



Saturday October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
OuterBanksSeafoodFestival.org  
info@outerbanksseafoodfestival.org  
Event: MP 16, 6800 S. Croatan, Nags Head, NC  
Mail: P.O. Box 805, Nags Head, NC 27959  
P: (252)732-0373 F: (252)449-8392

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release | August 18, 2014

### Meet Outer Banks Waterman Dewey Hemilright

Outer Banks, N.C. -- From gillnetters to longliners, crabbers to shrimpers to oystermen, Outer Banks commercial fishermen are a diverse bunch. The Outer Banks Seafood Festival was created in part to honor and celebrate these hardworking people who bring us the bounty of the sea.

What follows is an article on Outer Banks waterman Dewey Hemilright, who fishes out of Wanchese. It is the second in a series of articles about the people of the Outer Banks seafood world, from the harvesters to the chefs who put it on our plates.

#### A Solid Commitment to Fishing

*Outer Banks commercial fisherman Dewey Hemilright is a dedicated spokesperson and advocate for the U.S. fishing industry.*

**by Susan West**

Outer Banks fisherman Dewey Hemilright took a busman's holiday this summer and went to Alaska to fish for salmon.

The Kitty Hawk native spent seven weeks in Dillingham, set-netting sockeye salmon in the Wood River that flows into Bristol Bay and experiencing another dimension of America's commercial fishing industry.

*The Outer Banks Seafood Festival organization is a 501(c)(4) non-profit established with the purpose of providing a fun and educational experience, promoting, honoring and celebrating our coastal seafood heritage and community.*

#### 2014 Board of Directors

Lee Nettles, Chairman ~ Tim Kelly, Vice-Chairman ~ Karen Brown, Secretary ~ Tess Judge, Treasurer ~ Dorothy Killingsworth, Assistant Treasurer  
Matt Austin ~ Carl Curnutte ~ Webb Fuller ~ Chris Hess ~ Bob Peele ~ Katie Weih



Saturday October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
OuterBanksSeafoodFestival.org  
info@outerbanksseafoodfestival.org  
Event: MP 16, 6800 S. Croatan, Nags Head, NC  
Mail: P.O. Box 805, Nags Head, NC 27959  
P: (252)732-0373 F: (252)449-8392

“The fishing was good and the area beautiful and remote, accessible only by plane or boat,” he says. “I plan to go back. It’s good to know more about fishing beyond what happens in my own backyard.”

Hemilright’s backyard is the Atlantic Ocean. He runs his boat, the 42-foot *Tar Baby*, out of Wanchese through Oregon Inlet to fishing grounds. Built in Dare County by boatbuilder John Bayliss, the boat takes its name from a much larger boat Bayliss built called the *Tar Heel*.

Hemilright fishes for a variety of species. His typical annual round includes longlining tuna and swordfish in the fall, gillnetting dogfish, croaker and bluefish in the winter and spring, and longlining mahi-mahi and tilefish in the summer.

“It’s kind of like the lugnuts on a tire; you have to have each of them to make it work,” he explains.

He laughs hard before describing his first commercial fishing job.

“I was probably one of the greenest greenhorns ever,” he says. “I was so sick I lost something like 15 pounds on that swordfishing trip.”

Despite the rough start, the experience struck a chord with the 21-year-old Hemilright, and he knew fishing was a challenge that matched up to his youthful appreciation for adventure and his expectation of a life well-lived.

A quarter of a century later, the affable fisherman is also a dedicated spokesperson for the U.S. fishing industry. He serves on a federal fishery management council and is a member of several state and national advocacy organizations. He also works with scientists studying fish migratory and breeding behavior, carrying teams of researchers on his boat to record information about the catch and to tag fish.

*The Outer Banks Seafood Festival organization is a 501(c)(4) non-profit established with the purpose of providing a fun and educational experience, promoting, honoring and celebrating our coastal seafood heritage and community.*

#### 2014 Board of Directors

Lee Nettles, Chairman ~ Tim Kelly, Vice-Chairman ~ Karen Brown, Secretary ~ Tess Judge, Treasurer ~ Dorothy Killingsworth, Assistant Treasurer  
Matt Austin ~ Carl Curnutte ~ Webb Fuller ~ Chris Hess ~ Bob Peele ~ Katie Weih



Saturday October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
OuterBanksSeafoodFestival.org  
info@outerbanksseafoodfestival.org  
Event: MP 16, 6800 S. Croatan, Nags Head, NC  
Mail: P.O. Box 805, Nags Head, NC 27959  
P: (252)732-0373 F: (252)449-8392

For the last nine years, Hemilright has visited classrooms from Montana to New York to tell students about his work and to show them fish hooks, glow sticks and other artifacts of the trade.

One story popular with schoolkids is about the time a small kitten crawled out of the cabin on his boat and jumped overboard into the dark, rough sea. The fisherman rescued the stowaway kitten with a dipnet.

Hemilright is a member of Outer Banks Catch, a local seafood-branding initiative focused on consumer education, and he often pitches in to fry fish or soft-shell crabs at fundraising events for the program.

“Most people don’t know that over 90 percent of the seafood consumed in this country is imported and often comes from countries that have lax conservation and public health controls,” he explains.

He advises consumers to ask wait-staff and retailers about the origin of the seafood they sell.

“People always ask me what type of seafood I like best,” he says. “I like whatever is local and in season.”

But he says there’s nothing better than “a mess of round-heads,” a reference to sea mullet by one of its regional names.

###

Meet Outer Banks watermen, learn about commercial fishing, have fun in a community atmosphere, and feast on local seafood at the Outer Banks Seafood Festival on Saturday, October 18. The theme for this year’s Festival – Outer Banks, Seafood Proud! – reflects the appreciation that Outer Banks residents and visitors have for the local seafood products and the people who harvest and prepare them.

*The Outer Banks Seafood Festival organization is a 501(c)(4) non-profit established with the purpose of providing a fun and educational experience, promoting, honoring and celebrating our coastal seafood heritage and community.*

#### 2014 Board of Directors

Lee Nettles, Chairman ~ Tim Kelly, Vice-Chairman ~ Karen Brown, Secretary ~ Tess Judge, Treasurer ~ Dorothy Killingsworth, Assistant Treasurer  
Matt Austin ~ Carl Curnutte ~ Webb Fuller ~ Chris Hess ~ Bob Peele ~ Katie Weih



# Outer Banks Seafood Festival



Saturday October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
OuterBanksSeafoodFestival.org  
info@outerbanksseafoodfestival.org  
Event: MP 16, 6800 S. Croatan, Nags Head, NC  
Mail: P.O. Box 805, Nags Head, NC 27959  
P: (252)732-0373 F: (252)449-8392

Held from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the soundside Outer Banks Event Site at milepost 15.5 in Nags Head, the event includes live music, beer and wine tents, games, vendor booths and, of course, lots of great food! For more information, visit [outerbanksseafoodfestival.org](http://outerbanksseafoodfestival.org).



Outer Banks fisherman Dewey Hemilright's typical annual round includes longlining tuna and swordfish in the fall, gillnetting dogfish, croaker and bluefish in the winter and spring, and longlining mahi-mahi and tilefish in the summer.

*The Outer Banks Seafood Festival organization is a 501(c)(4) non-profit established with the purpose of providing a fun and educational experience, promoting, honoring and celebrating our coastal seafood heritage and community.*

#### 2014 Board of Directors

Lee Nettles, Chairman ~ Tim Kelly, Vice-Chairman ~ Karen Brown, Secretary ~ Tess Judge, Treasurer ~ Dorothy Killingsworth, Assistant Treasurer  
Matt Austin ~ Carl Curnutte ~ Webb Fuller ~ Chris Hess ~ Bob Peele ~ Katie Weih