



HARBOUR LIGHT

OFFICIAL VHFC NEWSLETTER September 2026

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 6:00; Meeting begins at 6:30 PM

Next meeting: 11 September 2026 at the Forked River Tuna Club

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello VHFC Members,

Happy Labor Day to you and your family as we celebrate the 'notional' end of summer and the start of the school year! Labor Day is celebrated on the first Monday of September to honor the achievements and contributions of American workers! President Grover Cleveland signed it into law as a federal holiday on June 28, 1894 and to this day, people celebrate Labor Day with parades, barbecues, picnics, and family gatherings. But aside from enjoying the holiday, Labor Day signifies we are now into the 'shoulder' or off peak season. However, September at the Jersey shore can be a wonderful time of year. The weather vacillates between near- perfect and hurry up and take cover from the storms. Usually though, it will continue to improve as we move into early fall - my favorite time at the shore. So venture out into the open air and experience all this area has to offer.

Fortunately, many things have started to reduce / lessen and thankfully so! Air temperatures are becoming more bearable along with the lesser humidity and traffic congestion is disappearing.

Visitors will start to taper off now that schools are reopening and lastly, beach badges shortly will no longer be needed! Surf City and Ship Bottom beach access will commence on the 21st with most other beaches on 1 October. Oh and I almost forgot, the fishing can be outstanding. There are less than three weeks left to enjoy fluke fishing until it closes on Friday September 25th. Blowfish should become more abundant along with blueclaw crabs in the bay and blackfish and seabass should provide some fine catching based on the spring season. There have been multiple reports of bird action right outside Barnegat Inlet with Bluefish, Spanish Mackerel, Bonito and even a few False Albies with Stripers arriving in our waters shortly. This is also a great time to jump on a party boat for some fine catching of bottom species- ling, porgies and winter flounder, or better yet, jump on our Bottom Trips on September 17th or November 4th. So make the most of the remaining days of summer and enjoy our great outdoors.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the special Tri-Club meeting on Friday, September 11th at the Forked River Tuna Club (FRTC) located at 18 Bay Ave in Forked River - more details later in the NL. Lastly, be sure to take a photo of your catch for our FOM / FOY and POM awards and submit a report for others to enjoy and learn where the fish are biting.

Ed

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UPCOMING VHFC 2026 EVENTS - For your long term planning and participation.

- **Tri - Club Meeting September 11 at the Forked River Tuna Club**
- **Ocean Fluke Party Boat Trip Thursday September 17**
- **Club Dinner October 21 at Kosta's in Tuckerton**
- **Bottom Party Boat Trip Wednesday November 4**
- **Surf Tournament Saturday November 21**

SEPTEMBER MEETING - A DIFFERENT VENUE by John Stuebing Our September 11 meeting will not be held at the Community Center. Instead, we will be meeting at the Forked River Tuna Club, 18 Bay Ave, Forked River, NJ. This will be a combined meeting with VHFC, Fish Hawks and FRTC. Here are some details:

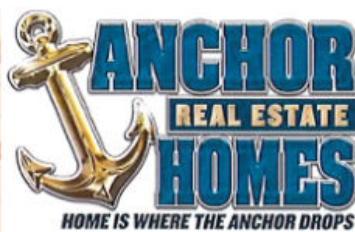
- Doors and Cash Bar Open at 6:00PM
- There will be a 50/50 Raffle along with Rod & Reel Raffles and more.
- Meeting will start at 6:30PM
 - o Introductions
 - o Flag Salute
 - o Moment of Silence for the 25th anniversary of 9/11
- Guest Speaker, Captain Jim Freda will talk about techniques for Fall Striper Fishing.
- After Jim is finished, the rest of the evening is dedicated to socializing.
- Various snacks will be available.

This will be a fun evening talking to fellow members and members of the other two clubs.



That's our August speaker Peter Clarke, head of New Jersey's Artificial Reef Program, overseeing 17 artificial reef sites along our coast. Pete made an excellent presentation the past, present and future of our most important fishing asset - our artificial reefs.

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BOAT SAFELY ON THE BAY by Captain Walt Bohn of Sea Tow Central New Jersey

Barnegat Bay is one of New Jersey's most popular recreational waterways, but its shallow water, changing conditions, and heavy boat traffic require boaters to stay vigilant. Whether you're heading out for a day of fishing, cruising, or anchoring up at your favorite spot, a little preparation and basic knowledge of safe boating practices will go a long way. As a captain with 50 years on the water, someone involved in emergency services for 30 years, and General Manager of Sea Tow Central New Jersey, I've seen the other side of boating. Too often, what starts out as a day of fun ends with a tow—or something much worse. This year there have been way too many accidents, some of them fatal. The first 3 days in July, 9 boats struck the North Jetty at Barnegat Inlet, 5 of them were on the same day. We also had a total of 4 fatalities this year, all alcohol related incidents.

Designate a Sober Skipper

After the season we have had in our area, THIS NEEDS TO BE PLAINLY SAID: If you are drinking, **DO NOT OPERATE THE BOAT**. Alcohol can affect judgment, reaction time, balance, and coordination. Conditions on the water, including sun, heat, wind, engine noise, vibration, and the constant movement of the vessel, can amplify the effects. Boating Under the Influence (BUI) is the leading cause of fatal boating accidents, yet it is 100% preventable. Always designate a Sober Skipper before you leave the dock.

Prepare the Boat Before Leaving the Dock

Before departure, take a few minutes to check the boat. Always check your batteries, fuel supply, bilge pumps, navigation lights, and VHF radio. Also make sure required safety equipment, including properly fitting life jackets, fire extinguishers, and visual distress signals are in good condition and easy to access.

Check the Weather

Check the forecast and continue monitoring conditions throughout the day. Pay attention to wind, storms, marine advisories, and other conditions that may affect the trip. The Sea Tow App provides access to marine weather forecasts, live radar, wind conditions and severe weather alerts to help boaters stay informed before and during their time on the water. If conditions are unsafe, stay at the dock and choose another time to head out.

Slow Down and Pay Attention

Barnegat Bay is a dynamic waterway with shallow areas, shoals, shifting conditions, submerged hazards, currents, and significant recreational boat traffic. To add to these challenges, we have dredging projects that are increasing the dangers of navigating. At higher speeds, a boat can

cover a considerable distance in only a few seconds, leaving less time to react to another vessel or an unexpected hazard. Maintain awareness of your location, follow navigation aids, and use current charts or other appropriate navigational resources. Conditions can change, so the route you took on a previous trip is not guaranteed to be the same. Take it slow, and if you're unfamiliar with the area, ask for help. Here in New Jersey, my adage is "Welcome to the Barnegat Bay, it is the only place in New Jersey where you can break down in a boat and walk home". Speed also inherently adds risk, especially at night. I always say, "go only as fast you are prepared to hit something".

Autopilot Does Not Replace an Alert Operator

Technology can make boating easier, but it does not eliminate the captain's responsibility to maintain a proper lookout. Never leave the helm unattended. Autopilot is a tool, not a substitute for a captain. Continue to monitor surrounding traffic, changing conditions, and potential hazards at all times.

Wear a Life Jacket

Life jackets only work if they are worn. A sudden wake, collision, fall, unexpected turn, or loss of balance can send a passenger overboard with little warning. In case of an emergency, there may not be enough time to locate and put one on. Every person on board should have access to a properly fitting life jacket; wearing one provides the greatest protection if an unexpected incident occurs. It is also important to remember that all people on board a vessel under 26' from November 1 to May 1 must have ON a USCG approved life jacket when underway, (anytime away from the dock).

Know When to Ask for Help

When something does not feel right, always assess the situation early. Depending on the circumstances, that may mean returning to the dock, anchoring the vessel, or calling for help. Mechanical problems, running aground, and other issues happen. Having an on-water assistance membership, like Sea Tow, provides a backup plan when the unexpected happens. Safe Boating Starts with the Captain An inconvenience on the water can quickly turn into an emergency situation, but preparation and good decision-making can reduce the risk. Always check the boat and the weather, maintain a safe speed, stay aware, use navigational tools appropriately, and wear a life jacket. Most importantly, anyone who consumes alcohol should leave the operation of the vessel to a Sober Skipper.

A successful day on Barnegat Bay is one that ends with everyone returning safely to shore.



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VHFC OPEN TOURNAMENT GETS CANCELED by John Stuebing

For the second year in a row, we could not get the VHFC Open Tournament up and running. Last year, it was the weather and this year we just could not get enough anglers to participate. This Tournament was designed for people fishing Reefs, Wrecks and Jetties. For now, we will take this tournament off the schedule. Next year we will consider a different event in August.

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SOCIAL MEDIA by Bayside Dave Etelman - Our VHFC sites are [VHFC FB](#) and [VHFC Instagram](#). The FB site has 297 followers with each post reaching thousands of people; our Instagram account has 680 followers. Dave shares Members Reports, club activities, tournaments, monthly meetings as well as tips for fishing and boating on both social media networks. VHFC also has a YouTube channel at [VHFC YouTube](#) where you can send in your videos on anything related to fishing: tying rigs, how you set up your boat or car for surf fishing, tackle tricks or days on the water catching fish. **It's important to Like and Comment on each post to help boost distribution.** Here's a recent post:



Here's a photo from a recent Public Service Announcement about having a safe outing on the water.

Per Ed V... "In New Jersey, **operating a vessel while impaired by alcohol, drugs, or with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.08% or higher is illegal** and applies to **any vessel with machinery for propulsion or 12 feet or longer**, including motorboats, sailboats, and personal watercraft. Policing is handled by the **New Jersey State Police Marine Services Bureau** and the **U.S. Coast Guard**." Penalties include fines, loss of both boat and driver's licenses and possible jail time. See [NJ Boating While Intoxicated \(BUI\) Laws](#) for details

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MANAHAWKIN BAY DREDGING by Ed Valitutto - This article is an excerpt from an NJ DOT News Release with my personal observations. This \$8.4 million dollar project called the Beach Haven West Complex, will restore the Harvey Cedars, Harvey Cedars 2, Margos, Beach Haven West Mill Creek, Cedar Run and Little Egg channels. In July, H&L Construction LLC, began hydraulic dredging operations that will continue 24 hours, 7 days a week until project completion, which is expected in **December 2026**. The project will restore these channels to their authorized depths, varying from 5 feet to 8 feet at mean low water to ensure safe navigation and access to channels in Barnegat Bay.



The public is advised to be aware of and stay alert for the pipeline, buoys, dredge, and other maritime construction equipment during the project. NJDOT asks that no one approach the construction site or any other project-related equipment. Boaters should proceed through construction zones with caution and can contact the contractor for meeting/passing arrangements

on **Channel 63**. No wake speed should be observed in active work zones throughout the

duration of the project. The latest news is that the dredging is relocating to Harvey Cedars north of the Rt 72 bridge. Work will continue there for about 2 weeks. Go to [NJ DOT](#) for further details

I have contacted the dredge by radio several times and was given guidance on how to proceed. I also have two neighbors who went over the pipeline in unauthorized crossing areas and struck it! Neither had serious boat damage and both had no explanation for why it happened other than 'They didn't know.' I believe air can get into the dredge line and cause it to float off the bottom. Lastly, this work may seem like a royal PITA, it is absolutely necessary and long overdue.

Totally unrelated, I have not been able to get further information regarding reopening Double Creek Channel also under NJ DOT regulation and furthermore, **all channel markers have been removed!** Per Sea Tow, "We've ungrounded several boats that tried following "last year's tracks"... so conditions have definitely changed. Will advise when updated."



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RUTGERS RESEARCH ON SUMMER FLOUNDER by John Stuebing At the last meeting I talked about some of the research Rutgers is doing on Summer Flounder. In my discussions with Dr. Doug Zemeckis, I learned of some interesting research being done by one of the Graduate Students, Nicole Fox, on Fluke DNA and eating habits. I was also told that she was in need of some Fluke Racks and Stomach contents for her research.

I contacted Nicole and offered to try and get her some Racks for her research. On 8/31, I met Nicole and gave her about 20 racks for her research. She was very grateful to get them. Thanks to Marty, Jerry and Bayside Dave for providing the Racks. Next year Doug and Nicole will come to one of our meetings and provide the results from this research. Stay Tuned!



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BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW THIS by Ed Valitutto - Last week, two of my grandkids said they wanted to climb to the top of Ol' Barney. So off we went and while they climbed to the top, I walked the jetty listening to all the dismal fishing reports. After that we wandered into the small museum on the trail to the lighthouse. It is a very interesting place with any old photos of the inlet. While looking at the exhibits, one explained that on the ebb tide, water leaving Barnegat Bay carried sand particles and dropped them beyond the mouth of the inlet. These sand deposits built up and formed sandbars or shoals. Of course today with the two long rock jetties installed, the build up is much reduced/

In 1614, Dutch Captain Cornelius May observed the sea breaking on these shoals and named the inlet barende-gat or breakers inlet. From this the name Barnegat evolved!

Please welcome our newest advertiser, Harvey Cedars



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CLUB DINNER by Ed Valitutto - Mark your calendars for one of our most enjoyable club events! Once again, Bill Dabney has done all the leg work and coordinated our dinner event for **Wednesday October 21st at Kostas Grill in Tuckerton**. Kostas serves Greek cuisine - see [Kostas Menu](#) for details. Everyone pays for their own selections off the menu but our own wine expert, Bill Dabney (I'm not kidding, Bill has really worked in the wine industry), will select an assortment of wine complements of VHFC and VHFC will provide appetizer platters for your enjoyment. Kostas's is BYOB so if you prefer to bring your own favorite libation, certainly do so. There are no space problems but please let Bill know if you will attend so he can coordinate with Kostas Grill. This is always a fun event for members and their spouse to get together for fun.

Bill's info is dabney372@outlook.com or 609-709-5093.



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BEACH HAVEN MARLIN & TUNA CLUB TOURNAMENT WINNERS by Larry Leary

Fellow club member and grandson, Tyler Leary, was part of the five man crew that won this tournament with a 32lb Mahi Mahi. Other superlatives to note: This was the youngest Captain Jake Kline with the youngest crew sailing the smallest boat in the tournament. What an awesome win! They received a check for **\$30,536** to be split among the crew, boat expenses and Uncle Sam.





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PLAY HOOK E EVENT by Chuck Dishian - The event was held on Saturday, August 22nd. For 10 years, it's been a day of fishing for people with disabilities, veterans and active service members and their families. It is sponsored by The NJ Viet Nam Veterans of America, American Warriors Outdoors and the Jersey Coast Anglers Assoc. and takes place on Lake Julianna on the Ponderosa Farm in Millstone Township. A call went to all member clubs of the JCAA and five VHFC members answered.

We spent the day setting up the rods and reels, baiting hooks, untangling lines, removing fish, distributing toys and goodie bags and helping with casting techniques. The experience truly touched our hearts, especially when seeing the look of unbridled excitement and joy on the faces of the participants when they landed a fish. Among the species caught were Bluegill, a few Smallmouth Bass, Perch, Koi and a good deal of very decent sized Channel Catfish.

I know that we'll be participating in this great event next year and we hope that this article inspires more members to step up and volunteer. It's good for the club and it's good for the soul.



That's Chuck Dishian, Bill Bond, Pat V, Glen Minor and Ed V proudly repping our club at this great event. Ed V helps Amber get a photo of her Channel Cat.

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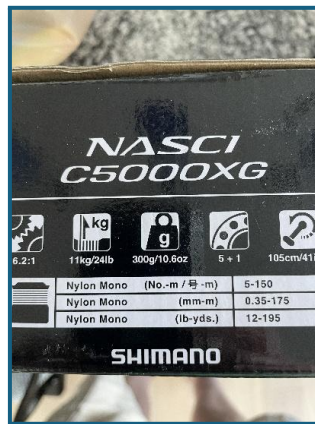
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ROD & REEL RAFFLE by John Stuebing Our next Rod & Reel Raffle is ready to go. Thanks to Creekside Outfitters, we have a great spinning outfit for jigging Fall Stripers and much more. This outfit consists of a Jigging World Rod (MH – rated for 15 – 30 lbs. line) and a Shimano NASCI5000XG Reel rated for 20 – 40 lbs. Line. **Total combo value is ~\$275!**

Tickets for the raffle will only be available at the August and October meetings. **Remember we will be at the Forked River Tuna Club in September for a joint meeting with the Fish Hawks and the FRTC and we will not be selling tickets at that meeting.**



This will be the last Rod & Reel Raffle for the 2026 season. Don't miss out!

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LBI SURF FISHING CLASSIC by Dave Edelman - Registration for the 72nd Annual LBI Surf Fishing Classic is now open!

The Derby kicked off early again this year on August 29th and runs through November 29th. This legendary event, one of the world's oldest and most prestigious surf fishing tournaments, offers anglers a shot at over \$25,000 in prizes for landing striped bass, bluefish, fluke, kingfish, blackfish, weakfish, and red drum. The Surf Master Award category returns again this year with prizes offered for the largest striped bass 38" or larger entered via catch, photo, and release.

The registration fee is \$40 for adults and \$20 for juniors (under 18). Register on their website www.lbisfc.com. You can also register in person at Fishermans Headquarters, Jingles Bait & Tackle, and Surf City Bait & Tackle. A free tournament hat and sticker is included with all registrations.

As of Monday, September 7th, there are 28 registered clubs including VHFC and 141 registered anglers. Total entries to date: 4 Kingfish, 1 Weakfish, 1 Bluefish, 3 Fluke. No Stripers, Blackfish or Red Drum have been entered. See all results at [2026 Live Results](#)

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LBISFC SEMINAR by Dave Etelman The 72nd Annual LBI Surf Fishing Classic's FREE surf fishing seminar is Saturday, September 12, from 9AM to 12PM at the Ship Bottom Firehouse. Greg Cudnik, owner of Fisherman's Headquarters, and local angler, Bayside Dave will be sharing their knowledge of surf fishing. Topics for discussion are, but not limited to, tackle & equipment, bait & lure fishing, reading the surf, and driving a 4x4 on the beach. We welcome all anglers and your surf fishing questions will be answered.

Free coffee and donuts will be supplied by How You Brewin and Crust and Crumb Bakery. There will be door prizes from AFW/High Seas Fishing for all participants. If you haven't already, while you are there, you can sign up for the derby and get a free tournament hat, sticker, and coupons from local sponsors while supplies last.

The Ship Bottom Firehouse is located at [2006 Central Ave. Ship Bottom](#) - on the corner of 21st and Central. **A \$5 donation to the Firehouse is required for attendance. However, this is free to anglers registered in the tournament. You can register at the door.**

Go to the website www.lbisfc.com for all the information, rules, and prize structure for this year's Fall Classic which runs from August 29 through November 29.

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SEPTEMBER FISHING TRIP by Bayside Dave The fall Fluke Fishing Trip for VHFC members and their guests is scheduled for **Thursday, September 17th, on the Mary M IV** at the Lighthouse Marina in Barnegat Light on LBI. Departure is 6 AM and will return by 2 PM, so please arrive by 5:30 AM. The cost per angler including tip will be approximately \$100 (depends on how many register). Money will be collected on the boat the day of the trip before departure. Free coffee and donuts will be available compliments of the club..



If you're interested, please send a message to Bayside Dave with the names and email addresses of you and your guest(s). A sign-up sheet will also be at our next monthly meeting at the FRTC on Friday, September 11th. So far we have 18 signed up!

Fishing reports from my Facebook group, Surf Fishing

LBI with Bayside Dave, shows that, even though fishing for Fluke and Kingfish started out slow, with many short Fluke being caught, people are starting to get keepers. Kingfish are starting to bite as well. Tog fishing off the Lighthouse walkway and jetty is still very slow. Small Bluefish are being caught in the inlet and off the surf.



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PICTURE OF THE MONTH by Phil Simon & Jerry Nichols - Here's our August winner submitted by Jerry Gherardi. Congratulations!



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FOM ENTRIES by Ed Valitutto- Here's our list of entries for the month of August / early September. Go to [2026 FOM Standings](#) for the complete list of entries.

Angler	Species		Class	Date	Size “	MBA	Location
Luis Salgado	Fluke	Boat	August	1	18.25	1	Oyster Creek Channel
Luis Salgado	Kingfish	Boat	August	1	13.25	N/A	Oyster Creek Channel
Bill Bond	Fluke	Boat	August	1	18.25	1	Wreck
Bill Bond	Sea Bass	Boat	August	1	16.25	3	Wreck
Jerry Nichols	Fluke	Boat	August	8	23.25	4	Barnegat Bay Dike
Tyler Leary	Bluefish	Boat	August	9	29	5	Barnegat Inlet
Cheri Hebert	Fluke	Boat	August	11	26.25	7	Barnegat Inlet
Ed Valitutto	Blackfish	Boat	August	13	16.25	2	Barnegat Inlet North jetty
Perry Hoagey	Fluke	Boat	August	14	21.5	2	LER
Gaige Grant	Mahi Mahi	Boat	August	14	26	N/A	Hudson Canyon
Tim Long	Bluefish	Boat	August	14	25	4	Off Manasquan
Ed Valitutto	Blackfish	Boat	August	19	17.5	3	Barnegat Inlet North jetty
Dave Etelman	Fluke	Boat	August	21	21.5	2	GSN

Luis Salgado	Fluke	Boat	August	24	22.5	3	Barnegat Reef
Larry Gonnello	Fluke	Boat	August	25	21.5	2	Off LER
Marty Friedrich	Fluke	Boat	August	26	23	4	Wreck
Luis Salgado	Fluke	Boat	August	29	20.75	1	Oyster Creek
Dave Puzak	Fluke	Boat	September	4	22.5	3	North of Barnegat Inlet
Perry Hoagey	Fluke	Boat	September	4	28	9	Deep Wreck
Dave Puzak	Blowfish	Boat	September	6	11	N/A	Barnegat Bay

Some impressive FOM entries:



Tim Long caught a nice 24" Bluefish & Gage Grant got a nice 26" Mahi Mahi





Dave Puzak caught a bunch of Blowfish including this 11" FOM leader



That's Perry Hoagey FOM / FOY leading 28" 8 lb monster Fluke

2026 CONTESTS by Ed Valitutto - VHFC has three year-long contests: Melanie Boytos Award, Fish of the Year and Fish of the Month. Go to [VHFC Contest Rules](#) for full details.

The MBA winner receives a \$200 Visa gift card name plus their name engraved on a trophy they display at a place of their choosing for one year; FOY winners each receive a \$100 Visa gift card plus an engraved plaque; FOM winners receive a \$50 gift card to a local Bait & Tackle shop.

Melanie Boytos Award (MBA) - Here are the top 5 Leaders

Angler	MBA Points
Glen Minor	18
Pat Presutto	14
Dave Etelman	14
Perry Hoagey	12
Rocky Vendett	11

Fish of the Year (FOY) Leaders

Species	Angler	Size Inches
Bluefish	Glen Minor	32
Fluke	Perry Hoagey	28
Sea Bass	Ed Valitutto	19.5
Striped Bass	Glen Minor	42.25
Weakfish	No Entry	
Blackfish	Rocky Vendett	19.25

FOM CONTESTS by Ed Valitutto - There are 30 FOMs open at present: 8 Junior & 22 Adult FOMs: 5 Surf, 10 Boat, 4 Boat / Surf and 3 Offshore.

One FOM contest closed on 31 August (Boat Fluke) and 2 FOM contests opened on 1 September - Boat Fluke & Offshore False Albacore. Here is the August FOM closure and winner:

Boat Fluke Cheri Hebert 26.5"

Congratulations Cheri

FOM CONTEST STATUS by Ed Valitutto Go to [VHFC Contest Rules](#) for full details.

Open FOM Contests shaded Green; Closed Contests shaded Red

Junior Angler FOM Leaders					
Species	Start	Finish	Leader/Winner	Size Inches	Status
White Perch	1/1/26	12/31/26	No Entry		Open
Bluefish	1/1/26	12/31/26	No Entry		Open
Kingfish	3/1/26	12/31/26	No Entry		Open
Blowfish	3/1/26	12/31/26	No Entry		Open
Fluke	5/4/26	9/25/26	No Entry		Open
Sea Bass	5/15/26	12/31/26	No Entry		Open
Striped Bass	1/1/26	12/31/26	Bryson Wyatt	29	Open
Spring Blackfish	1/1/26	4/30/26	Gaige Grant	16.75	Closed
Fall Blackfish	8/1/26	12/31/26	No Entry		Open

Surf FOM Leaders					
Species	Start	Finish	Leader/Winner	Size Inches	Status
Striper	1/1/26	7/31/26	Dave Etelman	31	Closed
Striper	8/1/26	12/31/26	No Entry		Open
Striper No Size Limit	1/1/26	12/31/26	Glen Minor Leads	42.25	Open
Bluefish	1/1/26	6/30/26	Glen Minor	32	Closed
Bluefish	7/1/26	12/31/26	No Entry		Open
Fluke	5/4/26	6/30/26	No Entry		Closed
Fluke	7/1/26	9/25/26	Tyler Leary Leads	20.75	Open
Blackfish	1/1/26	4/30/26	No Winner		Closed
Blackfish	8/1/26	12/31/26	No Entry		Open

2026 Boat FOM Leaders					
Species	Start	Finish	Leader/Winner	Size Inches	Status
Striper	1/1/26	7/31/26	Jim Healy	30.75	Closed
Striper	8/1/26	12/31/26	No Entry		Open
Striper No Size Limit	1/1/26	12/31/26	Rocky Vendetta Leads	40	Open
Bluefish	1/1/26	6/30/26	Doug O'Brien	28.75	Closed

Bluefish	7/1/26	12/31/26	Mike Woodrow Leads	24.75	Open
Blackfish	1/1/26	4/30/26	Rocky Vendett	19.25	Closed
Blackfish	8/1/26	12/31/26	Ed Valitutto Leads	17.5	Open
Weakfish	1/1/26	12/31/26	No Entry		Open
Ling	1/1/26	12/31/26	Marty Friedrich Leads	17.25	Open
Triggerfish	5/1/26	12/31/26	Bill Bond Leads	14.5	Open
Porgy	5/1/26	12/31/26	No Entry		Open
Sea Bass	5/15/26	6/21/26	Ed Valitutto	19.5	Closed
Sea Bass	6/22/26	9/22/26	Bill Bond Leads	16.5	Open
Sea Bass	9/23/26	12/31/26			Not Open
Fluke	5/4/26	6/30/26	Jim Witczak	25.75	Closed
Fluke	7/1/26	7/31/26	Cheri Hebert	25	Closed
Fluke	8/1/26	8/31/26	Cheri Hebert	26.25	Closed
Fluke	9/1/26	9/25/26	Perry Hoagey Leads	28	Open

2026 Boat or Surf FOM Leaders

Species	Start	Finish	Leader/Winner	Size Inches	Status
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White Perch	1/1/26	12/31/26	Dave Spendiff Leads	13.75	Open
Blowfish	3/1/26	11/30/26	Dave Puzal Leads	11	Open
Kingfish	3/1/26	11/30/26	Luis Salgado Leads	13.25	Open
Black Drum	1/1/26	12/31/26	Dave Etelman Tied with Bill Bond Leads	40.5	Open

2026 Offshore FOM Leaders

Species	Start	Finish	Leader/Winner	Size Inches	Status
Bluefin	4/1/26	11/30/26	Andrew Thomas Leads	32	Open
Yellowfin	5/1/26	11/30/26	Tim Naples Leads	53	Open
Mahi Mahi	5/1/26	11/30/26	Gage Grant Leads	26	Open
False Albacore	9/1/26	11/30/26			Open

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EASY BLACKENED FISH by Ed Valitutto - Here's an easy recipe that works with any white fish. You can make the blackening seasoning or buy one of the pre-made ones.



Ingredients:

- 2 Tbsp.** packed brown sugar
- 4 tsp.** ground cumin
- 2 tsp.** kosher salt
- 2 tsp.** paprika
- 2 tsp.** dried oregano
- 1 tsp.** freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp.** garlic powder
- 4 (6-oz.)** filets
- 2 Tbsp.** extra-virgin olive oil

Directions:

In a small bowl, combine brown sugar and spices and rub on fish.

In a large cast-iron skillet over medium heat, heat oil. Add fish and cook until the crust is deeply golden and fish flakes easily with a fork, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Serve topped with your favorite salsa.

On The Water Towing

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VHFC APPAREL by Chuck Dishian - As previously reported, we have an online store for an assortment of apparel including knitted beanie style hats. However, we still have our 'baseball' hats with a khaki cap, dark blue brim and a mesh back. Hats are available at all meetings. Hats have our logo on them and cost \$25. If you would like a hat, purchase one at our meeting. But

for a huge selection of club apparel purchased directly from the supplier that you can either pick up at their store in Barnegat or have shipped directly to your home, visit [Artist Tees](#). You also have the option to customize your apparel with either club logos or your name.



New Scent Emitting Soft Product

Most Effective Bait Available

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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 have been 12 reports since the last Newsletter.



Tim Naples made one of his many Tuna trips and caught a 44" and a 53" YFT



Jerry Nichols had a nice trip with his brother and nephew fishing inside the inlet and getting 2 keepers.



That's Ed V and pal Anthony aka Rig a Tony with their first two Tog caught anchored at the end of the north jetty



Club members John Stuebing, Nate & Bill Figley with brother Dave and Bill Dabney & son Bill, had a fantastic Nantucket Fluke trip with Nate Figley getting a 11.4 lb beast!



Wil Kresge had a nice day fishing with Marty.





Paul Pintinalli had a limit catch on the Ocean Explorer out of Belmar



Marty & Friends with some nice keeper Fluke



Bayside caught a nice Fluke and John Barrett and Mike Almasi had a fine day!



Tim Naples and crew with a beautiful Wahoo!



**That's Perry Hoagey
with his FOM & FOY
leading Fluke - a 28"
beauty!**

VESSEL SAFETY CHECKS By Jeff Orsoe - Give me a call in the spring for your vessel safety check. Contact: Jeff Orsoe Cell / Text: 732-672-5530 or email: jorsoe786@gmail.com.

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.

[Allen's Dock](#) (10% discount on bait & tackle w/ VHFC card)

5698 US-9, New Gretna, NJ 08224

609-296-5660

[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.

[Bogin's Bait & Tackle](#) (10% discount w/ VHFC card)

11 E Main St Tuckerton, NJ 08087

640-281-9433

[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

Great Bay Outfitters (5% off Kayaks and 10% off Accessories with VHFC Card)
955 Radio Road, Little Egg Harbor, NJ 08087
609-848-3657

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

Knot Easy Bait & Tackle (10% discount w/ VHFC card)
945 Radio Rd, Little Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08087
609 294 1300

Martek Marine Electronics Specialists (10% discount w/ VHFC card)
701 Old Avalon Blvd, Unit 4, Avalon, NJ 08202
609 390 3355

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609 597 6708

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Sara's Salon Barber Shop, Beauty Salon, Manicure
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732 269-2522

Sea Tow (\$50 off yearly membership)
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South Harbor Marine A FULL SERVICE MARINA Located on Barnegat Bay
116 Oregon Ave, Waretown, NJ 08758
609 693 3658 FAMILY OWNED AND OPERATED SINCE 1968
Surf City Bait & Tackle (10% discount w/ VHFC card excluding worms)
317 Long Beach Boulevard Surf City, NJ 08008
609 494-2333

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

[West Marine Pro Team](#) (Varied Discount by Product Purchased) You must sign up to be part of the West Marine Pro Team. Sign Up Sheets will be available at our Meetings. You can also contact John Stuebing (stuebs@comcast.net) to sign up and get access to our West Marine Account.