

# Fishing & Hunting



By Richard Seale

## More Regulations—This Time Black Drum

In 2013 the black drum proved to be one of the fish caught regularly in surf casting off our Pine Knoll Shores beaches, particularly near the remnants of the Iron Steamer pier. The Atlantic States Fishery Commission required North Carolina to have a written Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for black drum by January 1. The recreational FMP regulations have been effective since that date and include a "slot" size limit going from 14 inches to 25 inches, with one fish per day allowed to be above 25 inches. A daily per person creel limit is 10 fish. More things to remember as we fish!

By the end of December, water temperatures had dropped to the lower 50s. Our Bogue Sound and close-to-ocean-shore cold-blooded fish friends are slipping into their slow motion lifestyles. The early January "deep freeze" dropped water temperatures into the 40s. At this level, going for speckled trout in the marshes or up the creeks means adapting to very slow stop-and-go retrievals of suspending baits such as M17 MirrOlures.

Night fishing for striped bass (rock fish) around inshore structures, such as bridge pilings, can be productive. Carefully-hooked back- (don't hit the spine) or lip-hooked live mud minnows on long leaders and minimal weights can produce rock fish in the 15" to 25" range. The trick is to let the rig down very slowly next to the pilings. Hook sizing is a compromise decision in that the mud minnows are not very large, so much above a 1/0 hook gets "big." A stout hook is needed to fight a big rock. Another decision is when to set the hook. When the fish first bites, the bait will be forward in its mouth. With a single and relatively small hook, trying to set the hook might pull it out of the fish's mouth. Another bait that is a rock favorite is an eight-to-twelve-inch eel. Eel rigs are very effective in ocean fishing for rock fish. Live eels are hard to come by, but soft plastic eels are effective for both trolling and casting. The big rock fish that show up in our near-shore ocean waters are migrants from New England, so they are accustomed to colder waters. These visiting rock fish are aggressive feeders and are not nearly as impacted as speckled trout are by cold waters.

**Important reminder:** hypothermia due to cold water immersion is a real threat to human survival at these water temperatures. Being extra careful when boating—be it fishing, duck hunting or joy riding—can save your life.

# PKA NEWS

By Gail Halada

## Reach Out and Touch Someone!

Three years ago I was surprised when someone I knew in Pine Knoll Shores called and asked me to consider running for office as a PKA Director. At that time I had lived in Pine Knoll Shores for eight years and volunteered with the Pine Knoll Shores Women's Club, but my other volunteer work was outside of Pine Knoll Shores.

I decided to say "Yes" because I felt I needed to get more involved in Pine Knoll Shores. I felt challenged and excited. Exploring new territory can stimulate the brain and produce new energy—just what I needed.

At the PKA annual meeting in June, I was elected and met the other directors, all of us serving a three-year term at different intervals. At our first meeting, each director was to select an area of interest on which to focus. I decided to write PKA articles for *The Shoreline* and attend the Board of Commissioners' monthly meetings to report back to the directors any new information that affected PKA. I am also secretary, so I feel I have satisfied my commitment and made a contribution.

All the directors share the responsibility for overseeing our large homeowners' association (710 members). It is truly amazing and I must compliment all the directors for their dedication and commitment to PKA—what a wonderful group of people to work with, who truly give their time and talents to making the PKA community a grand place to live.

We meet on the second Monday of each month at 9:30 a.m. at town hall. Our meetings are structured and we closely follow an agenda. Please feel free to attend and observe a meeting.

If you are wondering why I am talking about this, it is because my three-year term is up in June. I am hoping that all the PKA readers of this issue of *The Shoreline* will consider volunteering to run for election to the position of director for PKA. Bill Steenland is conducting a search to fill the openings. If I have encouraged just one person after reading this article, I will feel blessed. Please call Bill Steenland at 240-1145. If you wish to ask me any more questions, my home number is 222-3940. Thank you so much for your consideration.

## Pine Knoll Shores

### VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

Our **vision** is to provide a quality environment in which our citizens are safe and secure, where individual talents flourish, and everyone enjoys the natural resources of our area.

It is the **mission** of the town of Pine Knoll Shores to provide concerted and friendly means of promoting health, safety and social well-being; develop and implement plans for the continuous improvement of the town; and encourage the participation of residents in service to the town and community.



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