



Long Island Traditions

NEWSLETTER

www.longislandtraditions.org
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New York Sportsfishing Federation Show

February 17-18
Freeport Recreation Center
130 E. Merrick Road

Join us at this annual event where you can learn all the latest news and trends of the coming fishing season. On hand are many knowledgeable folks who can share with you their tricks and tips on how to catch that big one. Learn what the latest regulations are for recreational fishermen, how to register for the NY fishing registry, and stop by our table in the lobby. Hours are Saturday, February 17 from 10 - 6 and Sunday, February 18 from 10 - 2.

For more information visit <http://nysf.org/forum-auction/>. ■

Long Island Decoy Collectors Show

March 3

The LI Decoy Collectors 46th annual Decoy show is scheduled for Saturday, March 3 at the IBEW Union Hall, located at 370 Vanderbilt Motor Parkway, Hauppauge. The program takes place from 9 am – 4 pm. The featured exhibit is Contemporary Decoy Carving. For more information visit www.lidecoycollectors.org. ■



Indian Celebrations Program

March 25 at 2 pm
East Meadow Public Library

Following our December Indian program, we're happy to support another South Asian program, focusing on women's traditions. Joining us will be Odissi master teacher Mala Desai, table player and instructor Sejal Kukadia, and Meena Mani, teacher and singer with her choir.

Come join us. The library is located at 1886 Front Street, East Meadow. ■



Odissi teacher and dancer Mala Desai. She will be part of the Indian Traditions program on March 25.

Grants News

LI Traditions has been recognized for several new projects and other ongoing projects. The NY State Council on the Arts awarded LI Traditions a multi-year general operating support grant from the Folk Arts program, its fifth such award since LI Traditions founding in 1991. In addition NYSCA provided a 1-year economic development grant to support our maritime programs, including several partnerships with City Lore, the Oyster Bay Historical Society, Staten Island Arts and Arts MidHudson. Stay tuned for program details. ■



Long Island Traditions Inc.

Dedicated to the documentation and preservation of Long Island's living cultural heritage.

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LI Traditions is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization registered with the NY State Board of Charities.

For more information call: (516) 767-8803
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Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum Programs

LI Traditions is partnering with the Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum on a series of programs exploring our maritime culture "At Work and At Play." On March 18 the first program will feature hands on activities that reflect our recreational boating and fishing traditions, with 5 traditional artists and recreational fishermen. They include boat builders Ben Bentley and Edmanuel Roman, boat builder and model maker Chris Hale, decoy carver George Rigby, and maritime folk artist Herb Jurist.

On April 8 the focus will shift to those who harvest fish and shellfish on Long Island, on the north and south shores. Visitors will meet Oyster Bay baymen Bill Fetzer and Fred Menges, Freeport bayman Tom Jefferies and an up and coming bayman Collin Weyant of Freeport, and Patchogue clammer Flo Sharkey.

The final program on May 17 will feature fishermen who have come close to death. John Aldridge and Anthony Sosinski are the authors of A Speck in the Sea which describes how Aldridge survived in the ocean after falling overboard during one of their fishing trips. Copies of the book will be available for purchase. Also joining in this evening program will be commercial fisherman Captain Tony Sougstad of Freeport, who once survived a powerful Nor'easter near George's Banks.

The March and April programs are designed for families with lots of hands on activities children and teenagers. The May program is appropriate for families and adults. All events are free with museum admission. Funding for the programs is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, and the New York State Council on the Arts with support from the NY State legislature and Governor Cuomo.



Photo by Nancy Solomon

Creations by Herb Jurist who will be part of the Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum program on March 18.

Fisher Poetry

Over the years we've connected with poets and fishermen who write about their experiences in prose and poetry. Chuck Tekula, a commercial fisherman, lives in Center Moriches and has written several poems, along with songs and stories for various publications including National Fishermen. Tekula has been a featured participant in many of our programs including our school and museum programs. You can meet him at the Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum on April 8th. This February he'll be joining other fisher poets at the Fisher Poets gathering in Astoria, Oregon. Here is one of his poems:

He Sees the Bottom

Two pickup trucks are idling at a road that ends at the Bay;
the one on the left is new, clean, shining white -- the owner has stopped to see the sunrise before he heads off to his job at an insurance agency.
He dreams of this weekend latching onto a trophy striped bass -- envisions his photo on display at the bait shop -- but his left brain is consumed with clients and meetings and policy changes.
The truck on the right is not as new or clean -- white matte as it hasn't been washed yet this week. And it smells of fish.
It's owner is also watching the sunrise -- but he's looking at the wind and tide.

His work is out there.

Many imagine that they know about the Bay, which fish are active per season.
When they make a stop at the end of the road they see the sun shimmering in the wind chop on the water. Lovely.
But the one whose work is out there -- he sees the bottom.

He knows where the hard sandy edges drop off to tacky mud;
where the eel grass rows begin and end.
He knows which crabs roam when and where. He has to.
As the terns and gulls wheel and swoop he can feel whether they're on a pod of anchovies being herded by bluefish
or a just picking on the grass shrimp as the fluke and sea robins drive them upward over the sand bar beyond the channel.

What the bystander doesn't even notice is Charlie in his little garvey --
a tiny white dot across the morning --
running his crab pots on the flat just this side of the marshy islands along the barrier beach.
He has to lift his motor now and again to slip over our bayman's gillnet set on the same sand flat where the scallops used to set every year but now don't get to grow as the acres of stingrays new to this northern latitude scoop them all up when they are still barely as big as the grains of sand they take up and later excrete.

The life on land is in the good earth and the flora must dig deep to bring it into the daylight air where most of the fauna forages.
But in the Bay the life is in the water.
The mud and sand and rocks that make up the bay bottom and its contours shape and are shaped by the currents pulled by the moon and sun
and this determines where the zoo' and phytoplankton accumulate and flow -- where the life begins and ends and begins again.

And the Bayman sees the bottom.

Another poet with strong connections to the seashore is Mark Nuccio, a lifelong Long Islander. Mark C. Nuccio has been writing poetry since 1967. His first Chapbook, "Connecting Tides" was published 2002, followed by "A Winter Prayer" (2003), "This Broken Day" (2005) and "Salvaging Hope", a collection of 118 poems (2017). He reads his poems at many local poetry gatherings and writes a monthly article for Boating World Magazine. Mark is an accomplished artist with a current one person show at the Walt Whitman Homestead Museum. Much of Mark's work is influenced by the beauty, history and preservation of our Island.

Unreachable Shore

his sailing days are over.
the sheets all stowed away.
lines coiled below deck
no more sailing on the bay.

the keel no longer cuts the brine,
old sailors succumb to storms and time.
until the day comes with aching bones,
he grabs the tiller and sails for home.

his feet now forever
on the shore,
he lets his thoughts
carry him forth,
and in his daydreams
he sails once more,

soon he'll reach
the unreachable shores.



Photo by Nancy Solomon

Fisher poet Chuck Tekula is one of Long Island Traditions' master teachers in our maritime school programs. He will be participating in the Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum program on April 8.

EVENTS OF INTEREST

PLEASE NOTE: If you have a Long Island concert or program that focuses on some aspect of traditional culture, drop us a line and we'll put it in our "Events of Interest" column.

Don't forget to visit our web site and our Facebook page for timely information.



February 17-18: New York Sportsfishing Federation Show, Freeport Recreation Center, 130 E. Merrick Road, Freeport. See accompanying article.

March 3: LI Decoy Collectors Show. IBEW Union Hall, located at 370 Vanderbilt Motor Parkway, Hauppauge. See accompanying article.

March 18: Recreational Maritime Traditions. 11am – 3 pm. Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum. 301 Main St, Cold Spring Harbor. (631) 367-3418.

March 25: Indian traditions program at 2 pm. East Meadow Public Library. 1886 Front Street, East Meadow. See accompanying article.

April 8: Commercial fishing traditions. 11am – 3 pm. Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum. 301 Main St, Cold Spring Harbor. (631) 367-3418.

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