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St. Thomas Fishermen's Association
P.O. Box 502974
St. Thomas, USVI 00805

The Ole Wife

Newsletter of the St. Thomas Fishermen's Association

Protecting our Natural Heritage and Culture

Bastille Day Kingfish Tournament a Huge Success!



Winston Ledee and the crew of the Karen Lee receiving their prizes from Miss Carenage.

- 75 boats
- 312 Anglers, including 40 Junior Anglers
- 226 fish, (1819 lbs) including 78 Kingfish, (703.27 lbs)

Once again, the Northside Sportfishing Club's Bastille Day Kingfish Tournament was a huge success. The exhausted members of the Committee (including STFA members Monica Lester and "Dago" Berry) watched the happy crowd at Hull Bay Hiway party and celebrate while receiving thousands of dollars of cash and prizes.

STFA members did well in the tournament with VP Winston Ledee's boat Karen Lee winning Best Boat, Best Captain, Best Junior Male and even the grand prize from the "Cash in the Hat" for Junior Anglers. David Greaux on STFA VP Julian Magras's Yum-Z won biggest Jack.

Enough for bragging, the Northside Club deserves huge congratulations for continuing to put on a MAJOR event.

Good going!!!!

(See page 7 for a list of winners)

St. Croix Fisherman Bob McAuliffe dies at 66

Robert McAuliffe, fishermen, founder of the St. Croix Fishermen's Cooperative and chairman of the Caribbean Fisheries Management Council's advisory panel, passed away Tuesday, May 25 at a hospital in Puerto Rico.

Mr. McAuliffe was born in Trinidad and raised on St. Croix. He attended St. Mary's School on St. Croix and graduated from Southwestern High

School in Atlanta, GA. He attended Georgia Institute of Technology before joining the US Coast Guard.

Mr. McAuliffe was a strong advocate of fishermen's rights and very active at public meetings on fisheries management and agriculture.

He is survived by his wife Lesley and three sons, Richard and Terry McAuliffe and Greg Esser.

September 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1

SAVE THE DATE!

The 1st Annual St. Thomas Fishermen’s Association Fun Day will be held **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25** at the Frenchtown Baseball Field. There will be a 50/50 raffle, events for the kids, food and drink plus softball matches between the lobster, trap, line and net fishermen, as well as the women’s Frenchtown team verses the women’s Northside team. For more information contact Julian Magras.

STFA Hosts Reception for the CFMC

On Monday, May 3 the STFA hosted a “meet and greet” for members of the Caribbean Fisheries Management Council, STFA members and other members of the St. Thomas community. The event was held at the Frenchtown Community Center after the first day of the 118th CFMC Meeting at Marriott’s Frenchman’s Reef Resort. As you can imagine, the food and drink were delicious and the celebration was wonderfully entertaining. CFMC members who were present at the event included Roy Crabtree and Ginny Fay of NMFS Southeast Office, and Eugenio Piñeiro-Soler, the CFMC Chair. The STFA had a fine showing with over 30 members in attendance. The VI government and community were also well-represented and included visits from John DeJongh, Senator Louis Hill, Barbara Kojis of Division of Fish & Wildlife and representatives from Senator Berry’s office.



Julian Magras (STFA VP), Eugenio Piñero (CFMC Chairman), Roy Crabtree (NMFS Regional Director), Jimmy Magner (STFA President).

The reception helped to welcome a new era of partnership between the NMFS, CFMC and STFA. Working together as peers will help STFA have a greater say in the management of resources that impact their livelihood.

The STFA would like to thank everyone who came to the reception and supported our efforts. We would also like to thank those who graciously donated food, time or money to help make this event as successful as it was.



Warren Querrard, who fishes with “Chicken Chest” and Teddy Bryan

THANKS TO:

- Alexander’s** for a platter of food
- Arian’s Bar and Restaurant** for the pan of stuffing
- Elizabeth Ban** for 4 bottles of wine and a case of beer
- Bellow’s International** for 3 cases of beer and 1 case of water
- Senator Lorraine Berry** for her donation of \$100.00
- Betsy’s Bar** for a case of beer
- Louis Blanchard, Neville Smith & Jerry Quetel** for donating fish
- Blue Dolphin** for frying the fish, pan of macaroni and pan of rice
- Bryson Bryan** for cups
- Leon Danet** for his pick-up salt fish
- Linda Evans** for assisting with set-up
- Frenchtown Community Center** for always letting us use the center
- Frenchtown Deli** for 2 platters of food
- Ruth Gomez** for bringing plates, forks and drinks
- Hook, Line & Sinker** for two platters of food
- Winston Ledee and the STFA Lobster Sub-committee** for incredible lobster salad
- Jimmy Magner** for crackers and other miscellaneous items
- Julian Magras** for the meatballs and setting up the event (including getting all these great donations!)
- David & Annette Olsen** for 2 platters of food
- Spike Sport fishermen** for jonnies cakes
- Bobby Vante** for the cooler of ice

And thanks to everyone else that helped in any way that we may have forgotten. Without all of you, none of this would have been possible.

THANK YOU!

John Fleming: St. Thomas Boat Builder

They are *everywhere* on St. Thomas! Hull Bay, Red Hook, the Mangrove Lagoon, Coki Point, Frenchtown—every where you find fishermen you find John Fleming’s boats.

They are unmistakable, the sturdy construction, the unmistakable sweep of the bow, hard working solid beautiful boats that are the backbone of the St. Thomas fishing fleet. Hurricanes come and go but Fleming boats still survive.

Mr. Fleming started building boats with his father Fred, bringing Anguilla’s boat building tradition to St. Thomas in 1967. Until he died in 1990 he was so prolific, no one knows just exactly how many he built. His final boat sits in Hull Bay, painted green, STFA member Patrick Berry the proud owner. Frenchtown looks like a Fleming distributorship, filled with his boats.

Talk to a Fleming owner and hear the talk of the ruggedness, the sea kindness and the overall beauty. Fleming owners are proud and the bright, fresh paint jobs attest to that pride.



John Fleming with his son Delano and his favorite boat building tool.



Mr. Fleming’s widow Jasmine says that he was not only an excellent boat builder but a loving and caring husband and father, a fact borne out by all who knew him.

He is certainly missed, but his legacy of sturdy, beautiful fishing boats lives on, the pride of St. Thomas’ fishing fleet.

(See the back page for more pictures)

John’s widow Jasmine with a few of his boats in Frenchtown.

Just what in the Hell are they talking about?

If you've ever attended a Council Meeting or gone to a public hearing about more closures and fishing regulations, you must have wondered just what language is being spoken by these people?

Despite the fact that Government wants to make some pretty serious controls that affect your ability to feed your family and pay your mortgage, they do not seem to feel that they need to explain why in simple English. This article will be the first in a series that will attempt to explain some of the terms and concepts used by Government fishery managers.

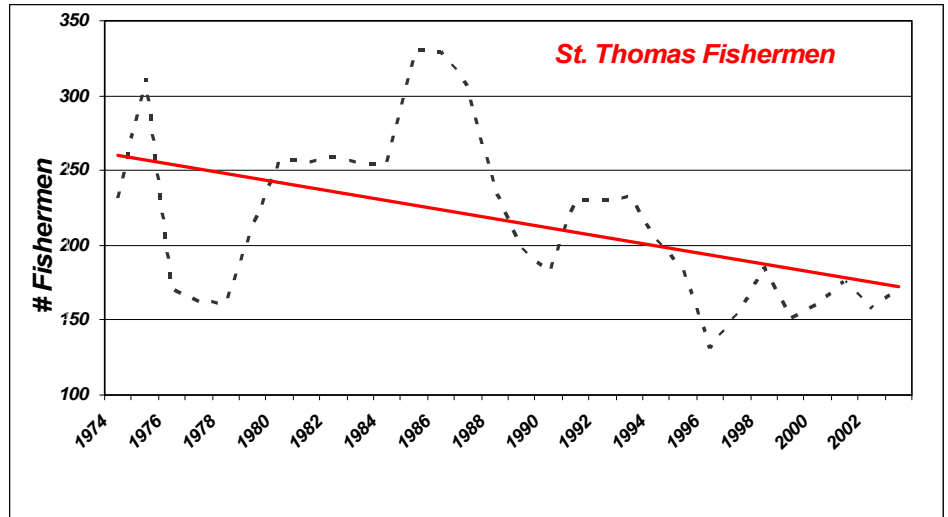
“Effort”

The first topic for discussion is fishing effort. Effort is just what it sounds like-how hard do you have to work to catch? How many fishermen, how many traps, nets, hooks, lines, boats-just what does it take to catch some fish?

In a perfect world everyone would use the same type and number of traps, hooks, nets and so on and all you would need to know would be the numbers of boats and fishermen.

In St. Thomas, the numbers of registered fishermen have been dropping over the past 30 years. Does that mean that effort has decreased?

- Not so. As everyone knows, conditions in 1974 were very different than today in 2005. Even though St. Thomas had over 250 registered fishermen in 1974, they fished fewer traps, probably averaging 30 for a total of around 8,000 traps.



- In 2003, the number of registered fishermen in St. Thomas had fallen to around 180 but they were fishing as many as 1500 traps (probably averaging 300) so the number of total traps had risen to as many as 54,000, over 6 times increase from 1974.
- In some fisheries, like the seine net fishery and the hand-line fisheries, the number of boats remains a fairly good indication of fishing effort but for many, more detail is required.

Now, everyone knows that not every registered fisherman actually fishes, or fishes with traps and not every trap fisherman has this many traps but the fact is, that if we want to know just how much fishing pressure Virgin Islands resources can take, we need to know what the actual levels of effort are.

The only way to get the necessary level of detail is from the fishermen themselves.

The only way that fishermen can supply that information is through clear and understandable catch

reporting systems. Our new appointees to the Fishery Advisory Committee (Julian Magras, Bryson Bryan and Alfred Aubrey) are taking as one of their first tasks, to make changes to the DFW catch reporting system so it is both easier for the fishermen and more useful for the fishery managers.

Detail is particularly a problem here in the Virgin Islands since fishermen use multiple methods to land up to 100 species. The Federal Government is legally obligated to manage each of these species, whether or not they have information and unless we can find a way to provide more detail, we can look forward to more closures like we saw this year with the Lane Snapper, Mutton Snapper, deep water snappers and the Yellowfin Grouper.

The STFA is trying to address these closures by carrying out studies that will show whether or not they are needed in the hopes of opening up closures. We'll need your help.

Next issue-Catch Per Unit of Effort (CPUE), a favorite of Jimmy and Julian.

DFW Installs Fish Aggregating Devices in VI Waters

The purpose of the fish aggregating devices (FADs) is to attract seasonally abundant pelagic fish species, such as tuna, dolphin and wahoo, for harvest by recreational and commercial fishers. The FADs are similar in design to those contracted and deployed by the State of Hawaii, Division of Aquatic Resources, around the Hawaiian Islands.

The surface FADs consist of a 58" diameter surplus steel buoy with a sealed battery pack, strobe light and radar reflector mounted from a three-foot section of 4" schedule 40 steel pipe, welded to the top of the buoy. A seven foot section of 4" schedule 40 steel pipe welded to the bottom of the buoy and filled with 200 pounds of steel and lead

serves as a counterbalance and attachment point for the mooring system. The buoys are painted yellow to conform to U.S. Coast Guard regulations for Private Aids to Navigation and bear identification letter, name and phone number.

Beneath the buoy is attached 100 feet of high tension stainless steel chain, then 1" mooring line, the upper portion sinking and the lower portion floating rope. A second 100 foot section of chain attaches the floating line to a 4'X 4'X 2' concrete anchor(s) that weigh >6,000 pounds. All hardware connections are made with safety anchor shackles and swivels.

The submerged FADs consist of one or two surplus 100 pound metal gas cylinders. The cylinders are filled with Poly-U-Foam. The cylinders are painted safety orange for better visibility. The cylinders are attached to 1" diameter nylon rope which is connected to 50 feet of ½" high tension stainless steel chain. The length of chain attaches to a >2,000 lb concrete anchor (2'X 2'X 4'). All hardware connections are made with safety anchor shackles and swivels.

Longevity of FADs is anticipated to be in excess of three years with periodic inspections and maintenance.

FAD Locations in the USVI

<u>Island</u> <u>Isla</u>	<u>Bouy</u> <u>Boya</u>	<u>Geographic Coordinates</u> <u>Coordenadas Geográficas</u>	<u>Depth (ft)</u> <u>Profundidad</u>	<u>Location from Land</u> <u>Localización</u>
St. Croix	A	17° 46.5' N; 64° 51.2' W	2,370	Surface buoy, 1 nm N of Hams Bluff
St. Croix	B	17° 51.6' N; 64° 30.8' W	3,582	Surface buoy, 6.8 nm NE of East Point
St. Croix	C	17° 58.9' N; 64° 30.3' W	5,400	Surface buoy, 19.0 nm NE of Christiansted
St. Croix	P	17° 45.8' N; 64° 27.0' W	3,800	Surface buoy, 6.6 nm E of East Point
St. Croix	R	17° 39.0' N; 65° 04.0' W	4,200	Surface buoy, 11.5 nm SW of F'sted
St. Croix	S	17° 46.5' N; 65° 00' W	2,252	Surface buoy, 6.5 nm NW of Butler Bay
St. Croix	T	17° 52.3' N; 64° 42.8' W	10,000	Surface buoy, 7.2 nm N of C'sted
St. Croix	U	17° 44.0' N; 64° 54.6' W	2,000	Surface buoy, 2 nm W of Sprat Hole* U.S. Navy underwater
St. Thomas	E	18° 11.05' N; 64° 55.87' W	1,465	Submerged buoys; 10 nm S. of Charlotte Amalie Harbor
St. Thomas	H	18° 38.3' N; 64° 58.8' W	1,610	Surface buoy; 16.5 nm north of Outer Brass
St. Thomas	J	18° 27.7' N; 64° 54.2' W	174	Submerged buoy; 3 nm N. of Little Hans Lollick
St. Thomas	K	18° 36.4' N; 64° 58.4' W	235	Submerged buoy; 13 nm north of Little Hans Lollick



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Printed at St. Thomas Graphics

Olewives' Tales . . .

- **Bryson Bryan** won the French Heritage essay writing contest.
- **Net fishing** is starting to pick up
- **North tide** is still running so catches of yellowtail have been very low
- **French Heritage Night** was celebrated at Government House
- **Congress** still hasn't debated Delegate to Congress Christensen's bill to extend VI Territorial waters to **nine miles**
- **The people** who stole Francis Bryan's and Patrick Berry's engines from Hull Bay have **been identified but NO ARRESTS HAVE BEEN MADE!!!!**

DPNR & EPA to Set Pollution Limits

In yet another example of DPNR’s attempts to keep the public from knowing what they are up to, DPNR announced that it is setting pollution limits for Limetree Bay, Magens Bay, the Mangrove Lagoon/Benner Bay and Vessup Bay. These total ALLOW-ABLE limits should have been the source of an active public awareness program but there are no scheduled public hearings, and five phone calls (none returned) and a trip to the DPNR offices (where no copies of the documents were available) demonstrated their desire to avoid scrutiny. STFA finally obtained copies from the EPA offices in New Jersey.

The documents list construction, on-site septic systems, boats discharges, marine overflow and sanitary sewer overflows as the major sources of pollution but do little to suggest how the islands might institute a meaningful effort to reverse the environmental deterioration which has endangered our beaches, our fisheries and our tourist industry.

STFA feels strongly that the EPA has failed in its role as an environmental watchdog and has let the local DPNR concentrate on funding rather than action to restore our islands to an acceptable environmental state. We are particularly appalled that Vessup Bay and the Mangrove Lagoon, two historically important fishery nursery grounds, have been allowed to become highly polluted.

DFW Hearing on Comprehensive Fisheries Plan

After STFA and its supporters stomped out of an April hearing because of 24 hour notice of the hearing, DFW held a follow-up hearing at the Community Center in May. Despite attempts by STFA to provide input to the plan,

STFA Research Proposal

The STFA has recognized that information for basing fishery management measures is limited in the U.S. Virgin Islands. In the interests of ensuring the best possible fishery management regimes required to insure sustainable resource management, the STFA will assist fishery managers by undertaking a series of studies to supply necessary information through application to the NOAA Cooperative Research Program for necessary funding.

The studies specifically address management measures approved by the Caribbean Fishery Management Council (CFMC), most recently in the Amendment to their prior management plans. The following studies are being proposed:

1. **Size Frequency Studies of Priority Species**
2. **Tag-Recapture Studies of Priority Species**
3. **Port Sampling**
4. **By-catch from local fisheries**

changes were mainly cosmetic and the constant negative view of fishermen and fishing remains. It looks like we’ll have to wait until DFW has a new Director before fishermen can expect to be heard.

STFA to Participate in Mutton, Lane & Yellowtail Snapper Genetics Study

STFA will be involved in a study of the genetics of these important species which will be funded under the NOAA Cooperative Research Program (CRP). Despite CFMC closures for two of these species, very little is know about them in the Virgin Islands. This study and STFA’s proposed studies for CRP funding should provide information regarding whether or not the CFMC closures are justified.

5. **Nassau Grouper Breeding Aggregation Survey of Historic Aggregation Sites**
6. **Data Recovery from Fishermen’s Records**
7. **Spiny Lobster Fishery Management**
8. **Spiny Lobster Rehabilitation**
9. **Outreach through establishment of a web page, continued publication of the STFA Newsletter, and undertaking a non-point source pollution survey and outreach campaign.**

Additionally, the STFA studies will utilize members of the St. Thomas fishing community to increase future involvement in fishery management as scientists and fishery managers and enhance indigenous fishery management. The projects represent truly Cooperative Research with a direct link between fishery management agencies and the actual fishing community rather than through consultants or universities.

Another National Fisherman Article

“Fishermen win concessions on Virgin Islands Limits” reads the headline in the August 2005 article. Even a quote from our President CokaBird “We showed them that the study they published was a pile of trash with no data to back it up.” For the second month in a row the STFA has made the *National Nisherman* news. We must be doing something right!

Good News for the STFA

The STFA is an official corporation with a business license, checking account, and an application for a 501c3 (not for profit corporation) status. This will allow STFA to receive federal grants.

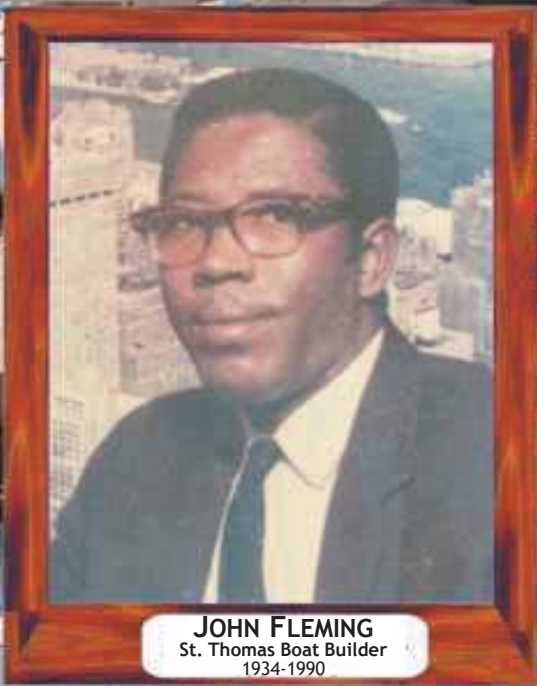
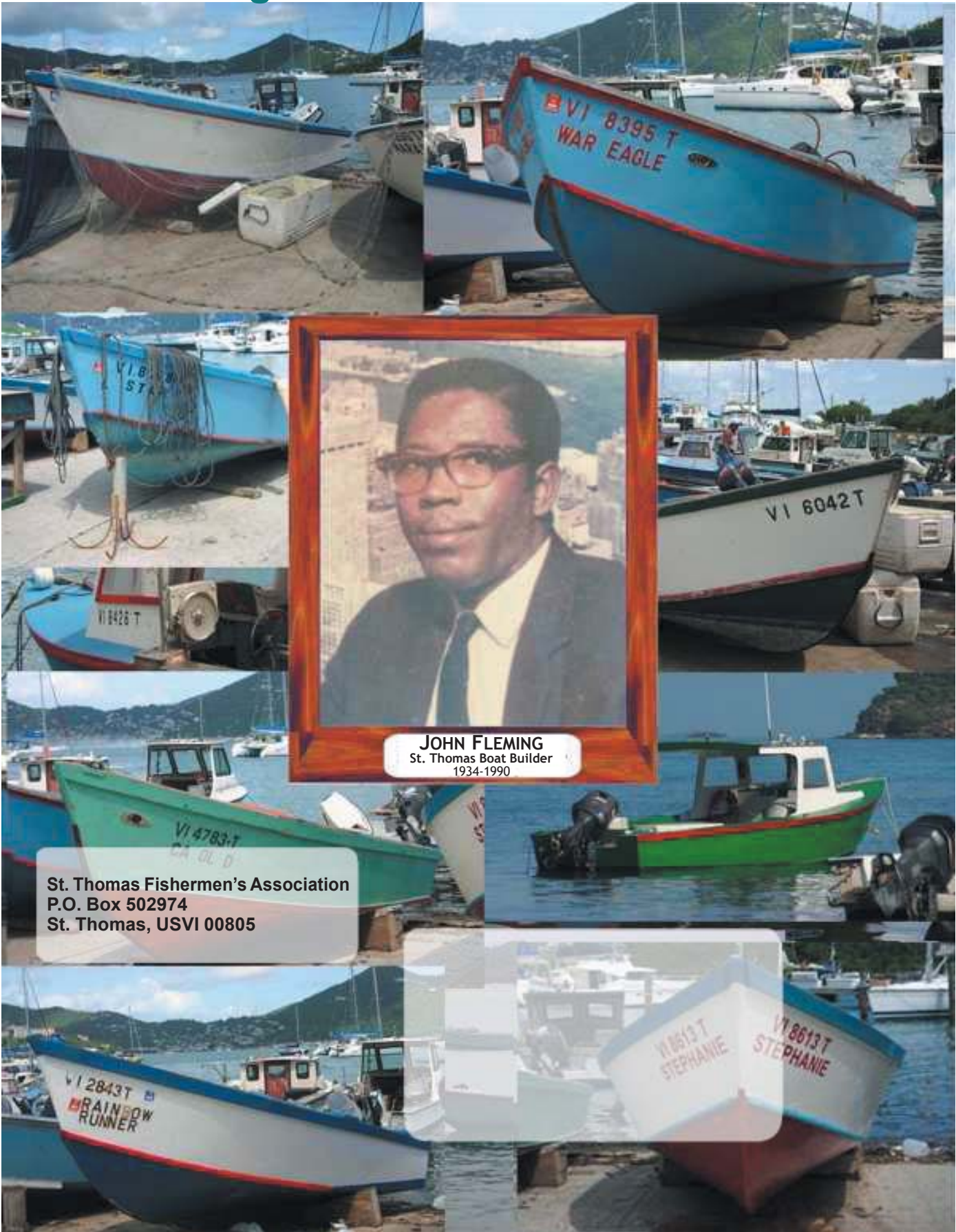


The perfect end to another Bastille Day Tournament

Bastille Day Kingfish Tournament 2005 Winners

<u>Category</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Lbs.</u>	<u>Boat</u>
<i>Largest Kingfish</i>	<i>Adam Quandt</i>	<i>27.41</i>	<i>Bright Star</i>
<i>2nd Largest Kingfish</i>	<i>Cliff Bryan</i>	<i>24.91</i>	<i>Double Header</i>
<i>3rd Largest Kingfish</i>	<i>Svta Lohr</i>	<i>21.02</i>	<i>Life Line</i>
<i>Best Boat</i>	<i>Winston Ledee</i>	<i>26 Fish</i>	<i>Karen Lee</i>
<i>Best Captain</i>	<i>Ryan Mertens</i>	<i>22 kingfish, 126.68 lbs.</i>	<i>Karen Lee</i>
<i>Best Female</i>	<i>Ursula Bryan</i>	<i>67.12</i>	<i>Urshe</i>
<i>Best Male</i>	<i>Raymond Petersen</i>	<i>84.98</i>	<i>Turning Green</i>
<i>Best Junior Male</i>	<i>Ryan Mertens</i>	<i>78.79</i>	<i>Karen Lee</i>
<i>Best Junior Female</i>	<i>Shannelle Brin</i>	<i>32.70</i>	<i>Suga Lips</i>
<i>Largest Jack</i>	<i>David Greaux</i>	<i>17.45</i>	<i>Yum-Z</i>
<i>Largest Barracuda</i>	<i>George Ravella</i>	<i>21.63</i>	<i>Double Vision</i>
<i>Largest Bonito</i>	<i>Ryan Berry</i>	<i>5.77</i>	<i>Double Header</i>
<i>Largest Tuna</i>	<i>Parker Hall</i>	<i>20.92</i>	<i>Mainiac</i>
<i>Largest Mackerel</i>	<i>Murray Earle</i>	<i>9.86</i>	<i>Tunnel Vision</i>
<i>Largest Dolphin</i>	<i>Nicolas Capozzoli</i>	<i>2.92</i>	<i>Slicksted</i>

Parting Shots . . . (Scenes from the St. Thomas Fishing Community)



JOHN FLEMING
 St. Thomas Boat Builder
 1934-1990

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