



## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Lance Brown

It's Friday, a week after the tournament, a week after one of the most anticipated weeks of the year for me. Yes, I get "keyed up, pumped up, on the rev. chip," whatever term you want to use for excited, as I anticipate the feeling of citation red drum "pulling back!" But I've also come to embrace the excitement of getting to see you, my friends, some of which I only get to see once a year. I've also learned to embrace the memories we've made together, the stories we get to tell because of the experiences we've had on that little strip of sand. I've also learned time is fleeting and to enjoy every minute. Davis Island is one of the few places on earth where you stand in sand from the time you arrive till the time you leave. No asphalt, no concrete, just sand. And it typically takes about 2.2 seconds to rid me of my sneakers. Everything about the island is unique and something special.

I'm not going to sugarcoat it, I was sad to unpack the truck, clean everything up and put it away. Mostly because it will be another year till I feel that "pull back" feeling. But I do have another chance to spend time with you, my friends, and that is at our DIFF Annual Meeting. This year it will be held in the Triangle area. As our membership has grown, the Triangle has become more central to our membership. The attendance at our 2022 Annual Meeting in Matthews, NC was atrocious! It was disheartening, and I would argue a waste of club resources as there was an excessive amount of food wasted. The bylaws of the Davis Island Fishing Foundation, Inc. (DIFF), require us to host an annual meeting of the membership. At this

meeting we elect our board of directors, communicate the projects of the club, convey the financials of the organization, and the meeting is an opportunity for the membership to set the direction and path of the club. We have guest speakers from the NPS that provide updates on the park and park projects and this is also an opportunity for the membership to make suggestions to the park leadership. This is also an opportunity for you to spend time with your

Lance Brown, DIFF President, and Johnny Ray, with their pre-tournament Reds caught Wednesday prior to kickoff.



DIFF friends, to continue to broaden your relationships with like minded individuals, to get to know the NPS leadership and to be engaged with the club outside of the annual tournament.

I hope you will make the time to join us for our next annual meeting at the Golden Corral in Raleigh on February 24th @ 10:30am. I look forward to seeing each of you.

Tight Lines! Lance Brown



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#### 36TH ANNUAL DIFF FISHING TOURNAMENT

October 10-12, 2024

Deadline for entries is July 31st, 2024

Enter online at: www.diffclub.org

### **DIFF CLUB ANNUAL MEETING**

Feb. 24, 2024 — 10:30am Golden Corral 3551 Grenelle St. Raleigh, NC 27603

### ANNUAL DIFF/CBSFC WORK TRIP May 8-12, 2024 Contact Roy Byrd at:

roy.byrd@mindspring.com if you are interested.



Alvin Lee Tans — 1945-2023

This past year the DIFF Club lost several very significant and dedicated members of our club, one of whom was past DIFF Club President, Alvin Tans, who passed unexpectedly in September. In their honor and memory, the DIFF Board of Directors decided to have a ceremonial moment of silence and first cast to open the fall tournament. Rich Lambert used one of Alvin's fishing rods to make the first cast to kickoff the tournament.

Alvin served on the Board Of Directors as DIFF President from 1995-2001. Under Alvin's leadership, the club membership grew and the tournament expanded.

One of his most significant acts was in 1998 when he helped DIFF become an official registered

non-profit organization and helped create much of the organizational structure we enjoy today. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS), now recognizes the Davis Island Fishing Foundation as a non-profit neighborhood association. The club had applied for tax exemption under a different section of the tax law, but the IRS said we qualified as a 501(c)4, or neighborhood association. The ruling means that the club won't have to pay income taxes. However, it does not mean that dues, donations, or the cost of raffle tickets are tax deductible, they're not. But being relieved of paying income taxes will amount to sizable savings each year for the club. Alvin was largely responsible for making the application and shepherding it through the IRS.

Rich Lambert









Rich Lambert kicks off the tournament with a "first cast" and a moment of silence to honor and remember former DIFF President Alvin Tans as well as other club members who passed away this year.

first met Alvin in 1988 on my first trip to Davis Island, (aka, "Paradise") — this was a pre-social media era and in that time period, you just didn't see anyone on the island that didn't fish. It was pure heaven— I'd never been anywhere like this before. Alvin began fishing this narrow strip of sand in the early '70s. By the '80s, he had invited my friend, Larry Bassett, who brought me just after I graduated from college. And that's when I met Alvin, Gordon Jones, and Jack Davis. I fished with these guys for nearly 35 years. One of the best things about our group was that you always met new people that were invited by one of them. And more often than not, unless they just pissed someone off that first trip, they were invited back. So relationships were built

every year with a very large group of people. A lot of them were DIFF Directors that Alvin had known during his tenure with the club.

In my early years fishing with these fellas, I would fish with whoever had room in their truck for me. I began fishing with Larry, but moved to fish with Gordy and Jack after a couple of years so that he could bring someone else. I fished with Mike Laughlin— "Sharkey," named after Alvin helped him catch a shark. I also fished with Mark Weir— "Fish Hog," for many years. I met Ed Caskey— "Ricochet," who is currently still in the group.

Alvin had a nickname for everyone. Bassett was called, "Big Chunks," because after his first trip with Alvin, he got home and Alvin called to check up on him. Larry said, "I had



(left to right) Alvin Tans, Larry Bassett, Jack Davis, and Gordon Jones, on the Katherine T, early '80s.

to take two showers, one, just to get the 'Big Chunks' off," and thats all it took to stick. These early trips were before hot showers were available in the cabins.

There was Jack Davis— "Deer Slaver,"



We would always fill up a 12-man cabin. (front row seated, left to right) Ed Caskey, Mark Weir, Reece Chapman, Larry Bassett; (middle row seated, left to right) Lou Provenzano, Mike Laughlin; (back row, standing, left to right) Rick Herron, Gordon Jones, Alan Nichols, David Schickedantz, Alvin Tans, Micky Southerland, and Calvin Dean. — 2013



(left to right) Larry Bassett, David Schickedantz, and Alvin Tans. — 1992

who was headed down to the coast at 3am to catch a 7am ferry with us, and a bunch of deer ran across the highway in front of him. He was able to slow down to avoid them, but then they turned around suddenly and came back across the road in front of him tearing up his rack and truck. Alvin's handle was "Hot Tuna," but to this day, no one can recall how he got that name, not even some of his family who I got the privilege to fish with a couple of times over the years.

Alvin was a true leader that knew how to get things done in both his personal and professional life. He had a way of pulling things together and was really great at organizing things. He was instrumental in organizing our trips, making sure that the proper amount of food and supplies were available, reserving the cabin, and making ferry reservations for the group. When he joined the DIFF board, he went "all-in," and became President. He must have made quite the impression on the folks in our group after he served as President. Jack Davis, Gordon Jones, and Larry Bassett were all board members.

He also did a lot of mission work for his church and other organizations throughout the years. Al was recently very engaged and passionate about being a member of the SC Kershaw County Baptist Disaster Relief group. He lead this group to travel to areas hit hard by natural disasters such as the recent flooding in Vermont, and Kentucky, and helped with relief after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. Their work involved making homes livable again as well as bringing encouragement and spiritual help to the victims.

One thing that I always remembered about Alvin was that he would rather teach someone to fish, and put them on the fish, than to catch fish himself.

Alvin will be greatly missed. After losing Jack in 2013, Larry in 2019, Gordy in 2020, and now Alvin in 2023, it has become the end of an era of fishing with a lot of wonderful friends. I know that most of you have had similar relationships with a lot of the people that you've fished with over the years and lost some good friends as well. Here's hoping that you can celebrate their lives, as I've been able to celebrate the lives of my friends that have passed.

I joined the DIFF Club Board of Directors in 2018 when Larry invited me to one of their meetings. Through the DIFF Club, I've met a lot of new people that fish on Davis, and it has proven to be a great outlet for me to keep fishing and remembering the great times that I've had on the island with my friends.

David Schickedantz



(front row, left to right) Alvin Tans, Sam Williams, Keith Mansfield; (back row, left to right) Jack Davis, Larry Bassett, David Schickedantz, Mark Smith, and Gordon Jones. — 1992



(left to right) Gordon Jones, Jack Davis, and Alvin Tans. - the day after Hurricane Gordon. We were evacuated off the island leaving everything but a bag of clothes for the night.— 1994



(left to right) Alvin Tans, Scott Mosley, Gordon Jones, Lou Provenzano, and David Schickedantz— 2020

#### CALL FOR 2024 DAVIS ISLAND FISHING FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

The Davis Island Fishing Foundation (DIFF) offers seven scholarship opportunities established to honor some of its founding members. They are awarded annually. This is the call for applications for the 2024 awards. The DIFF Board of Directors allocates \$2,500 annually from the fishing tournament proceeds to fund five \$500 scholarships. The Jones family established a scholarship to honor the late Gordon Jones. Friends and family of Clyde Cheek have do-

nated the funding for a scholarship to honor Clyde. The deadline for submitting applications is **April 15, 2024**.

Applications can be found online at <a href="www.diffclub.org">www.diffclub.org</a> or can be requested from Rich Lambert (<a href="reglamber@uncc.edu">rglamber@uncc.edu</a>). Applications can be submitted electronically to the same email address, or mailed to: Rich Lambert, DIFF Scholarship Chairperson, 124 E. Lockman St., Fort Mill, SC 29715.

THE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE ARE BELOW. THE APPLICATION MATERIALS CAN BE FOUND ON THE DIFF CLUB WEBSITE, www.diffclub.org.

#### **BK BARRINGER STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP**

This scholarship is available to high school seniors graduating in 2024 and planning to attend a four year university. The applicant must be a current DIFF member or a relative of a current DIFF member.

#### **JACK DUNAWAY CONTINUING SCHOLARSHIP**

This scholarship is available to an enrolled university student who has completed a minimum of 12 credit hours and has a minimum grade point average of 3.0. The applicant must be a current DIFF member or relative of a current DIFF member.

#### **DON EURY COLLEGE STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP**

This scholarship is available to a sophomore, junior, senior or graduate student in a four year university. The student must be enrolled in marine or wildlife biology or a curriculum that stresses environmental conservation. The applicant does not have to be a current DIFF member or a relative of a current DIFF member however; current DIFF members or relatives of current DIFF members are preferred.

#### **GLEN GREEN GRADUATE STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP**

This scholarship is available to a current graduate student or one enrolled for graduate level work. Applicants must be a current DIFF member or a relative of a current DIFF member.

#### MARK WEIR STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP

This scholarship is available to individuals planning to attend a two year community college. It is open to traditional students (high school seniors) and non-traditional students (individuals seeking a career change through additional training and degrees). Applicants must be a current DIFF member or a relative of a current DIFF member.

#### **GORDON JONES SCHOLARSHIP**

This scholarship which is funded by the Jones family, is available to UNC-Charlotte undergraduate or graduate students majoring in finance and related areas. The applicant <u>does not</u> have to be a DIFF member or a relative of a current DIFF member.

#### **CLYDE CHEEK SCHOLARSHIP**

This scholarship is funded by friends and family of Clyde Cheek and is available to undergraduate Naval ROTC students. The applicant does not have to be a DIFF member or a relative of a current DIFF member.

A five person committee of DIFF members reviews the applications and selects the scholarship recipients. Awards are \$500 for each scholarship and the check is made out to both the recipient and his or her college or university.



## **SOUTH CORE WORK TRIP**

Roy Byrd

#### 2024 DIFF/CBSFC WORK TRIP ANNOUNCEMENT

The 2024 DIFF/CBSFC work trip has been scheduled for May 8-12, Wednesday through Sunday—Wednesday and Sunday are travel days. Cabin reservations will be made for 3 cabins. Last year we had cabins 16, 17, and 19. We installed siding on cabins 17 and 19 during the 2023 work trip.

For '24, projects will most likely be siding installation, painting, (cabins 17 and 19), cabin repairs and other projects that the park

service may need us to do.

Meals, refreshments, and lodging will be provided for volunteers. Volunteers will be responsible for transportation and ferry service to and from the island.

Please let me know if you can attend by emailing me at <a href="Roy.byrd@mindspring.com">Roy.byrd@mindspring.com</a> or by phone at (919) 270-4170. I will add your name to the list that I'm keeping for planning and cabin assignments.

### UPDATE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT, CAPE LOOKOUT NATIONAL SEASHORE



Superintendent, Jeff West, with James E. Melonas, Forest Supervisor in NC

The contract for the North Core Cabins had successful bids and is being evaluated by contracting for award - expected to happen in the next two weeks. The contract for the Cape Lookout Lighthouse repairs has been advertised - it closes on October 24, and contracting will evaluate for award. The Army Corps of Engineers contract for dredging Barden's Inlet and the beach nourishment in front of the lighthouse closes on October 31, and we expect that award by the end of November.

Thanks, Jeff

Jeff West Superintendent Cape Lookout National Seashore





## **NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**

Ann Beeson

The DIFF Club would like to recognize our new members for 2024. Please welcome the following new members and those that have upgraded to lifetime members to the club.

#### **NEW MEMBERS:**

Mark Hansen	New Bern, NC
Steve Hansen	New Bern, NC
Jonathan Herman	Madison Heights, VA
Hardin Jarrett	Raleigh, NC
Kimberly Jarrett	Raleigh, NC
Nathaniel Jarrett	Raleigh, NC
Jennifer Last	Graham, NC
Cathy Mann	Davis, NC
Trinity Pledger	
Matthew Schock	
Mark Smith	
Matt White	



## **DIFF DONATIONS**

Ann Beeson

The DIFF Club would like to sincerely thank our membership for their continued support through your donations to the club. These donations carry an added benefit for the club to go towards Scholarships, Work Trips, and Community relief. The following is a list of donors who have made those contributions this quarter.

#### **DONATIONS-GENERAL**

#### **Given By**

Matt White

**Hege Construction** 

**Jody Pierce** 



(tournament winner photography by Darrell McCormick)

#### DIFF FALL SURF FISHING TOURNAMENT

t was another great year for the turnout of the tournament. There were 215 total registrants with a record number of kids this year — 24 registered and 19 on hand. Lets keep those kids coming to make long-lasting memories, because ultimately they are the future of our club.

Obviously, we had a front that showed up with rain to greet us for the kickoff on Thursday, and then rain on Saturday for the weigh-in. Fishing was a little slow to start, but picked up on Friday, and it was a very productive day with a lot of Blues caught on the entire island. The Sea Mullet fishing was decent this year as well. I would like to congratulate **Kevin Davis** for his **4th time winning** the DIFF annual fishing tournament for the largest Big Drum category at 73.13 inches.



I would also like to thank all of our sponsors this year. If you get a chance and are at any place of business that sponsored the tournament, please take a moment to thank them for their continued support.

Tournament preparation starts in November and is talked about until everything is finalized on Wednesday before the tournament kickoff. I would like to thank the Board of Directors and the volunteers for their commitment to help put all this together. Without this assistance it would not be what it has grown to be over the years. Make sure you go ahead and request time off for next year, October 10th-12th, 2024. Until then I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season. Please remember drop dead registration for the 2024 tournament is July 31, 2024. Go ahead and get signed up early. Invite a friend this year and bring the kids.

Kind Regards, Brian Trotter



Kevin Davis (1st-73.125"); David Vestal (2nd-72.875"); (not pictured) Johnny Ray (3rd-70.000"); Jody Pierce (4th-69.500"); Tommy Parker (5th-69.250"); Bubba Johnston (6th-68.500"); Jeff Moncus (7th tie-67.500"); Eric Freeman (7th tie-67.500")



Carol Barefoot (1st-5.50#); John Reams (2nd-5.35#); Scotty Gordon (3rd-5.12#); Randall Parham (4th-5.05#); Sandra Reams (5th-5.02#); Lynn Kane (6th-4.89#); Andrew Riggleman (7th-4.79#); Dalton Vestal (not pictured) (8th-4.70#)



John Reams (1st-2.20#); Carter Willis (2nd-1.80#); Mike Manies (3rd-1.70#)



(1st-1.40#); Dylan Pledger (2nd 1.35#); Andrew Riggleman (3rd 1.20#); Mike Manies (4th tie-1.16#); Wesley Hart (4th tie-1.16#); Chris Allen (6th 1.11#); Trinity Pledger (7th 1.05#); Hayden Manies (8th 1.04#)



Randall Parham (1st-5.28#); John Reams (2nd-5.06#); Hunter Nichols (3rd-4.96#); Scott McCormick (4th-4.82#); Doug Ahrenberg (5th-4.76#); Bubba Johnston (6th-4.70#); Travis Johnston (7th 4.60#); Scotty Gordon (8th 4.58#)

#### **WILD CARD**



**Dylan Pledger (1st-2.15# Grey Trout)**; Dalton Curtsinger (2nd-2.00# Grey Trout); Tim Pierce (3rd-1.84# Grey Trout); Carter Willis (4th-1.63# Grey Trout); Les Wilson (5th-1.52# Frog Fish); John Reams (6th-1.45# Lizzardfish); Jeffrey Willis (7th-1.17# Grey Trout); Scotty Gordon (8th 1.06# Pompano)

### **SPANISH MACKEREL**

Photo Not Available
Matt Hassell (1st-3.22#); Lance Brown (2nd-1.90#)

#### **MOST SPOTS ON PUPPY DRUM**

This year Jim and Angie Weston brought back to the tournament the puppy drum with the most spots contest. There were 115 participants.

<u>1st place</u>- \$280.00 - Perry Shelton-12 spots <u>2nd place</u>- \$175.00- Dalton Curtsinger-10 spots <u>3rd place</u>- \$125.00- Steve Wells- 9 spots

> \$1160.00 total in pot \$10.00 additional donation from Jeffrey Willis \$580.00 to DIFF

#### YOUTH WILDCARD



There were \$2,720 in donations. Every Youth participant received a cash award including rod holders donated by Scot King.

Youth Category placings are: 1-Hunter Nichols 4.96# Blue 2-Emma Durham 4.10# Blue 3-Griffin Johnson 4.0# Blue 4-Emma Trotter 3.8# Blue 5-Wyatt Wisnant 3.5# Blue 6-Ren Barefoot 3.46# Blue 7-Lexi Kutshenko 2.82# Blue 8-Carter Willis 2.6# Blue 9-Dylan Pledger 2.15# Grey Trout 10-Olin Johnsom 2.0# Blue 11-Trinity Pledger 1.05# Whiting 12-Hayden Manies 1.04# Whiting 13-Grayson Newcomb .96# Whiting 14-Hunter Addington .93# Whiting 15-Bodie Harper .74# Whiting 16-Tucker Haynes .60# Whiting 17-Brian Trotter n/a

# FALL FISHING TOURNAMENT Brian Trotter













Darrell McCormick, DIFF Board Member





























# STORIES FROM THE CAPE Photos & Story by Mark Weir

Diff Membership, the following story is the fourth installment from former DIFF Club President, Mark Weir. It is his account of his years spending time on Davis Island with his family. It will be presented in multiple installments from the 1930s through the '80s.

Mark and his family have been enjoying fishing on Davis for many years. If anyone wants to submit their experiences on the island, please send images and copy to diffeditor@gmail.com.

#### Chapter 4 - My Dad's Early Fishing

My dad was a rather ordinary man, except for one thing. He loved to fish on Davis Island.

He began fishing for Big Drum at the original Drum Inlet. He classified Drum into three categories – Puppy Drum, Yearlings, and Big Drum. I heard him talk about his biggest Drum caught in the early 1950s. There must have been some kind of blitz at Drum Inlet that Saturday night. Dad knew that he had



Dallas Weir with his pride and joy -Drum and his son Mark (1946)

a big one, so he let it fight itself out. He finally got it on the beach and pulled it above the high tide line. About that time his brother-in-law, Owen Wood, yelled that he had a big one. He brought it in quickly only to see it escape in the suds. Everybody in the group saw it and they swore it was bigger than my Dad's Drum.

They got my Dad's Drum into the Model A and carefully drove back to camp. Sunday morning, they loaded it onto the ferryboat

Dallas with two big ones, but not "THE" Big One

deck. He got some ice on it in Davis and drove back to Winston-Salem. Finally, on Monday morning he got it on reliable scales. It weighed sixty pounds! I always wondered what it weighed when it came out of the water.

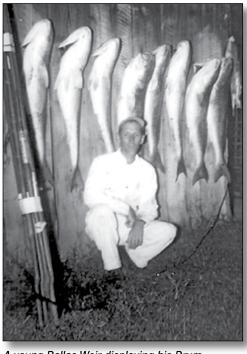
I recall seeing their Drum equipment.
The rods were homemade from local bamboo.
Several old stiff twelve-foot rods were stored in the cabin rafters. The

rods had a few small eyes lashed on with twine and heavy varnish. His reel was a big Ocean City level-wind bait-caster loaded with 35-pound nylon braided line. It was mounted

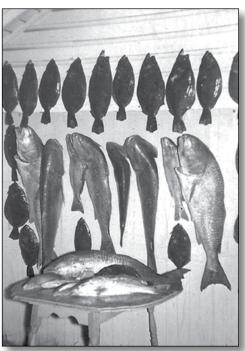
on the rod by two automotive heater hose clamps. They used crocheted thumb guards when casting. I never saw their terminal tackle, because he had quit fishing for Big Drum by the time I became a regular in his group.

My dad loved gigging Flounder in the bay. He brought them home in a small trailer made of oak boards and covered with a canvas tarp. The trailer was full of Drum and Flounder chilled with shaved ice from a fish house.

I recall the Sunday night he came home towing that little trailer iced down with a load of fish. He nailed the fish to his garage to take a snap shot before beginning the job of cleaning them under the lights.



A young Dallas Weir displaying his Drum



Fish nailed on his garage at home



# 2024 DIFF Membership & Tournament Registration Form Mail to: DIFF Club, P.O. Box 777, Walkertown, NC 27051-0777



DIFF website: https://diffclub.org/membership-dues/fall-fishing-tournament/ Scan QR Code to register online.

IP:
Member\$100.00
Renew/New Member \$25.00
Renew/New Member\$25.00
ne Member\$250.00
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oe under age 16 by 10-09-2024 <u>ived</u> when accompanied by a paid
tournament.
iles and will comply
mail and physical address. <u>Please</u>
нан ани рнуэвсаг айигсээ. <u>гіваэв</u>

*Tournament Entry Fees and Donations to DIFF provide at least:* **\$2,500.00 in DIFF Scholarships + \$1,000.00 in DIFF Grants** 

CASTING TAILS

Davis Island Fishing Foundation P.O. Box 777 Walkertown, NC 27051-0777



## **PARK WATCH**

You can be an extra set of eyes and ears in the park to help the park rangers keep everyone safe.

To report a problem, violation, or flagrant misuse or activity that you have seen,
 call 911 and they will contact the Park Service directly.

You have the ability to keep this fantastic natural resource from abuse.



#### Ufficers:

Lance Brown — President	.336.558.7942
Geneive Jones — Vice President	.434.222.6658
Roy Byrd — Secretary	.919.270.4170
Ann Beeson — Treasurer(Before 9PM)	336.399.6087

#### **Board of Directors:**

Tyler Buchanan	704.718.5531
Paul Duguay	910.880.0580
Steven Evans	252.423.0313
Darrell McCormick	336.655.4311
Ted Moseley	252.202.4673
David Schickedantz	336.312.7963
Brian Trotter	336.302.4820

Email Board of Directors: diffclub@outlook.com
Email Casting Tails Editor: diffeditor@gmail.com

Core Banks Surf Fishing Club (CBSFC) website: https://sites.google.com/view/core-banks-surf-fishing-club/

**DIFF... Beyond Fishing!** 

The Davis Island Fishing Foundation (DIFF) is a non-profit club for people that enjoy recreational Surf Fishing and associated fellowship and social activities on South Core Banks of Cape Lookout National Seashore, affectionately known as Davis Island.

#### **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The purpose, objectives and efforts of **DIFF** are to benefit the **DIFF** membership and other visitors of Davis Island.

- **DIFF** actively supports and demonstrates responsible use of Off-Road Vehicles (ORV) for beach access to engage in surf fishing and other suitable activities.
- **DIFF** promotes a code of ethics for responsible behavior on the island.
- **DIFF** educates visitors on the rich heritage of surf fishing and current fishing conservation practices.
- DIFF provides physical and fiscal resources to assist the Park Service in maintaining cabins and other facilities.
- **DIFF** hosts fishing tournaments for its members enjoyment, while raising money for scholarships and grants.
- **DIFF** supports the conservation of Davis Island's culture, history, heritage and appropriate protection of its fish and wildlife.
- **DIFF** collaborates with the park management, concessionaires and other supportive organizations to benefit the **DIFF** membership.
- **DIFF** maintains awareness of activities that could affect Davis Island in a positive or negative way and responds appropriately to support the **DIFF** purpose.
- **DIFF** provides effective communications to its members by website, email, Facebook, newsletter, and periodic meetings.