The Acute Angler

May 2017 **Volume 50, Number 3**

GOFC News

Spring Tournament

Crystal River- SATURDAY MAY 20th

SIGN UP:

Prior to start the Tournament Committee must be provided with boat name, size and make, captain's name and name of all anglers on board. Also, the committee must be advised of any lady or youth anglers participating. Sign up online in advance here (by 9:00 pm the evening before the tournament.)

START:

First safe light on day of tournament from any port – GOFC communications are on VHF channel 68.

WEIGH IN:

Ft. Island Boat Ramp Pavilions: Weigh in ends at 5:00PM. You must be "in line of sight" of scales by end of weigh in time to be able to weigh fish. Winner will be announced at next club meeting.

AWARDS/PRIZES:

Master Angler- $150

Inshore Angler- $100

Offshore Angler- $100

Most Ellet Species Caught- $50 (boat prize)

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, May 23rd
Vet School, New Lecture Hall

Captain Zack Hoffman of Homosassa Fishing Charters. He will be discussing inshore and offshore fishing techniques for our area. This is a great opportunity to learn from a pro!

Raffle Prizes:

- First Prize – Zachary Hoffman will be donating a half day charter for the raffle prize at this meeting, so be sure to buy your tickets!
- Second – $20 Gary's Tackle Box gift certificate
- Third – $15 Gary's Tackle Box gift certificate
- Fourth – $10 Gary's Tackle Box gift certificate

June Monthly Meeting

Fish Fry at L&S Auto Trim/ Gary's Tackle Box
June 27th 6:30PM

Instead of our regular meeting at the Vet School we're having a fish fry and social at L&S Auto Trim. Of course Gary's Tackle Box is on the same premises and Gary will be keeping the store open so club members can stock up on essentials while enjoying good food and company. There will be door prizes!

Cobiathon/Mac Attack Results

Cobia: No cobia entered

Kingfish:
1st-Brandey Andersen (15.89lbs)
2nd–Phil Wagner (12.56 lbs)
3rd–Reed Wagner (10.84 lbs)

Spanish Mackerel:
1st–Tim Pedersen (5.02 lbs)
2nd-Ed Ellet (3.94 lbs)
3rd–Reed Wagner (3.83 lbs)

Important Reminders

- Debby will be available to collect **membership dues** at the next meeting
- **New shirts are in!** They are available for purchase at the next meeting, only $15 each! All sizes are available.

The mission of the Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club is to promote and support recreational saltwater fishing in the Big Bend area; to provide educational and recreational experiences for its members of all ages; and, to promote responsible conservation of saltwater resources.

Fish Caught in April (Outside of Cobiathon/Mac Attack)

Angler: Carlos Morales
Fish: King Mackerel
Weight: 18.5 lbs
Date Caught: 4/1/17
Lure/Bait: Blue Runner
Location: Cedar Key

Angler: Tim Pedersen
Fish: King Mackerel
Weight: 10.75 lbs
Date Caught: 4/2/17
Lure/Bait: Lure
Location: Cedar Key

Angler: Travis Creamer
Fish: King Mackerel
Weight: 7.42 lbs
Date Caught: 4/2/17
Lure/Bait: Lure
Location: Cedar Key

Angler: Travis Creamer
Fish: Spanish Mackerel
Weight: 2.9 lbs
Date Caught: 4/2/17
Lure/Bait: Lure
Location: Cedar Key

Angler: Ken Knopf
Fish: King Mackerel
Weight: 27.94 lbs
Date Caught: 4/2/17
Lure/Bait: Live Pilchard
Location: Crystal River

Angler: Ken Knopf
Fish: Sheepshead
Weight: 3.83 lbs
Date Caught: 4/2/17
Lure/Bait: Shrimp
Location: Crystal River

Angler: Justin Magnifico
Fish: Redfish
Weight: 3.1 lbs
Date Caught: 4/8/17
Lure/Bait: Top Water
Location: Steinhatchee

Angler: Dale Reed
Fish: Seatrout
Weight: 1lb 11 oz
Date Caught: 4/8/17
Lure/Bait: Shrimp
Location: Steinhatchee

Angler: Ken Knopf
Fish: Spanish Mackerel
Weight: 2.46 lbs
Date Caught: 4/9/17
Lure/Bait: Jig
Location: Seahorse Reef

Angler: Tim Pedersen
Fish: Flounder
Weight: 1.23 lbs
Date Caught: 4/9/17
Lure/Bait: Live Bait
Location: Keaton Beach

Angler: Ed Ellet
Fish: Spanish Mackerel
Weight: 2.72 lbs
Date Caught: 4/9/17
Lure/Bait: Jig
Location: 32’

Angler: Dale Reed
Fish: Flounder
Weight: 1.46 lbs
Date Caught: 4/10/17
Lure/Bait: lil JOHN
Location: Crystal River

Angler: Russ McElroy
Fish: Redfish
Weight: 6.00 lbs
Date Caught: 4/9/17
Lure/Bait: Crank Bait
Location: Shired Island

Angler: David Patterson
Fish: Flounder
Weight: 1.26 lbs
Date Caught: 4/14/17
Lure/Bait: Gulp! Shrimp
Location: Pepperfish Key

Angler: Russ McElroy
Fish: Spanish Mackerel
Weight: 2.79 lbs
Date Caught: 4/17/17
Lure/Bait: Jig
Location: Shr Ck

Angler: Justin Magnifico
Fish: Cobia
Weight: 15.01 lbs
Date Caught: 4/19/17
Lure/Bait: Jig
Location: Cedar Key

Angler: Dale Reed
Fish: Cobia
Weight: 19.75 lbs
Date Caught: 4/19/17
Lure/Bait: Live Bait
Location: Cedar Key

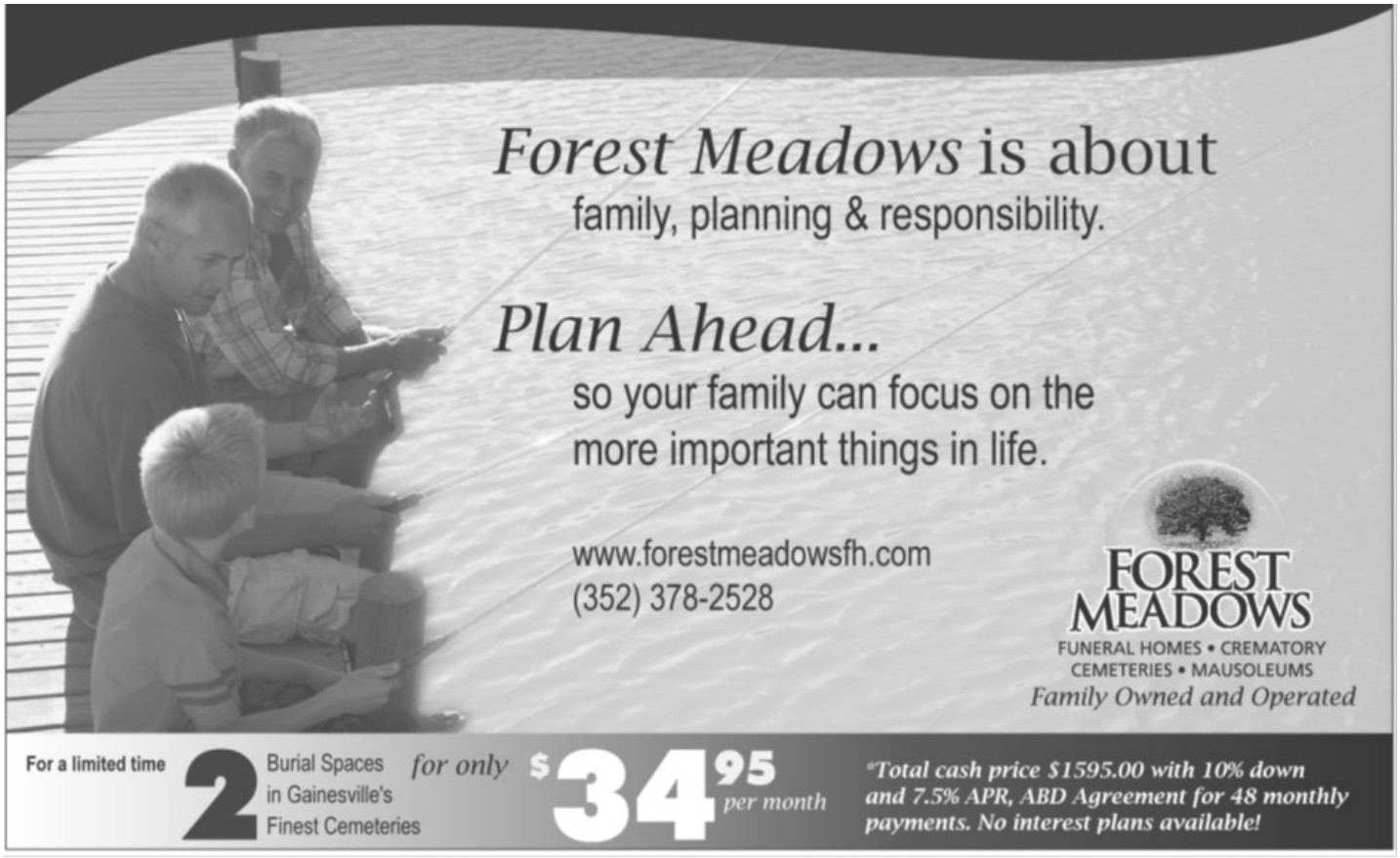
Angler: Dale Reed
Fish: Spanish Mackerel
Weight: 1.49 lbs
Date Caught: 4/19/17
Lure/Bait: Jig
Location: Cedar Key

Angler: Carlos Morales
Fish: Spanish Mackerel
Weight: 2.44 lbs
Date Caught: 4/22/17
Lure/Bait: Gold Spoon
Location: Cedar Key

Angler: Virgil Cooper
Fish: Cobia
Weight: 12.5 lbs
Date Caught: 4/22/17
Lure/Bait: Lure
Location: Cedar Key

Angler: Russ McElroy
Fish: King Mackerel
Weight: 7.29 lbs
Date Caught: 4/26/17
Lure/Bait: Jig
Location: Shr CK

http://www.pjmarine.com/



http://forestmeadowsfh.com/

Fish Caught in April (Outside of Cobiathon/Mac Attack) (Continued)

Angler: Ross McElroy
Fish: Bluefish
Weight: 1.21 lbs
Date Caught: 4/26/17
Lure/Bait: Jig
Location: Shr CK

Angler: Tim Pedersen
Fish: Spanish Mackerel
Weight: 5.2 lbs
Date Caught: 4/29/17
Lure/Bait: Lure
Location: Cedar Key

Angler: Ed Ellet
Fish: King Mackerel
Weight: 7.67 lbs
Date Caught: 4/29/17
Lure/Bait: Stinger Rig
Location: Seahorse Reef

Angler: Ed Ellet
Fish: Spanish Mackerel
Weight: 3.94 lbs
Date Caught: 4/29/17
Lure/Bait: Floreo Jig
Location: Seahorse Rig

Angler: David Patterson
Fish: Spanish Mackerel
Weight: 2.23 lbs
Date Caught: 4/29/17
Lure/Bait: Krocodile Spoon
Location: Hedemon Reef

Angler: Virgil Cooper
Fish: King Mackerel
Weight: 9.94 lbs
Date Caught: 4/29/17
Lure/Bait: Lure
Location: Cedar Key

Angler: Virgil Cooper
Fish: Spanish Mackerel
Weight: 2.79 lbs
Date Caught: 4/29/17
Lure/Bait: Lure
Location: Cedar Key

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Checking off AJs

John Byatt

For the last two years amberjacks have been my nemesis for catching all ten GOFC species that could weighed and entered for Ellett points. The best laid plans for catching a keeper-sized fish before the feds close the season have been thwarted by fishless trips or catching punishing numbers of fish just shy of the 34 inch mark. All that changed this year; Carlos Morales and I made an early January trip out to a spot in 75 feet and found a whole herd of willing fish, with one just squeaking past the magic nose to fork number. I figured I'd check off AJs for the year to concentrate on the other nine species that needed catching; until that is Carlos suggested another AJ trip so that his wife Nia could catch her fist AJ. Now Nia doesn't go fishing very often, but when she does the fish almost jump in the boat. The last time I fished with Carlos and Nia, we had an incredibly memorable trip with the three of us boating about a dozen cobia and a couple of barracudas to round things off. So heck yeah! Let's go for some more AJ abuse.

The feds had just announced that the recreational AJ season was going to close even earlier than ever so the weekend of March 17 was the last of the year to try for a keeper. Fortunately the fishing gods smiled on us and the winds were light and the seas flat as we made our way out to the Barge. Unfortunately, there were no AJs to be found at the Barge, or even those pesky red snappers. So out another ten miles it was to 75 feet where we'd found them in January. The first spot produced a whole lot of really nice red snapper, plenty of gray triggerfish and biggest black sea bass I'd ever seen, but only one short amberjack that had to be coaxed and cajoled into eating a live tomtate. By this point, I was worried that perhaps Nia wasn't the fish whisperer after all. I shouldn't have doubted her powers. We arrived at the second spot where we'd caught fish in January and within minutes of setting the trolling motor spot lock, all three of us are doing battle with fish that can only be AJs. Not having a net large enough to hold these fish and not wanting to gaff them either it took two people to manhandle each fish over the gunnel. We had "roddy" the rod holder take care of business while the first two AJs were landed, with mine being the last to surrender.

(continued on page 6)

The first three fish were all longer than 34 inches and weighed in at 34, 30 and 29 lb. Nia declared at that point that she'd just as soon not catch any more AJs and suggested that both Carlos and I may need some mental health counseling as we threw jigs out again for round two.

The side-scan and down scan sonar showed a solid mass of fish under the boat and every single drop of a buck tail or vertical jig resulted in a hook-up. Except those where the fish managed to take enough line to get to the bottom and fray the leader through. We probably also hooked a few grouper because several times something didn't play fair and got rocked up. Later after Carlos and I had boated several more AJs apiece he convinced Nia to try out the vertical jig. She quickly hooked up to something big that wasn't acting quite AJ-like. The fish kept making long shallow runs rather than digging deep. After what seemed like an eternity (especially to Nia) the fish finally came to the boat and mystery solved. Somehow or another, both of the single hooks on the vertical jig were firmly embedded in the tail of a 32lb AJ. No wonder it had been impossible to turn the fish!

We left them biting anything and everything thrown over the side of the boat and still had flat-calm seas for the 40 mile trip back to the Cedar Key. I don't know about Carlos and Nia, but I was sore for the next two days!

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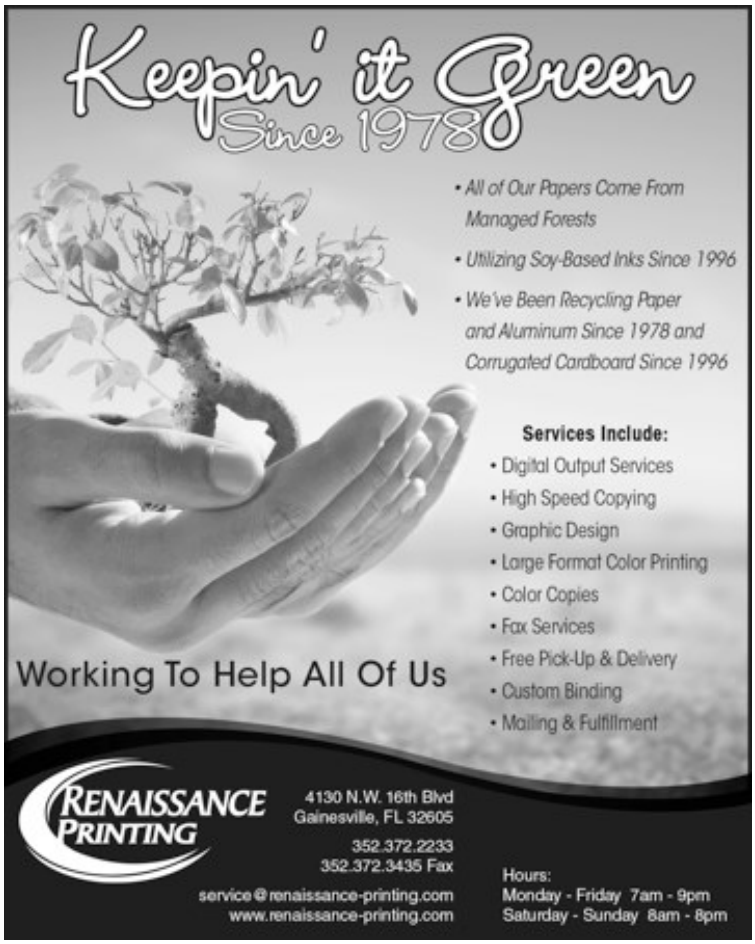
THANK YOU, FREDDIE!



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First Kings!

Michaela Mertz

During the Cobiathon Mac Attack at the end of April new member Brandey Andersen and my fiancé Jacob McCrary were able to catch their first Kingfish. For the tournament, Brandey, Jacob and I went on Ken and Debby Knopf's boat. Driving out to Cedar Key the winds did not seem to be too strong, but this dramatically changed when we reached the ramp at Cedar Key. The morning of the tournament was definitely a rough one– docks were galloping and waves were bouncing off of the ramp walls contributing to even worse conditions. We saw numerous boats still on their trailers sitting in the parking lot and we were one of them for at least another half an hour. Luckily we were to get out as the sun was rising but it was slow and rough going out to Seahorse Reef for bait fishing.

Once we had enough bait we headed out towards spots including The Pit in search of Cobia and Kings. Unfortunately for Brandey and Jacob, they didn't quite have their sea-legs and really started feeling those 2-4 ft waves. Needless to say they helped us chum but remained good sports! The morning and early afternoon passed with little luck- no tournament fish on the line and not many bites either. I managed to catch my first grouper but it wasn't in season.

On a hunch, Ken suggested we pull anchor and go out to Spotty Bottom. While pulling anchor and attempting to fix a portion of the anchor, the boat hit a good sized wave and the anchor came down on Ken's finger. Luckily for Ken it wasn't broken, just a bit cut up and pretty bruised, and we made our way to Spotty Bottom. At Spotty Bottom we began slow trolling for Kings with live bait. After awhile of trolling around, a Kingfish finally took the bait and Brandey was the first one up. For her first kingfish, Brandey did a great job fighting the King and brought the roughly 16 lb fish in about 5 minutes. After a failed gaff attempt, the kingfish was finally in the boat. Shortly after this King was in the boat another got on the line, this time Jacob was up. He also brought his kingfish in quickly and without problem. Other than those two kings, our boat didn't have much luck. Debby was able to bring in a Spanish Mackerel on our way out of Spotty Bottom. Overall the two that had the roughest mornings managed to catch the only two Kings on our boat and Ken and I left empty-handed.

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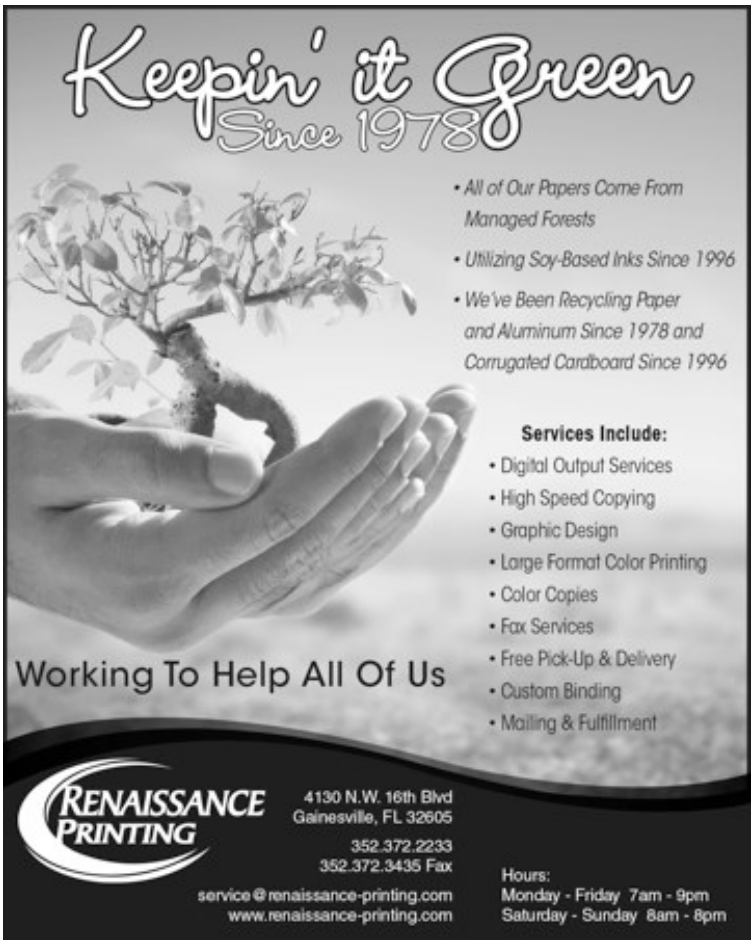
More on Kingfish

Debby Knopf

Sometimes, just one fish can put you on top of the world. For me nothing rings truer than catching a kingfish. Trolling is one of the main ways to catch these wily, sharp-toothed speedsters, using various live and dead baitfish, spoons, jigs and other artificial baits. King mackerel are highly sought-after gamefish throughout the sport fishing world. We target them using live bait, with two hooks tied to a wire leader. The first is a J hook through the live bait's nose. The second is a treble hook placed through the top of the fish's back. We do this because king mackerel commonly bite the tail section of a bait fish. When trolling for kings it is important to make sure the baitfish are swimming properly, not spinning on the surface.

On a Seahorse Reef trip, anglers all around were catching Spanish mackerel on various dead baits and shiny spoons. Bait was bubbling all over. After stocking the live well I asked to put out one of our larger threadfin baits on a balloon rig so I could have a visual point to watch. Watch the balloon, think positive, and good things will happen. Not long after, the rod doubled over and the drag began screaming. I grabbed the rod and began reeling while the fish made several runs leaping out of the water in an attempt to break free. After several runs he began the famous loop around making smaller and smaller circles. He sure put up a spectacular struggle, but he was finally close enough to gaff and I had a tournament winner. Once in the boat and ready for a picture you can see they look impressively fierce. For me the path to glory is usually paved with positive thinking and a sprinkle of luck.



A Message from the Coastal Association Florida:

CCA Testifies Before Congress on Red Snapper Fiasco

Article written by CCA Florida for immediate release. twvenker@JoinCCA.org

Three-day season in 2017 marks new low in federal management of popular fishery

Washington, D.C. - May 2, 2017 -- On the same day that NOAA Fisheries announced the shortest recreational red snapper season in history, Mark Ray, chairman of CCA Texas, was testifying before a Congressional hearing on dismal federal management of the fishery in the Gulf of Mexico. Ray told the House Subcommittee on Interior, Energy and the Environment, chaired by Rep. Blake Farenthold (R-Texas), that red snapper is a man-made fishery management disaster.

"By any measure, the red snapper fishery in the Gulf of Mexico should be held up as a shining example of proper management and good conservation. But as this hearing demonstrates, that is not the case. We aren't here today to highlight a conservation success story. Unfortunately, we are here because red snapper is known throughout the nation as a man-made fishery management disaster," Ray said. "After decades under intense federal management, this is the best that anglers can hope for - a three-day season in federal waters in 2017. I don't think anyone would declare the current situation a success. All we ask is for is a system that allows all stakeholders the best opportunity to enjoy and use those resources. I am here today to ask this you to give us that chance."

NOAA Fisheries continued its continued march to completely shutting down the recreational red snapper fishery in federal waters with its announcement that the recreational season for red snapper will begin on June 1 and last just three days in 2017. While the recreational season is being decreased from 9 days in 2016 to just three this year, it was also announced that the season for the charter/for-hire sector is being lengthened to 49 days while the commercial sector continues to enjoy year-round access to their privately held red snapper shares.

The 2017 season for private recreational anglers is the shortest on record and at least one U.S. Senator wasted no time voicing his displeasure at the never-ending downward spiral of recreational fishing access under NOAA Fisheries.

"I am deeply troubled and disappointed with NOAA's decision to considerably shorten the federal recreational fishing season for red snapper in the Gulf. NOAA's announcement today is unacceptable," U.S. Senator Richard Shelby of Alabama said in a news release. "Over the years, I have consistently authored several provisions to improve the red snapper stock

assessments and allowable catch limits. These actions include expanding the state boundary for catching reef fish out to nine miles, which is not subject to the federal season. In fact, the recent FY2017 government funding bill makes this boundary permanent. NOAA's rule is a significant step backward in our progress to increase limits for private anglers in federal waters. I look forward to working with President Trump and Commerce Secretary Ross to develop a system that actually serves the U.S. recreational fishing community."

Over the past year, a series of investigative newspaper articles and TV reports has highlighted the highly controversial schemes favored by NOAA Fisheries that give shares of red snapper away to commercial entities to use for their own profit. Under these privatization programs, known as catch shares, almost three-quarters of the entire red snapper programs, known as catch shares, almost three-quarters of the entire red snapper fishery in the Gulf of Mexico (continued on Page 12)

is on the way to being privately held by commercial entities, further frustrating anglers who have watched their opportunity to pursue red snapper all but disappear under federal management.

"With a three-day season and a federal system that seems committed to funneling access to our public marine resources to fewer and fewer people, there isn't much for recreational anglers to work with under federal management as it currently operates," said Bill Bird, chairman of CCA's National Government Relations Committee. "Sen. Shelby has done a tremendous amount of work in the past to help recreational anglers and we truly appreciate his comments today. We are certainly encouraging other elected officials to join him in his efforts to work with the Trump Administration to chart a new course for the management of our marine resources."

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If you'd prefer to support the US Post Office, complete the NEW MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL form (download from the website) and mail it to the GOFC Treasurer.

Debby Knopf, Treasurer
Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club
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Please make your check payable to GOFC.

Or just bring cash, a check or a credit card to the next club meeting and pay Debby at the meeting.

IMPORTANT GOFC CONTACTS

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