



RISAA Events & Meetings

All events and meetings can be found online at www.risaa.org/calendar.html

Apr 6 • 6:30 PM RISAA Kayak Committee Spring Meeting

Apr 13 • 6:30 PM RISAA Fly Fishing Committee Spring Meeting

Apr 14-16 New England Fisheries Mgmt Council, Mystic, CT

Apr 20 • 6:00 PM RISAA Surfcasters Spring Meeting

Apr 21 - 6:30 PM Board of Directors.

Apr 25 9:00 AM -Fly Fishing Committee at 100 Acre Cove.

Apr 27 • 7:00 PM Monthly Seminar

May 2 • 10:00 AM Kayak Committee Annual Meet & Greet, Goddard Park

May 4-7 • ASMFC Summer Meeting Arlington, VA

May 9 • 9:00 AM Kayak Committee fishing for bass, 100 Acre Cove

May 12 • 6:30 PM Board of Directors

May 16 • 5:00 PM Fly Fishing Committee fishing at Ninigret Pond

May 16 • 5:00 PM Kayak Committee fishing worm hatch, Potter Pond.

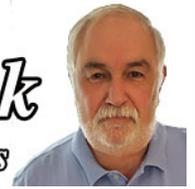
May 22 • 5:00 PM Fly Fishing Committee fishing Potters Pond

May 23 • Kayak Committee fishing for bass, Sabin Point

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From the President's Desk Stephen Medeiros



Fishing Show/Coronavirus/Striped Bass

March was the busiest and most frustrating month in my RISAA life (and I've been around a long time).

It takes a full year to prepare for our Saltwater Fishing Show. From the day after our show, exhibitors are already signing up for the following year. This 2020 Show was the same, and as usual, we had all possible dealer spaces filled and a waiting list of companies hoping to get in if someone cancelled.

By January, we already had hundreds of advance tickets sold.

I also handle the advertising and had in place print ads in newspapers in RI, MA and CT and magazines, commercials that would run on several radio stations, and a commercial made ready to run on several TV stations, TV fishing shows and the internet.

Although all positions were yet filled, we had 88 RISAA members signed up to help at the show.

And then the coronavirus hit.....

CORONAVIRUS?

Life in the RISAA office went from happy to crazy. Starting in mid-February, phone calls and emails came in from exhibitors asking if we would cancel the show.

By March 1, as the coronavirus news spread across the country, phone calls and emails here increased. Boat and fishing shows on the West Coast were cancelling.

I was now receiving 100 emails a day (no exaggeration!) along with dozens of phone calls from exhibitors and RISAA members. Half said we should cancel the show, and believe it or not, half said please don't cancel.

We were in a difficult situation. At that time many events were cancelling. But this was a problem for us. We were on the hook at that point for close to \$165,000. Shocked? Most members don't realize how much is involved in the show.

For the past 15 years, we have purchased expensive "cancellation"

insurance to cover us if something happened. This policy would cover our losses, but only if the cancellation was "beyond our control."

The governor went on TV and said that everyone should avoid events with over 250 people, and then added "these are only guidelines." That would not help us with insurance.

But at this point we all realized we need to cancel the show... for the sake of our member volunteers and the 300 companies in our show and all of their staff.

Phone calls to RISAA were now nearly nonstop. Every time I checked email there were 50 more messages, easily over 200 in a day.

Finally, on the morning of March 12, I received an email from the RI Convention Center saying they were shutting down for the remainder of March and "will not be able to host our show."

I informed the RISAA board and within an hour sent an e-blast to all show exhibitors and RISAA members.

And I breathed a sigh of relief!

Now a new type of work begins for Pete O'Biso, our treasurer and myself. Now we will begin the process of sending refunds to everyone who purchased advanced tickets, and contacting all of the show exhibitors and offering them refunds or allowing them to use it for their 2021 booth space.

At least now I'm looking forward to a stress-free remainder of 2020!

STRIPED BASS

A bright spot of the month for me was when I learned that DEM Director Janet Coit had decided to go with the single mode option with the 28"-<35" slot for striped bass.

The RISAA Board spent a lot of time discussing all of the options and we all felt that the most important aspect was that all neighboring states had the same regulations.