

# PELORUS

*Pelorus: a fixed compass used to take bearings relative to a ship's heading.*

The Quarterly Newsletter of

## Central Coast Women For Fisheries, Inc.

Incorporated May 4, 2006



Spring 2023

### A Message From the President

Hello Friends,

I hope you are all enjoying this beautiful spring. I know I sure am! May is when our annual memberships renew, so you should be receiving your renewal notice in the mail soon. (If you don't receive one, please contact one of the board of directors so we can be sure of accurate addresses.) I hope you will all see the value of this organization and continue your membership. Every member makes a difference and I encourage all of you to be actively involved. If you have ideas for the organization, we would love to discuss them with you. We are also planning our next annual membership meeting and look forward to talking with you there. We are shooting for June, so I hope to see many of you there. Also be looking for us at the Marine Swap Meet in Morro Bay in June.

Well, do you all remember those interpretative signs we have been talking about for years to be on the Morro Bay waterfront? THEY ARE HERE!! They are in storage awaiting the final city installation permit and the construction company to fit the installation work into their schedule. We hope they will be displayed in the next few weeks. A big thank you to many people, most of whom I named in the last newsletter, but also to Cathy Novak for her help with the city process. We hope to have some type of celebration and unveiling of them in the near future. Be watching for info. Hope to see you soon,

*Lenore Ward, CCWF president*

### Apply for Scholarships The deadline is May 31, 2023

Central Coast Women for Fisheries offers scholarships for fishermen, their spouses and direct descendants (children and grand children) through CCWF's Fishing Heritage Scholarship Program. Indirect descendants may also apply, such as nieces and nephews, that are involved in the fishing industry. Visit our website, [www.womenforfish.org](http://www.womenforfish.org), under "Scholarships" for guidelines and an application that can be printed, as well as a recommendation form.

The application and form can also be mailed or emailed to you, or any questions, by contacting:

Sharon Rowley: [srowley303@gmail.com](mailto:srowley303@gmail.com)

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### Inside this issue:

Albacore Enchiladas	2
Blessing of the Fleet	2
Aloha	3
Board of Directors	3
Cooking with Friends	3
Waterfront News	4
Pages From The Past	4
Pages from the Past continued	5
The Last Word by Travis Evans	6

Email:  
[ccwf@womenforfish.org](mailto:ccwf@womenforfish.org)

## 2023 Albacore Enchilada Fundraiser



A **Thank You** from CCWF to the members, fishermen and volunteers for making the albacore enchilada fundraiser such a big success.



Fishermen Bill Ward and Wayne Moody putting lids on the trays. Each tray has a label with cooking instructions.

This year CCWF members and volunteers made more trays of albacore enchiladas than ever before, which was 583. There are 4 to a tray, so that's 2,332 enchiladas that were put together on Saturday, Feb 11, 2023 at the Morro Bay Community Center kitchen.

This year the albacore was bought from local, long time fisherman **Jack Carpenter** off his custom made commercial fishing boat "Tilly", named after his granddaughter. Thank you to Jack for his troll caught tuna that was in prime condition, which made for excellent enchiladas. We already have a list started for next year.

All of the enchiladas were sold, so a Huge **Thank You** to all that bought them, and to our wonderfully supportive community.



On Sunday, April 23, Morro Bay had its annual Blessing of the Fleet on the north T-pier.

### Blessing of the Fleet

After the ceremony the public was invited to lunch at the Veterans Hall by the Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen's Organization.

Mark Tognazzini fed the crowd fish tacos, tri-tip and side dishes. Central Coast Women for Fisheries decorated for the event and provided an assortment of desserts, including a big cake.



A tradition where Blessings are given for a safe and bountiful season



**ALOHA:** (In Hawaiian, “Aloha “ means love: CCWF uses it to say both “hello” and “farewell” with love.)

Our Aloha committee is there for you. The committee sends cards and flowers, but we need you to make the call and let us know of the need and the address. Members are encouraged to contact the committee and help CCWF observe occurrences throughout our community, whether happy or sad.

For Aloha announcements  
Contact:  
srowley303@gmail.com  
805-674-4854

A card was sent  
To  
Barbara Cefalu

A card was sent  
Congratulating a  
new baby to the  
The family of Chris  
Pavone



Flowers in honor of Fred Cefalu  
by Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen Organization  
and CCWF.

A sincere Thank You to **Cathy Novak** from the members of Central Coast Women for Fisheries for her help with our projects thru the years. She was instrumental in getting us through the permitting process with the City and California Coastal Commission for our waterfront sign project. These signs will inform the public of five of Morro Bay’s major fisheries and will be erected soon. She also helped us with the statue at Morro Rock, “Those Who Wait”, which was a 10-year project. Cathy has been a strong force in Morro Bay for decades, serving the community and helping people and businesses in many ways.

We also congratulate Cathy on being the  
**2023 Morro Bay Living Treasure**

**CCWF Board of Directors**

- President:**  
Lenore Ward lenoredw@gmail.com  
**Vice President:**  
Sharon Rowley srowley303@gmail.com  
**Secretary:**  
Sheri Hafer somethingsfishy@charter.net  
**Treasurer:**  
Tacy Lee 4tacyl@gmail.com  
**Director:**  
Becka Kelly bkelly@morrobayca.gov

CCWF Website  
www.womenforfish.org

Visit the  
Central Coast Women for Fisheries  
Facebook page

**COOKING WITH CCWF and FRIENDS**

This recipe by fisherman Dick Sylvester was featured on the Faces of California Fishing several years ago. Each card has a fisherman with their boat, some with their family, and their favorite seafood recipe on them. After a lifetime of fishing, Dick is now retired. His boat was the Trudy S, named after his late wife that the Morro Bay community loves and misses.



**Halibut Chowder**

- 1 to 2 pounds halibut fillets
- 5 to 6 large potatoes, peeled & chopped.
- 1 large onion
- 3 stalks of celery, chopped
- 6 slices crisp bacon, finely chopped.
- 1 large can chicken broth
- 1 cup vermouth
- Garlic
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- Seasoning salt
- pepper

In a large pot, add chicken broth, potatoes, Vermouth and enough water until the pot is 3/4 full.  
Cook on medium heat until potatoes done.  
While potatoes are cooking, Sauté onions and celery in olive oil until translucent, then add to pot of broth and potatoes.  
Add the chopped bacon to pot.  
Season with salt, pepper and garlic to taste.  
When potatoes are done, add the fish. The fish will break into smaller chunks when it’s cooked, in about 5 minutes.  
Ling cod and most rock fish work well too.



## Waterfront News



### **New Patrol Boat**

On February 20 this year the Morro Bay Harbor Department celebrated with the community on the north T-pier. It was a christening and ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Harbor Patrol boat.

### **Marine Swap Meet**

This year the swap meet will be on Saturday, June 24, on Morro Bay's waterfront. Fun, food and nautical items. Details can be found on Friends of Morro Bay Harbor Dept. Facebook page.

### **Friends of the Morro Bay Harbor Department**

Check out their Facebook page for Harbor happenings, events, alerts and other interesting information.

## Pages From the Past

### **The Ritual**

*by Sharon Rowley*

A small crowd gathers on a fishing boat, some carrying food or drinks. One person is bringing a large pink bakery box which might have a cake inside. People are happily milling around the boat as it's tied to the dock and seem to be enjoying a party. It might be someone's birthday, a retirement party, or maybe a celebration of someone's milestone. With such a nice group of people appearing to be pleasant with each other, you wouldn't think that someone is going to be thrown overboard. A long-standing ritual in the small fishing community of Morro Bay on California's central coast has been to throw a newly licensed captain into the water. It's usually off the dock, but at times have been off a boat tied to the dock.

Rita Gartrell was the first lady captain to be the recipient of this cold, drenching experience in 1979. As with anyone, she was first given time to take off her glasses, jewelry and contents of any pockets. Then a few strong men took her by the arms on one side and feet on the other and swung her off the dock. Even though Rita was a good swimmer, a life jacket was thrown in too. Rita was then helped onto the dock, given a towel and congratulated by the crowd.

This same scene on Morro Bay docks has been played out over many decades. They all have been memorable and some a little more unusual. In the mid 1980's Sam Kaeli earned his Coast Guard license to operate up to 100-ton vessels with passengers after many years of working as a deckhand. His friends and family knew he didn't want to get thrown in the water, so some planning had to be done at his captain celebration. Sam wore some tight-fitting fishing boots because he knew he wouldn't get thrown in with boots on. The party was on a boat that Sam worked on tied to the dock and some of the men suddenly grabbed him at a surprise moment to get Sam's boots off. Sam struggled and didn't make it easy, so a few more people had to join in to help, including John Rowley, who was another captain who had received his license a couple of years earlier. No one had ever attempted to throw John in the water for an initiation because he was a large, intimidating looking person. John calmed Sam down by agreeing to jump in the water with him. Sam then allowed his boots to be taken off, led off the boat to the edge of the dock, and tossed in the drink. John jumped in at the same time, the only captain to initiate himself, and the two drenched friends enjoyed the rest of the party.

Continued on page 5.....

Around 2014 there were two deckhands, James and Tabby, that worked at Virg's landing in Morro Bay who wanted to move up to the job of captain. It meant better pay, but a lot more responsibility. After having the required minimum of 720 days working on the ocean, they both took a 2-week class designed to pass the rigorous Coast Guard written test. After a medical exam to show they were physically capable, a CPR course, and a federal background check they both received their licenses at around the same time. James and Tabby were both hard-working, skilled and deserving to become captains. James, in his 40's, was a real success story of how a person can succeed at changing and do an "about-face" from going down the wrong path and arriving at a very low place in life. He eventually became one of the best deck hands and is now one of the best captains. A lot of people like to go fishing with James because he consistently brings them back with good catches of fish and the passengers love his fun-loving personality. Tabby, 33, started fishing before she was 20, mostly on commercial boats for black cod and Dungeness crab. She was also scuba diving at that young age and earned money by cutting out line caught in boat propellers. She was only 22 when she earned a captain's license in 2014.

Friends, family and co-workers had a great party for James and Tabby on Virg's largest boat, the 90-foot Admiral, with lots of food and a huge cake. The boat remained tied to the dock and after a while, everyone was milling around the back deck with anticipation in the air. James was taking off his jacket and shoes with a huge grin on his face as the crowd was closing in on him. James made a big splash when he was thrown off the boat. Tabby was sitting by herself in the galley and when asked when she was coming out, she said with determination "No one is touching me!" Tabby never got thrown in the water for other's entertainment, but she is a person who throws herself into life with as much determination as when she claimed no one was going to touch her. Over the years, she has become well known in the fishing community as a hard worker and an asset to anyone that is lucky enough to have her working for them.

There are levels of Merchant Mariner licenses to operate a passenger vessel, ferry boats, oil crew boats, tugs, tankers and other ships from 25 ton to 1600 ton. Most are congratulated by family, friends and co-workers, but most don't go through initiations which may seem silly to others.

In 1994 one ritual for a newly licensed captain of sport fishing vessels in Morro Bay seemed to go a little overboard. It was for this writer, Sharon Rowley, that her sister planned as a surprise. It's a good thing it was a surprise or it never would have happened. I was led by my sister Patty to a local fish unloading dock on a pier where there was a small crowd gathered, which included family and friends. I thought to myself "Oh, a little party to congratulate me, maybe a cake will be here." There was no cake and I was put in a metal fish-unloading bucket. The large buckets are used to put a few hundred pounds of fish in when a boat is unloading and attached with big wire to a boom that lowers the basket to the boat, then hoists it back up to the dock. It was scrubbed out, but still smelled of fish. I stood in the basket and was swung over the water and lowered down off the pier until the water was up to my waist. As I looked up, I could see the delight on everyone's faces as I was gritting my teeth from what seemed freezing water, plus the fear I had of imagining the wire breaking and the bucket sinking to the bottom. I was planning in my mind how I would swim out of the bucket as quick as I could when I realized I was being hoisted back up. My sister had a towel for me and had sneaked a change of clothes. She and my mother also had a bouquet of flowers to go along with congratulations. A little gathering with cake was awaiting on one of Virg's Landing boats nearby.

In the 1940's and 50's, new Chief Petty Officers in the US Navy had an initiation of being thrown in the water, but in a swimming pool. It's not known how the ritual began of tossing new captains off docks in Morro Bay, but it has been the highlight of people getting together, having fun, good food and celebrating accomplishments.



Central Coast Women  
For Fisheries, Inc.

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Morro Bay, CA 93442

Please Note: The Quintana Road  
address for mail is a postal box  
only.

[www.womenforfish.org](http://www.womenforfish.org)

## The Last Word . . . *by Capt. Travis O. Evans*

Travis Evans, who had his 100th birthday last year, wrote this poem to his wife before she passed in 2017. Katherine was 91 when she passed and they had been married 75 years at the time. Travis has regularly contributed poems and stories for our newsletter for many years, many of them reflecting his lifetime of being a fisherman.

### Love Letter to Katherine

You are the temple of my life;  
You are all that I desire.  
Just knowing the depths of your love,  
my faith is always reaching higher.

You are the symbol of my hope  
through days and nights unnumbered  
and you have filled so many dreams  
whenever I have slumbered.

I never take the shortest trip  
or do the smallest duty,  
without thinking of how your love  
has filled my life with beauty.

You are my mood, my attitude,  
my fundamental reason.  
You are my sun, my rain  
and all the winds of every season.

You are the compass, the GPS of my  
heart,  
the voyage of deepest pleasure.  
You are my life's soul mate  
whom I shall always treasure.

And though I have failed in so many  
ways,  
Your undying love has never dimmed.  
With God's blessing we have made  
this journey.  
May all the glory go to "Him".

