallions minced
- 1 TBS lemon juice
- 1/2 TSP dried dill
- Few drops of hot sauce

* You can catch and clean your own crabs (Jim's choice), buy a can of crab meat for \$30-40 or my favorite, buy cooked Dungeness crab clusters at Costco for \$9.99/lb or ~\$20 / package. Picking the meat is simple and it's delicious. Just warm and dip in butter!

Directions

1. Pick through the crabs to remove all shells.
2. Soften the cream cheese and blend with the mayo.

3. Add all other ingredients except crab and blend gently.
4. Fold in the crab and transfer to an ovenproof baking dish.
5. Bake in a preheated 350 oven for 30 minutes until bubbly and starting to turn brown on top.
6. Serve with your favorite crackers. Enjoy!

DONATED EQUIPMENT FOR SALE by Ed Valitutto - VHFC member Ron Nachman dropped off several rods and reels to the club stating he no longer needed / used them and needed the space. Dave Sperndiff and I did an initial assessment and discarded a few items - mostly rods. The remaining reels Dave brought home and methodically verified their working condition and proceeded to clean and grease all of them. The reels are all Penn models as listed: Model # 155, 65, 500s, 140 and two 500's. Dave said all the reel drags are working but probably should be replaced in the near future. He's even offered to do the replacement if the new owner orders the parts! If you search Vintage Penn Reels on Facebook, you will see prices varying from \$10 to \$75. VHFC offers the reels starting at \$15 or Best Offer. Rods shown come with the reels. All material will be available at future meetings as available. **Thanks Ron for your donation and thanks Dave for your effort cleaning and greasing them.**



FISHING REPORTS - Please go to the VHFC website at <http://www.vhfishingclub.com> to read fishing reports submitted by fellow club members. Please submit your reports using the simple form on the pull down menu. If you do not feel comfortable using the form, please email Ed Valitutto @ edvalitutto@gmail.com or call 609 994 1311 and provide me with the details so I can do a report for you. Please take a moment to provide a report for other members to enjoy and gain some valuable fishing insight. There was only 1 report since the September Newsletter.



Dave Puzak had a good day fishing the Labor Day Holiday. His daughter caught her first keeper fluke in Double Creek. Even better, they combined fluking, blowfishing, clamming and swimming. Dave said his family bagged three blowfish dinners.

VESSEL SAFETY CHECKS - By Jeff Orsoe Both the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and the United States Power Squadrons have certified vessel examiners who will perform a free Vessel Safety Check ("VSC") at your boat, at a time of mutual convenience. There is no charge and no consequences if your boat doesn't pass. Our goal is simply to help make boating as safe as possible for you, your family and your friends. Personal pleasure craft, only.

I am available to perform a Vessel Safety exam on your vessel. As stated above, there is no charge for the exam and if you do not qualify for the sticker, the results will not be reported to any agency. Contact: Jeff Orsoe Cell / Text: 732-672-5530 or email: jorsoe786@gmail.com.

A fire extinguisher is one of the items that is required. Last year, a new law regarding them went into effect. The extinguisher now has a 12 year qualifying life cycle. If you look at the bottom, you will see the year it was made. Just add 12 years to that date to figure the expiration date.



VHFC Hats - Hats are khaki colored and feature a high definition VHFC patch on the front. They are high quality and available at club meetings for \$20. If you would like a hat,, please contact Dave Spendiff for details.

VHFC Shirts - VHFC T-Shirts are available for purchase but we need to order a 12 lot minimum. Sizes range from XS (Extra Small) to 6XL and are available in nine colors. Shirts have long sleeves and feature UPF 50 Sun Protection. Let us know



your size and color preference. These are quality shirts to be worn proudly. White is shown below with the ordering info. Sizes/Cost: XS, S, M, L & XL @ \$31, 2XL @ \$32, 3XL @ \$33 4XL @ \$34, 5XL @ \$35 & 6XL @ \$36. Colors: White, Pale Green, Sand, Pale Orange, Pale Yellow, Pale Teal, Aqua,

Lime & Medium Blue. For a slightly loose fit, order your normal shirt size. For a tight fit, order one size smaller than your normal shirt size. Contact Dave Spendiff at dnspeidiff@netscape.net for placing an order.

CLASSIFIED ADS BUY, SELL or TRADE

Classified ads may be placed free of charge by any club member for non-commercial fishing related items. Please contact Ed Valitutto via email at edvalitutto@gmail.com to place your ad.

FISHING WITH CLUB MEMBERS - Members may place free ads in this section if you wish to find someone to fish with. Maybe you need to find someone with a boat or you are interested in finding someone to share expenses on your boat. With gas prices reaching the sky, helping out with fuel costs is almost a necessity.

USEFUL INFORMATION LINKS

See the full list on our website [Links](#)

Wave Information (Height, Period, Direction and Water Temperature) from a Buoy 15 Miles Outside Barnegat Inlet Updated Every 30 minutes: [Buoy #44091](#)

Boat/US: <http://www.boatus.com/>

United States Coast Guard Auxiliary: <http://www.cgaux.org/>

Notice to Mariners (District 5): <http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=InmDistrict®ion=5>

Fisherman's Headquarters: <http://www.fishermansheadquarters.com/>

The Boat Shop: <http://theboatshoponline.com/>

The Bass Barn: <http://www.thebassbarn.com>

Barnegat Fishing Hole: <http://www.barnegatfishinghole.com/ubbthreads/ubbthreads.php>

Animated Knots: <http://www.animatedknots.com/>

Long Beach Island Water Temperature & Winds:

<https://seatemperature.info/long-beach-island-water-temperature.html>

SPONSORS - The following sponsors offer a discount with the presentation of your current VHFC Membership Card. Discounts normally do not apply to items that are fair traded or items on sale.

BHW Marine Center 10% discount with VHFC card
857 Mill Creek Rd Manahawkin, NJ 08050
609-709-5424

Boat U.S.

Special membership price call Jeff Orsoe. Forms for members' use will be at VHFC meetings or call Jeff Orsoe 732-672-5530. Also, VHFC members only pay \$9.50 for a year of Boat U.S.

Creekside Outfitters 10% discount with VHFC card
403 Rt. 9 Waretown, NJ 08758
609-242-1812

D & S Marine Service 10% discount on parts with VHFC card

460 Dock Rd, West Creek NJ 08092
609-296-0309

Fisherman's Headquarters 10% discount with VHFC card
280 West 9th St, Ship Bottom, NJ 08008
609-494-5739

JB Awards 10% discount on engraving and trophies with VHFC card
609-290-5851

Jingles Bait & Tackle 10% discount with VHFC card
1214 N Bay Ave, Beach Haven, NJ 08008
609-492-2795

The Boat Shop 10% discount with VHFC card
756 E. Bay Ave, Manahawkin, NJ 08050
609-597-1271