

Hats Off to Culinary School



On Dec. 12, the Red Hat Ladies of Pine Knoll Shores attended a Southwestern/Northern California luncheon put on by the Culinary School of Carteret Community College. They dined on pork and duck and fish tacos and homemade bread and homemade cake from their bakery. It was a delightful luncheon. Any woman over 50 years of age living in pine Knoll Shores is invited to join the Red Hats. Call Pauly Brown, 247-2959.

Slavery Subject of First 2008 BHA History Program

Beaufort Historical Association will kick off its 2008 Living History Program with a special presentation titled: "Slavery in Carteret County: Fact & Fiction." The presentation will be given by Barbara Milhaven and Alice Copes to honor Black History month a remembrance of important people and events in African American history celebrated annually in February.

This program will take place from 2-3:00 p.m. March 1 in the Carteret Courthouse of 1796 located on the Beaufort Historic Site, 130 Turner Street. Using many of the BHA archives, the program will attempt to document as many facts as possible about slavery in Carteret County. The emphasis and focus will be on information collected about slavery in Beaufort.

Jean M. Auel, a noted author acclaimed for her research and authenticity, describes

in her *Earth's Children* series man's attempt to conquer, dominate and enslave.

While this was certainly true of slavery, Barbara and Alice hope to dismiss the fictional notion that slavery in America was only practiced in the south and that slaveholders were kindly masters taking care of their "people." Also, many believe that slavery was just part of early America, but it actually had been perpetuated since the time of the ice age and perhaps before that.

Barbara and Alice hope to bring alive this part of the county's history for young and old to remember, understand, and work to make sure that this never happens again any where in America For more information on this enlightening program, stop by the Safrit Historical Center at the historic site or call 252-728-5225, or visit www.beauforthistoricsite.org.

Shoreline Fishing

For Early Risers and Low Tide Activists

By Richard Seale

The big fishing action these days starts at 4 a.m. at the docks and marinas close to Beaufort Inlet. The commercial blue fin tuna season is open and to fish for these monsters usually means being 12 miles out to sea as dawn starts to rosy up the eastern horizon.

As I walked down to the dock to water test some new waders, I noted that George Brown was keeping watch over "his sound" from McNeil Park. I called out "George, Merry Christmas, to you and Joan." George waved back a friendly reply and went on to say that his son just called him to say that 10 blue fins were boated that morning Dec. 7. A 10 fish day is a very good day in this dangerous and high cost, high revenue commercial fishery.

During December the Japanese pay big money for these fish which are air freighted to Japan and sold at weekly auctions. Some fish can yield up to \$50 a pound in the Japanese wholesale market. As sashimi or sushi at retail, well over \$100 a pound is on the low side. Of course the price to stateside commercial fisherman is more like \$15 to \$25 a pound. But for a 400-pound fish that is still a good Christmas present. So if you want to feel the excitement of this fishing fleet get up and go to Morehead waterfront or one of the nearby marinas and wander the docks at 4 to 5 a.m.

As far as less dangerous pursuits for inshore adventurers, low tides give clambers, oysters and mussel harvesters a chance to rake up some goodies this time of year using simple boots or even wading shoes. The water in the sound is in the 50's, so it is cold but not lethally so.

There seems to be a good crop of oysters for the taking this year along the shorelines. If you venture out to do this, it is essential that you wear sturdy gloves

and good foot protection. The oyster shells are razor blades in disguise. Oysters usually grow in small clumps, so you will need a hammer to knock the less than legal size ones off the clumps and throw them back into the water. Minimum shell size for legal oysters is three inches. It is easier to eat oysters if the legal ones are knocked off the clumps into singles and doubles. Steamed oysters, dipped in hot melted real butter or horseradish spicy cocktail sauce are a wonderful treat.

Our Beaufort County "wife and knife" parties were cold weather events we all relished. In the "good ole days" we could buy a bushel of Rose Bay oysters for \$5 to \$7 on several street corners in "Little" Washington, N.C. We would use pig cookers (really big grills used to barbeque whole pigs) so we could steam four or five bushels at a



BlueFin Tuna - Harbourseale Catch - 2006

time on metal trays under water-soaked tobacco burlaps. After the oysters were steamed open they were dumped in piles on plywood sheets which were set atop sawhorses.

With breaths steaming in the cold air, wives, knives, oysters (and the guys too) descended on these piles. Gloved hands and twisting oyster knives pried the oysters open and meats were dipped in butter or sauce with lots of chatter and laughter as we "pigged out." Gosh, life is good. Some of the parties went through 60 bushels of oysters! So don't be bashful, get yourself some local oysters, steam them up in the oven in a two inch deep pan with a half inch of water in it and, under an old wet dish towel over the oysters, melt some butter and mix up some spicy cocktail sauce and enjoy. At 350 degrees the oysters should steam open and be ready to eat in 15 to 20 minutes. Don't overcook them as they get dried out and chewy.