

Nancy Solomon: This is Nancy Solomon of Long Island Traditions. I am interviewing Joe Scavone of Freeport, a local fisherman and bayman. Today is September 27th, 2011. So, Joe, can you tell me a little bit about yourself, where you grew up, what your parents did, and how you came to be a fisherman?

Joe Scavone: I grew up right here in Freeport. My father always loved fishing. So, I used to go out with my father when I was a little kid. It would be dark out and he would wake me up. On the weekends mostly because he worked in construction. On the weekends, we fished every single weekend. That's how it all got started.

NS: Can you tell me where you went fishing? What kind of boat he had, what kind of things you caught, some of your earliest memories?

JS: Some of the earliest memories were striped bass. He always kept really nice care of his boats. He had wooden boats that always were beautiful. He did a lot of work to them. I remember catching big striped bass. If it was in the ocean, it was on these long, red rubber tubes. If it was in the bay, it was on big clams under the bridge. I remember some of the fish were so big and I was so little that they would swim under the boat and I couldn't even reel them in. My arms felt like they were falling off. I couldn't even pull them up. That was usually a few days before Fourth of July. We used to go to the bridge every morning. We would catch bluefish too and some weakfish. Back then, when I was a little kid, we used to catch these fish that I only see once in a while anymore. They come out of the freshwater rivers into the saltwater. They're like white perch. They're really, really pretty fish.

NS: What would you do with the fish?

JS: Oh, we would take them home. At first, we would line them up on the dock, take pictures of them, and clean them, give them away to the neighbors. We would be eating fish for weeks. Whether it was flounders or fluke or striped bass or blackfish or bluefish, it was all good.

NS: What were some of your favorite family recipes?

JS: My mom used to cut up a lot of vegetables and tomatoes and cook the fish in a soup. That was always really good. If it wasn't that, then it was breaded and broiled, mostly like that. Flounders were always breaded and fried. But blackfish and striped bass, mostly broiled. Then when it became a little cooler, that is when we used to make the soups with it. My grandmother used to take bluefish meat and used to make meatballs with it. Fifty percent chopped meat and fifty percent bluefish meat. She used to make meatballs out of it and put it in the sauce. That was pretty good. [laughter]

NS: What were your parents' names and your grandmother's name?

JS: My father's name was Joe. My mother's name was Loretta. My grandmother's name to this day, I'm still not really sure. Everybody called her Josephine, but she always lied about her age and her name. So, I don't really know what her name was.

NS: [laughter]

JS: I don't even know when her birthday was. [laughter] But she could cook, that's for sure.

NS: So, what were some of your tasks as a young boy growing up going fishing?

JS: Scooping the chum over the side. If we were anchored up or tied to the bridge, I would have to dump the chum over. Every day after school, I would have to come home and pump out the boat because they were wooden boats so they leaked. My dad would be at work. So, first thing I did after school was go on the boat and check it and make sure it didn't need to be pumped out. There weren't really a whole lot of chores being that little.

NS: As you got older, did you have more responsibilities in terms of the fishing and the boats?

JS: I guess so. When I became a teenager, I had more responsibilities. Making sure the batteries were always up and making sure things worked. The first thing is making sure all the equipment was good, because life jackets get old after a while, boats sink. So, you want to keep up on that stuff. It's not like getting a flat tire in your car and walking away. You want to make sure everything works right. I was always big on that.

NS: So, what were some of the things that you had to learn in order to take care of the boat?

JS: When the boat was out of the water, a lot of sanding, stripping up, digging out the caulking, putting in new caulking, painting it. Whether it was paint or varnish or scrubbing the teak with Coca-Cola. The acid in the Coca-Cola was good to clean the wood with. There was a lot of work when it comes to wood boats. A lot of work. Then as the years went on, fiberglass boats came around. You compound them and you wax them, just paint the bottom. The upkeep wasn't like a wooden boat. Wooden boats are a lot of work.

NS: Who taught you?

JS: My father taught me, mostly. It was always with my father. Mainly, it was my father.

NS: Can you describe what kind of boat he had?

JS: Actually, he had a lot of boats. One was a race boat. It came in second place around Long Island in a race they called the marathon. The boat that came in first place that beat him, was a fiberglass boat when they first came out with Donzis. Then he went on to bigger boats as I got a little older. The biggest boat was thirty-six feet. It was a double-planked boat built in Massachusetts. It was called an Out of Gloucester. Boy, what a beautiful boat that was. That was really some boat. If my parents let me, I wouldn't even come in the house, I'd sleep on the boat. Because I never wanted to go. I just wanted to stay on the boat all the time. [laughter] That's all that I did. After school, I'd be on the back of the boat snapper fishing. On the weekends, we'd go out fishing.

NS: Where did you actually go fishing?

JS: We used to go fishing right down off of Freeport right here. Swift Creek, Fundy Creek Bridge, Long Creek. We used to catch so many flounder and eels.

NS: How would you catch the eels?

JS: With little flounder hooks and blood worms or clams. While you were fishing for flounder, the eels would just bite the hook. Sometimes at night, right in my own backyard, I had one of those wooden fishing poles. I forget what they call them. Bamboo fishing pole. I used to just put a piece of bait on the hook and jam the pole in the fence and just leave it and the next morning go check it. So, many times in the morning there would be a big eel on that hook. [laughter] My uncle loved eels. So, I called up my uncle and told him I had an eel. I had to cut the line. The eel swallowed the hook in. After he cleaned it and ate it, he mailed me back a letter with the hook in it telling me how good the eel was. [laughter]

NS: [laughter]

JS: Send me back my hook. [laughter]

NS: Did your family live on the water?

JS: Yes. We lived right on the water, a little canal in the backyard. So, the boat was right behind the house. In September, you could catch flounders and flukes right in the backyard, eels. Certain times of the year, fish would come in the canal. You could always catch killies and snappers. Caught a lot right in the backyard. [laughter]

NS: Can you tell me how you caught the killies?

JS: The killies, we would catch in traps. Put some bread in the trap and they would just swim into the trap. We'd catch enough to go out fishing with them. We used them for bait to catch fluke. Occasionally, a striped bass would take the killie. You would catch a striped bass on a killie. It's really amazing how many different things would eat a killie. I never saw people eat them, but a lot of fish will eat them.

NS: You mentioned you used traps to catch killies. Can you tell me about the traps that you used?

JS: It was just a round, cylinder-shaped wire trap that was two halves that you could buy in any local bait store. It had a hole on each end. The holes were small so that the killies wouldn't go back out. Sometimes, you'd catch small eels in the same killie trap, which was also good bait for striped bass. If you put the trap all the way down to the bottom, you would even catch little baby blackfish in it. But most of the time, we kept the trap off the bottom so we'd catch the killies. They were up higher.

NS: How would you keep the killies alive, the ones that you caught, for when you would go fishing?

JS: We'd just put them in a bucket with salt water and bring them out on the boat with us. We had these other plastic containers with holes in them that you could tie a line to and throw the container in the water and they would have constant circulating water. So, you'd use them with little spring-operated doors. You could reach your hand in and grab one and put it on the hook and then put it back overboard and let it just float around the water. They're pretty hardy. You don't even need water. You could put them on ice and they would stay alive. They'd just flop around all day long on ice.

NS: So, as a teenager, did any of your friends' fish and did you go fishing with them?

JS: Some of my friends fished. Not many. It's funny. A lot of kids in the neighborhood when we first got our first rowboat, we used to go around the canals crabbing and catching blue claw crabs and spend the afternoon eating them. It's funny, but most of my friends really weren't into going out on the water and catching fish and stuff. You either liked it or you didn't. Then as you get a little older, when you see that you can get money for crabs and fish and clams, that made you more ambitious. Because it was a lot more money than a paper route. That's what starts it. You go fishing for fun for a bunch of years and then all of a sudden you learn that you can make money doing that. That's how all commercial fishermen get started. You start seeing money and then you say, "What am I going to go catch tomorrow?" The night isn't fast enough, you can't wait to get up in the morning and figure out what you're going to do.

NS: So, what is your first memory of catching fish and selling it? [laughter]

JS: My first memory of catching a lot of fish was on a gillnet boat, which is a boat that handles a lot of net. The toughest part was unloading the boat at the end of the day at the fish dock. That was the hardest part, was unloading. That was back-breaking work maybe because some of us started too young. I remember one time reaching down to lift a basket and my back locked. I was bent over. I was in a L-shape. My back just locked. I couldn't stand up, probably for about a half hour. I was just locked in a position. It was so weird. It could be pretty tough work.

NS: Whose boat did you work on?

JS: I worked on a guy named Al on his boat. The boat was named after his wife Johanna. He's the one who got me started with gillnetting. He used to let me and his son take out his boat. So, we were both like the captains. We were little kids taking out this big commercial fishing boat and we just felt like we were on top of the world.

NS: Where would you go? How old were you? What year are we talking about? [laughter]

JS: When the guy started letting us take out that boat, I was about fifteen. My buddy was about thirteen. But we always had to be together. He wouldn't let us take the boat unless there was two of us. We used to go out off of Long Beach or Jones Beach. Sometimes on the way out, we would drag a net right through the bay and catch a bunch of flounders first. One time it was so full, we had to tow the net back to the dock. We had a Freeport police officer help us lift it. We couldn't lift it up. It was so filled. Then we went back out in the ocean fishing.

NS: What year was this?

JS: This would be about 1976, 1977. Maybe 1975. I started gillnetting in 1975 because it was before the bicentennial. I remember that.

NS: How did you decide that you wanted to be a commercial fisherman?

JS: I didn't really decide. It's just something you started doing and kept doing. There was no decision in it. One of the deciding things was that I couldn't seem to do good in school, so I knew I wasn't getting a good job. Between clamming and fishing, I just kept doing it.

NS: What were some of the hardest things that you had to learn to be a good fisherman, especially the gillnet fishing?

JS: Not to be a hero and go out in bad weather. It was always better to be safe than sorry. As you grew up, you learned where to fish and when not to fish for certain reasons.

NS: What were some of those situations?

JS: It could be like when there were too many spider crabs around or too many dogfish around or just too much seaweed. Or sometimes in the middle of the summer, you'd go through a two-week low with no fish at all. It took a few years to learn when not to fish. Dogfish season always started in the beginning of hunting season. So, you knew when hunting season was coming, it was time to lay off fishing for a month because it was nothing but dogfish. You could sell some of them, but nobody really wanted them much. There was plenty of other fish around.

NS: So, what are some of the things that you fish for now? How has it changed in terms of the amounts that you used to catch and what it is like now?

JS: We're limited now with the amounts by the state of New York. By any state up and down the coast, everybody is limited on what you're allowed to have. If it's an open season, closed season, what month it is, how many you can have for that month. Sometimes it could be a hundred pounds, sometimes it could be a thousand pounds.

NS: So, for flounder, when you first started, what was it like and how is it now?

JS: There definitely used to be a lot more flounder. I'm not really sure the reason why there's less now. But I do believe it's because of the water being warmer than it used to be. That's what I really believe. I believe that a lot of our fish go further north instead of hanging around here. I think our water is just warming up. It seems like the water used to be a lot colder. Then there's other things. There are other variables like cycles of fish. Fish go on a thirty-year cycle, it seems like. I'm not old enough to see the second cycle yet, but I saw one of them where we used to catch a lot of blues, then we went through a period where there weren't any. Then I saw where you'd catch a lot again. Now I think we're on our way back up the upside when it comes to blues, weakfish, striped bass, fluke, and even flounders. There's a lot of flounder in the bay that

people don't even know about because for the last ten years nobody's been fishing for them. But if you go out there now in some of your old spots, you can catch them. The best thing about it is, nobody really knows.

NS: What were the favorite fishing spots when you were younger? What are your favorite fishing spots now?

JS: Oh, I can't give up my favorite fishing spots. [laughter]

NS: This is not going to other fishermen. [laughter]

JS: Over by the bridges are good. Some pilings, you'll catch sea bass. Some you'll catch blackfish, some you'll catch flounder. It depends on the tide, tide's going out, tide's coming in. It's funny, you could be right here, drop a hook straight down and catch a fish and you move over five feet, drop a hook straight down and not catch anything. You have to be right on the spot. Then the fish always seem to be in those spots. You can go to places year after year where you never caught a fish and you never will. You can go to places where you always catch fish and you always will.

NS: So, what are some of the historic fishing places where you used your gillnet rather than your hook?

JS: I like to fish off of Long Beach, Lido Beach, Jones Beach. Really, I don't go too far out. Stay within a mile of the beach. When I was younger, my favorite spot was Long Beach because they used to have rock and roll concerts. So, I could listen to a concert while I was fishing. [laughter] Nowadays, my worst spot is Jones Beach when the air show comes because it's too noisy with all those jets. [laughter]

NS: [laughter]

JS: But that only lasted a few days, then it's back to Jones Beach.

NS: [laughter] For people who do not know, can you describe the different seasons for fishing? What you catch at what time of year?

JS: When it comes to gillnetting, towards the end of March you start catching bunker. The next thing you know, it's what I call mixed bag season. It's the beginning of April, you start to catch a couple of blues. You start to catch a couple of weeks. You start to catch a few blackfish. You start to catch a little bit of everything all the way up until – it's hard to say. When the summer's getting warmer, it lasts a little longer. Until the end of May into beginning of June. But by that time, it's mainly blues and still bunker. But the blackfish only lasts a couple of weeks in the early part of the year. Even the weakfish move on. So, up until third week in May is usually good for striped bass, blues, bunker, herring, and maybe even a few butterfish. Then as most of those fish pass by, then those summer dogfish move in. Start catching those for a while. They are usually gone by the end of July. This particular year, right now they just finally left us about two weeks ago, where I only catch a couple a day now. So, it was a long summer picking

dogfish. Nowadays though, it's like on the food chain, people like it. So, you could sell it more than you could thirty years ago. Then as the summer rolls on, by middle of August, towards the end of August, you might get a couple of Spanish mackerel. Usually, once the water changes enough where the dogfish go away and you start to catch a couple of Spanish mackerel, you also catch some bluefish and some butterfish, or some weakfish, herring, a couple of bunkers, not a lot. Then as the season starts to cool down, September and October, then you start catching more blues. Now, all of a sudden, the fish are heading back south again, so you start catching more blues, more weakfish, more butterfish. Once it cools off a little bit more, you start catching striped bass and more bunker. That usually is good unless a big school of blues comes by, then they chase all the striped bass away. They chase away everything. But then as it cools down pretty good, it's mainly just striped bass. Then after the striped bass, it's spiny dogfish. Then sometimes right after that, it's codfish.

NS: So, we were talking about the seasons of fishing. We stopped when you were talking about going for, I believe it was striped bass and blackfish in the colder months. So, can you continue to tell us how the year looks or what you are catching and how you are catching it?

JS: Twenty, thirty years ago after the striped bass passed by, then it would go to whiting and herring. Nowadays, you don't see that. You don't. You see the herring, but you don't see the whiting. The whiting doesn't come in shore like they used to. They stay out in the deep water for some reason. I don't know why. Lately, there haven't been any oil spills in the harbor. But when the oil spills come, fish just swim away. They don't want to breathe oil. Definitely, it's they want to breathe clean water, so they won't come near here when that happens. After the striped bass leave, you'll get the spiny dogs. Like I said, years ago it used to be herring and whiting.

NS: How would you catch the herring and the whiting? Also, on a gillnet?

JS: Also, on a gillnet. Taking out the herring are pretty easy. They don't have teeth and they're pretty easy to handle. Not like handing up bluefish with big teeth. [laughter]

NS: [laughter]

JS: Herring, it's no spines on them, just sticky-like splinters. Striped bass have those spines. You really have to watch it. You have to be very careful with striped bass. They could hurt you. Same thing with porgies, a lot of spines on them. But after the whiting, then it's codfish for the rest of the winter. With codfish, we used to gillnet them. But then we went to where we used to run lines with hooks and put clams on the hooks. So, we used to wait until a little bit after Christmas when those spiny dogs would finally leave and the water got cold enough. So, the dogfish would leave because they would eat up all our bait. We would fish from, say, the turn of the year up until about the second, sometimes the third week in March. We'd just stay with codfish.

NS: Can you describe these lines and the process of baiting them? Where would you get the bait? [laughter]

JS: The lines were like what we call the main line. It was probably like eighth-inched, twisted line. Every seven or eight feet, we would have a leader coming off of that main line, going through a cork. Then another six or eight inches of line going to a hook. We used to put clams on all the hooks. The cork would be eighteen inches, twenty inches of line from the main line. So, the cork would float up and keep the clam off the bottom so the crabs didn't eat it. There was a certain time of year when you had to have cork gear. Then there were times when you could use what we call flat gear. That was no corks, just lines with leaders and hooks. Into the middle of March, we could start using flat gear because the crabs would move away. But when the crabs were around, you had to use cork gear.

NS: How many hooks did you have on a line and how long were the lines?

JS: I don't know exactly how long they were. But we used to have about three hundred to three-hundred-fifty hooks on a line. On a good day, two guys could bait three or four lines. That would mean going down to the clam boats and buying skimmer clams. Maybe six or eight bushels, sometimes ten, twelve bushels. Shucking the clams open and cutting the clam into three pieces and throwing them into plastic tubs. We would shuck clams for about an hour. Let's say I would shuck and the other guy would cut them. Then once we got ahead a little bit, either me myself or my buddy would start baiting the lines. Which would mean all the lines were coiled in a tub. So, you would just start taking the line out until you got to a hook, put a clam on it, and then you'd have to coil the line. We used to have what we called two coilers. It would take two coils and then the hook would lay in the front of the box. It was like an open-end box. Then you'd do two more coils. Then the next hook with the cork would lay right next to the last hook with the cork. It all had to be laid out in order so when you set it out into the water, it would all peel off without getting tangled up or stuck. You just couldn't throw it in there. It had to really, really be laid out good so that it wouldn't get messed up. Sometimes in the winter it got so cold. So, we'd put wax paper on top of a row of corks and hooks. We used to use open-end boxes where we used to hold about twenty-one corks and hooks right across from one side to the other. Then we'd cover with wax paper and then put the next layer on top of that. So, in the winter when the clams would freeze, when you'd go to set it out, the clam on top wouldn't stick to the clam on the bottom. It would be about five rows back from forward to back. Then a layer of wax paper and then another. So, you'd have twenty or twenty-one corks and hooks going across side-to-side. Then five rows back. So, we would put about a hundred corks. I would say maybe we only went four rows back. It was a long time ago. But we would have probably seventy-five corks and hooks on one layer. So, we would wind up with five layers, which came out to about three-hundred-fifty hooks. Probably, if you figured that each hook was eight feet apart, then a three-hundred hook line would be 2,400 feet.

NS: A quarter mile.

JS: Three-hundred hook line would be a good half a mile. Sometimes in the ocean, while the one guy would be pulling the lines in and taking the fish off, I would be shucking more clams and rebaiting at least two lines so that we could set them back out. So, we always had gear in the water. Then we'd come in with our catch. Then in the winter year, it's very hard to get out more than two days a week because of the weather, cold, windy, big waves. That we would always have gear in the water, which was great. Because if you didn't bait anything when you're out

there, then when you came in you didn't have anything in the water. So, we always had hooks fishing.

NS: How would you set the lines and how long would they be sitting before you would pull them in?

JS: We would take a buoy and an anchor to the end of the line. The buoy line would be a hundred feet, 125 feet of buoy line going up. We would anchor them down and then run it out. Just put the boat in forward and just watch the hooks peel out. When you got to the opposite end, you would just quick tie an anchor on it and another buoy line would – there's sometimes one-fifty feet of line depending on how far off we were. We were about thirty miles sometimes. I remember days coming back when the wind started blowing out of the northwest and the water would spray up on the boat and just turn into ice. This one day, we had to come in early because the ice was four inches thick. You couldn't even see our boat. It was four inches thick. That day was so, so cold that as the codfish, as big as forty pounders, would come out of the water, by the time they came over the gunwale of the boat before they hit the deck, they were frozen. They would just freeze in a curve. So, we would just put them inside the cabin. We had a big blue tarp with us. We laid out this big blue tarp. We had a heater in the cabin and we never put fish in the cabin.

NS: [laughter]

JS: We came in with somewhere between five hundred and seven hundred pounds of cod that day. Because you couldn't have them freeze when you'd go to sell fish, the sign on the fish market says, "fresh fish." So, you can't have it freeze, unfreeze. Then, let's say that they decide to clean it and freeze it again. So, we would throw everything in the cabin. We had a kerosene heater, which used to fog up the windows especially with four inches of ice on the outside of the boat. The boat got so, so heavy that I'm just glad we made it home that day. It was so heavy with ice. We were so low in the water. Then since we got in early, we were in by 12:00 p.m., 1:00 p.m. We asked a friend of ours if we could bait hooks at his house. Because he had this long breezeway in the back of his house where it was warmer. It was a cement hallway where the wind couldn't get you. We're in there baiting hooks and about 4:30 p.m., right as it was starting to get dark, you could hear the wind from a half a mile straight up whistling. I remember looking at my buddy. I'll never forget it. It was either March 8th or March 10th, 1987. Either [19]87 or [19]88. No, [19]88. Definitely [19]88. The wind blew so hard. It must have been blowing seventy miles an hour. I said to my friend, "I'm really glad that we're in. Because anybody who's out now, is not going to make it in." The next day, we found out that a guy that we know, his boat went down. We don't call 911, but you call the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard sent out a helicopter and lowered a basket. These three or four guys made it home safely. But their boat went down. It was just so heavy with ice. That boat was about twenty miles south of Fire Island. My whole life, I'll never forget that day. How windy and how cold that was.

NS: How old were you when you first started going cod fishing?

JS: I don't exactly remember the age. But I remember we had a battery-operated TV and we had a stove. I was about sixteen or seventeen years old. We would take this boat way out. We

would leave at midnight and get there about 3:00 a.m. or 4:00 a.m., and who knows where we were going. We were so far out. After we put out our gear, we would catch on fishing poles about forty or fifty codfish by 8:30 a.m. Then the bite would slow down. They wouldn't be biting as much. We would be eating cereal and all kinds of breakfasts that little kids would eat, watching cartoons as we're catching codfish. So, not that little but fifteen or sixteen years old, we used to go way out there. We did it every winter. About 1989, stopped doing it for a while. Then back in 1993, went out one winter in a small eighteen-foot boat. Was catching them then, but not that far. Only five miles off the beach. Really haven't done much of it since. But I sure do have some corks. I have bags and bags of corks. Everybody I know who drinks wine, I ask them to save their corks for me. I have bags and bags of corks just waiting to make new lines.

NS: How come you stopped?

JS: We had a bunch of warm years where the codfish wouldn't come here anymore. But now in the last three years, it's starting to come back. So, they must have stayed more by Rhode Island and Massachusetts. They're actually spawned up in the Arctic Circle. When you see some of these TV shows, you see that thick ice, a couple of feet thick. All the baby little codfish are swimming under that layer of ice. They're all in that really, really ice-cold water. They won't come here unless it's cold. They like it cold. So, to me that always meant you were getting a good fresh fish. When you eat a codfish, you're eating something that's living in really cold water. It just seems to me like it's got to be good for you.

NS: Are there regulations that also affect the cod fishing?

JS: There's a size limit. The size limit is twenty-one inches. But anybody who would keep a codfish less than twenty-four or twenty-five inches, they should be put in prison. Because that's a small fish. If everybody would just throw back small fish, we wouldn't even have any of these laws. People just like to keep everything and then not even eat it. I've seen a guy catch a five-gallon pound full of bluefish and then throw it back in the water. Then a week later, I heard about it from other people saying they read about it in the newspaper. There happened to be a guy down by the dock that does these, I don't know what you call them, newspaper articles. He actually saw it happen. The guy said to his son, "Son, we could throw back all these bluefish now because they're all dead." They dumped a whole bucket of bluefish back in the water. I saw it happen. I didn't know that the other guy watching was from the newspapers. But he wrote an article about it and then I heard other people talking about it and I said, "I saw that happen."

NS: What do you do now in the wintertime? [laughter]

JS: I mainly go clamming in the wintertime. That's about really it, is just clamming. I might do a little cod fishing this winter. But my boat is a wide-open boat with no heat. If I figure out a way to put heat on it, then I think I might go cod fishing again this winter.

NS: Can you talk about how you go clamming? What kinds of tools you use and what kinds of clams you get? [laughter]

JS: We get chowders. Those are the really big clams. Cherrystone clams, those are the

mediums. Then it goes down to a smaller size, which is a top neck. Then it goes down to a very little one, that's a littleneck. But in the wintertime, it seems like the littlenecks disappear. They seem to go deep. So, you get mostly big clams in the winter. There's a couple of ways you could catch them. You could go on the sandbars or on mud bars with a handheld fork and just dig into the bottom of the fork when the tide goes out.

NS: What kind of clams would you be getting to do it that way?

JS: Those would be what they call hard clams. Chowders, littlenecks, cherry stones, it's all the same. It's just littleneck clam is a baby and the chowder clam is like a granddad. The cherrystone would be a teenager. [laughter]

NS: [laughter]

JS: As long as you can find where they live, you can dig them up.

NS: So, that is one way. What are some of the other ways?

JS: Then there's another way which is a little tougher, and that's pulling a rake. That's at the end of a long pole or a couple of poles joined together with clamps which telescopes longer or shorter. It depends on the depth of the water. A clam rake, it looks like a basket with an opening on one side. Then it's got teeth that dig into the bottom. You have the long-tooth rake, which is good for digging in mud. Then you have a short-tooth rake, which is good for digging in a hard bottom like sand. Some of the hard bottom rakes, the opening is a smaller opening because in the hard bottom there's also gravel and rocks and you don't want to catch certain stuff. Which also makes it harder for a chowder clam to go in. So, you got to really know where to use different hard bottom rakes. You got to have a variety of rakes when you go clamming because the bottom is all different. You got mud bottom, hard bottom, bottom with seaweed, rocky bottoms, very sticky bottom like clay. I could throw a rake down and close my eyes and actually tell you where I am just by the feel of it.

NS: Now, where do you go clamming?

JS: I go clamming anywhere from Freeport to south of Seaford. Which is a big area between Freeport and Seaford. So, it's plenty acres out there I can go clamming. So, the farthest I travel would be about seven miles from my dock, which is long enough.

NS: What kind of boat do you use when you go clamming?

JS: I go with a Garvey clam boat. It's like a wooden boat. Nowadays, they're prehistoric. Not too many people have Garveys. They invented Garveys after dugout canoes because it's not too much different. You put fiberglass on the outside of them, which helps them last a little longer. They're a good boat for our kind of bay with the wind chop. They're a tough boat. They're built with heavy wood. They're good to rake out of in the deep water.

NS: Who built your boat?

JS: A friend of mine. It was a homemade boat. A friend of mine built that boat. The one I'm using now was built in around 1979. Right now, as we speak, it's got two leaky bolts. It needs to come out of the water and I need to replace two bolts. Because it's got this very, very slow leak. I like a dry boat, so soon it's got to come out. It needs a little tender loving care.

NS: Do you remember the name of the person who built your boat?

JS: Yes. It was a friend of mine, John Zuck. I'm trying to think of his nickname, what we used to call him. Because everybody on the water has a nickname.

NS: What is your nickname?

JS: The guys around our bay just call me Sleek. Everybody called him Little John. That was his nickname. Everybody called him Little John. His nickname was Little John who was Robin Hood's right-hand man. So, that is who he was named after.

NS: Can you tell me about your gillnet boat?

JS: My gillnet boat, it's fiberglass. It's not wood. So, it's a lot less maintenance than a wood boat. But it also rides different down the ocean than a wood boat. The old-style, heavy wood boats are really comfortable to be on. Fiberglass boats are like picture yourself in a big eggshell out in the ocean. You are rocking and rolling. They're just not quite like a good old wood boat. But they are a lot less work. So, you could still buy wood boats, but they're a lot of work. Boatyard bills are very expensive nowadays.

NS: Can you tell me who built your boat and how big it is and some of the things that you like about it?

JS: The man who built my boat used to build wooden boats for fishing. Even as far back as the rumrunning days, the guy built boats for rumrunners with airplane motors in those boats. Actually, my boat is one of his first fiberglass boats. He used to build the boats for the Coast Guard. He used to build the boats for – they were called Freeporters, Nassau County Police Marine Bureau police department. He built those boats. As far as I know, the man is somewhere between eighty-four and eighty-eight years old. Right now, as we speak, he's restoring four sailboats right now. The man still goes to work from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. He's an unbelievable guy.

NS: What is his name? [laughter]

JS: His name would be Fred Scopinich. I don't know him all that well. I've only met him a few times. But I do hear stories about what he's doing. A good friend of mine named John Remsen, who builds a lot of Garvey clam boats and crabbing boats, is good friends with Fred. So, I do hear about the things that Fred still does to this day. I just hope I could do it when I'm his age.

NS: So, let us talk about the net. Where do you get your nets? What do you have to do to them

in order to go fishing?

JS: Mainly they come from Tennessee. I order different size mesh to catch different size fish.

NS: Can you describe that?

JS: It's a clear monofilament. The webbing is clear. Monofilament is the same line that would go on a fishing pole. But it's woven together by a machine. So, every mesh is identical, all the same size. I put the net together myself. I order the lead lines and the top line with the floats. Then just what you call hanging. We have to hang it. You stretch the top line, you stretch the bottom line together, and you start tying this monofilament webbing to these lines. You put a float about every four feet on the top. You put lead on the bottom line. Every eight or nine inches, I put a small piece of lead that makes it sink down to the bottom. Then the floats help keep the net up high. You have a tide running, so you need plenty of float to keep the net in an upright position. Otherwise, the tide will lay it down and then it wouldn't fish right. I normally put a small float every four feet. That seems to do the trick.

NS: What size mesh do you use to catch what type of fish?

JS: It's funny. Sometimes you could catch almost any kind of fish in any net. Because even little fish will get tangled up. Most of them will swim through. But occasionally, you'll get a small fish in a big mesh net where that fish should have swum right through. Let's say there's a hole in your net and you have pieces that are flopping around in the sea, that'll help snag a fish. Sometimes the older nets catch better than the new nets. But I usually use nets with four-inch openings and five- and six-inch openings. Basically, lets everything smaller right through it. Really never anything bigger than an eight inch because it takes a big fish. Eight inches would be good for codfish. But normally to catch blues and striped bass and weakfish, anywhere from four inch to six inch usually does the job. Is what we fish with.

NS: So, we were talking about clamming. Do you harvest soft clams?

JS: Not really. Some people do. Some people, their forte is soft clams. I'm mostly a hard clammer. I do soft clams if I just want to bring home some for dinner.

NS: When did you first start clamming?

JS: Clamming was at a very young age. My dad taught me about clamming, maybe five years old. Because I've been going on the boat with my parents since I was a month old. They had me on the boat right away. In the summers, we used to go to the beach. Like little kids with those little shovels and the plastic buckets, we used to dig down and get the soft clams. You'd get some hard clams with them too. So, I don't even know how old I was when I started with them. I didn't even know you can eat them. I was so little, I used to bring them home thinking they could be a pet until we learned about eating them. So, as little kids, we did that every summer, always digging them up. Then I finally got my first rowboat at about nine years old. Like any kid, parents say, "Don't go out of the canal. You can only go so far." We would go a lot farther than that. It's just like any kid. Your parents tell you, "You can't go to the candy store, it's too

far away," or "I don't want you going off this block." It was the same thing. You'd sneak off with your boat exploring. Everything with an adventure. Coming home with buckets of clams and your parents going, "Where'd you get that? Where did you get all those clams?" [laughter]

NS: [laughter] What did you do with all those clams?

JS: Give them away to the neighbors. Then you start coming home with them every day. Then your parents tell you, "We're running out of neighbors. There's really nobody else that we can give clams to. We've been giving them to everybody." That's when my dad actually took me down by Woodcleft and sold them for me. One day he goes, "We're out of neighbors. We filled everybody up. If you come home with more clams tomorrow, I'll take you down to Woodcleft after work and we'll sell them." Like any other kid, you get a few dollars in your pocket and next thing you know you got more money than any of your friends and now you want to go catch even more clams. Because the more you catch, the more you make. That's probably about how it really all started.

NS: Do you remember who your first customers were?

JS: Yes. My first customer was Muller's Fish Market, which is now an outside restaurant and clam bar. Actually, in the last three years, it's a new clam bar. I sell clams there. I never realized that. I never thought of that. I sell clams at the same place right now as I did my first bit of clams. Because when I was little, there must have been eight or ten fish markets on Woodcleft. There were a lot. I would say at least eight. Nowadays, there's one, two. There's only three left. Three fish markets now. It's mostly restaurants now.

NS: Do you remember how much you got when you first started clamming?

JS: You used to get about \$5 for a bushel. It didn't take long, the next thing you knew, they were giving you \$8 a bushel. Then it got tricky. Then they wanted you to separate the big ones from the little ones and the medium ones. So, at first it was just everything in a basket and, "Here you go. Here's \$5 for your basket." Then as you got a little bit older, the guy was like, "You got to separate them." So, you had to put all your big ones in one basket, your mediums in another basket, and then all the little ones in another basket. Actually, they used to weigh them. Nowadays they count them. You had to have between sixty-eight and seventy-two pounds in a basket and that was called the bushel. Then in about 1975, instead of being poundage, it went where the guy would tell you, when it came to small clams it had to be between four-eighty and five hundred in a basket. That's what he told you. Then in the early [19]80s, they changed it to the very small clams that had to be four hundred in a basket. The next size up, the top necks, had to be two-fifty in a basket. To this day, it's still like that. You put four hundred littlenecks in a bag and they call that a bushel. It's not really a bushel, it's just called a bushel. In top necks, what they call a bushel is two hundred clams. Really if you measure them, it comes more. If you put it into a wooden basket, it's really only three quarters of a bushel. So, nowadays it goes by count, not really by the volume size.

NS: Who are your customers today, both for your fish and your clams?

JS: Nowadays, I sell to a lot of restaurants. I have at least three customers. One guy is twenty-seven years, another guy about twenty-five years, and a lot of other ones for ten and fifteen years. But my oldest ones are bringing to the same restaurant from 1984. Twenty-seven years is my oldest customer.

NS: Can you tell me who some of them are?

JS: Just local restaurants right here in Freeport. Some on the Nautical Mile. Nowadays, they're called the Nautical Mile, like Otto's Sea Grill, the Crabshack. Sometimes, Two Cousins Fish Market if they need stuff. Then there's another place called Landshark. Then I have other pizza type restaurants that are away from the water there or just on the mainland where it's a different kind of atmosphere than being by the water. Down by the water is more of a summertime thing. Right now, I'm waiting for one of my customers to reopen his restaurant. His restaurant burned down a year and a half ago. So, hopefully he'll be open soon. A cook I know told me he used to cook at the Waldorf Astoria and he said he saw my tag on a bag of clams with my name on it.

NS: [laughter]

JS: So, I know that at least once my clams have made it to the Waldorf Astoria. For all I know, the President of the United States might have eaten clams that I caught.

NS: Do you work with any distributors that work with what used to be the Fulton Fish Market or any of the other large scale?

JS: Yes, I bring fish to the Fulton Fish Market. I bring clams to the Fulton Fish Market. I deal with mainly the same guys when I go there. One guy is a fish dealer, one guy is a clam dealer. So, I bring all my fish to the one guy and all my clams to the other guy. In the summertime, I can't even catch enough clams for everybody. But in the winter when I'm catching a lot of the big clams, I bring my big clams to the Fulton Fish Market. They take care of you. They pay pretty good for them in the winter. They're more than happy to get them there. Most of the time they need them.

NS: So, can you tell me how the regulations have affected your fishing over the years?

JS: Most of the regulations started to come out in the early [19]80s. That's around when the National Marine Fisheries came into play. I think it was President Reagan. Was it? It was President Reagan who started the, not positive, but who started where we should have fishing laws. In the beginning, it was really tough because they didn't know how to regulate anything. Actually, it was the great striped bass cycle back then. There were billions and billions of baby striped bass everywhere. Probably quadrillions of them. For some reason, they closed off striped bass fishing. It was the weirdest thing. The most striped bass I've ever seen in my life, and they just decided to shut it off. So, we had to live with that for about five or six years. Then the funny thing was when they shut up bluefish. I remember being at a meeting and I said to the guy, "Do you agree that bluefish are like piranhas?" He goes, "Oh, yes." "The bluefish eat anything," he said. I go, "Well, have you ever seen bluefish spit up little baby striped bass?" He goes, "No." I told him, "Well, I don't know how great of an idea it is to shut off bluefish.

Because now they're eating up all those baby striped bass." We could never catch all the fish anyway. There's just no way in the world you could catch all the fish. That will never, ever happen. It just won't. I don't know if regulations are a good thing or a bad thing. Because the way I see it, it's mainly temperature and water. Water temperature where the fish are going to swim to or live. Or they're going to want to be where there's bait, where they're going to feed.

NS: What I was wondering is, have the regulations affected your ability to make a living?

JS: Yes. They made it pretty tough and costly. Everything adds to that price of fuel. But all these licenses cost money. So, that's money you got to come up with. You have to do it in the month of January when that's the toughest month of the whole year for us. We're regulated on what we could catch, when we could catch it, how many we could catch. When it seems like when the fish come by our area, we're not allowed to catch it. When the fish are past our area, then they tell us we can catch it. It always seems to be like that. It keeps coming to me. I keep forgetting what I wanted to say.

NS: How much do you spend on licenses every year?

JS: I spend about fourteen hundred a year on licenses. Which may not sound like a lot of money, but it is a lot of money.

NS: Do you use all of those licenses?

JS: Yes. I use all the licenses. Some of the licenses I gave up because you need to do so much paperwork when you hold all these licenses. That there's only so many hours a day, and being a fisherman takes up most of those hours. Now, all of a sudden, you have to do all this paperwork on top of it. You have to know the laws and the rules and the regulations about whatever you're catching. Whether it's any species of fish or clams or crabs. You have to know it's going to be closed at a certain date at midnight and then it's going to be reopened two weeks later. You can't know all these things. If I wanted to do all this paperwork, I definitely would have tried to do better in school because there's not enough time. Then, all right, you try and save some of the paperwork for a rainy day, or when the weather's easterly, but you can't remember it. You have to fill out trip reports out in the ocean. Your net goes in the water, your trip report better be filled out. Because if you get caught without your logbook being checked in for that day, you're going to pay a big fine and they'll confiscate all your fish. It could be pouring rain out, it could be windy, the boat could be rocking back and forth, and they want you to fill out paperwork. It's not like sitting at a desk and writing something down. You have to do it while you boat's rocking and the wind's blowing. I'm not saying it's bad weather all the time. But you're always rocking. You're never just laying, sitting there. The boat's always rocking no matter what.

NS: When do you remember having to do this kind of paperwork? When did it start, roughly?

JS: Probably around fifteen years ago. Maybe a little bit more. I would say about mid-[19]90s. I don't really remember when. It was sometime around then.

NS: So, how many days do you go fishing these days?

JS: That's a tough question. Because every year, you have different weather patterns. Last year at this time, I was fishing every single day. We had beautiful weather every day. I was fishing at least five days a week. This year, I can't seem to catch a break. I'm lucky if I get out once a week. Between hurricanes, and whether they're here or not, they bring a big swell of hurricane. It could be a thousand miles away and makes our water all dirty and muddy. You can't catch fish in that kind of water. They don't want to be in it. Just like we don't want to be in the storm, they don't want to be in the storm. So, I don't know where they go hide, but they find a place. They must find places. A lot of them come into the bay.

NS: In thinking about all the years you have been fishing, are there particular people that you learned things from, and what kinds of things they taught you?

JS: Yes. There are definitely quite a few old-timers that stand out in my mind. I was always one of those kids that loved to listen to their stories. Sometimes, I would actually go hunt these guys down just to ask them stuff.

NS: Can you tell us their names? What are some of the things you remember they taught you?

JS: This one guy who was a buoy tender for the town of Hempstead, his name was Maynard Smith. Right now, if he was alive, he would be at least one-fifteen years old.

NS: [laughter]

JS: Matter of fact, right next door to this property used to be the Freeport's first firehouse. His children were born in that firehouse. I think it was a house before it was a firehouse.

NS: So, what were some of the things that he taught you that you remember about him?

JS: He taught me how to skin eels. He used to tell me stories about bay scallops, which I never caught bay scallops. Before my time, there were a lot of bay scallops around. Because I used to see the bay scallop dredges hanging off the back of his garage. I used to ask him, "What are those rusty things? What are they?" You could see these big chain bags. He would look at me and he had some kind of a nervous condition and his head was always going like this. He couldn't hold his head steady. So, when he was talking, it used to come out like – I don't know how to explain it. But that guy, he used to tell me the best stories about fishing and where to catch fish. He used to tell me a lot. Then you had old Jeff and Doug that taught me a lot about flounder fishing.

NS: You are talking about Jeff Blossom?

JS: Yes. Jeff Blossom.

NS: What about other commercial fishermen?

JS: The commercial fishermen used to like to not tell you much.

NS: [laughter]

JS: When I was a kid, there were a lot of commercial fishermen around. The guys didn't really tell each other what they were doing. It was like a race or a game or a competition. It was more like that. If there was a special way to make a net, what net caught better. You always had the high liners, the guy that caught the best, and other guys always were trying to figure out what makes them catch it better. But those guys were pretty smart, not only in catching, but in knowing how to keep it a hush-hush.

NS: So, who taught you the most? [laughter]

JS: I really mainly learned mostly on my own. I started going with a guy and his son on the gillnet boat. Before that, I used to go out on seventy-eight-foot clam boats. When I was twelve and thirteen, I started going out on ocean-going clam boats. They were pretty big. So, if I wasn't clamming, I was fishing. Nowadays, I do a little ocean clamming, but not much. It's mostly clamming in the bay. It's a different kind of clam. The ocean clams are surf clams. So, I learned a lot about surf clamming as a young kid. Then as I became a teenager, I learned about gillnetting. I've only been out on a few draggers. When I was probably eighteen and nineteen, I used to go dragging with this one guy. I went out with him a few times catching whiting, squid, and sometimes herring. Then in the late [19]80s, I was on another fishing boat out in Montauk. We used to catch fluke. We used to catch whiting and ling and codfish, porgies, mackerel. That was a tough boat to work on. That was a four-, five-day boat with no sleep. That took quite a bit to get used to. It took a few months to get used to not sleeping. You had to be very headstrong with that. That was tough. That's the toughest fishing I've ever done, is when you can't go to sleep. Mainly, I learned a lot mostly on my own. Nobody in my family did it. I'm not a second or a third generation. I have relatives in other countries that are fishermen, but I didn't learn anything from them. I never even met them before. I just know that I have cousins that are overseas that own big, big fishing boats. So, mainly I learned about it by myself. Through the years, you always get the comers and the goers and guys that follow you around and guys that want to try it for a year or two and then they realize how hard it is. That makes it tougher for you too. Because most of the time they're following you around. I used to always have two clam boats just to get around the bay. After a while people see the same clam boat, they start to follow it around.

NS: [laughter]

JS: You have to have these incognito type boats, so they don't know who you are.

NS: [laughter]

JS: Then you got to pick your days of you got other clammers that have good jobs, and on the weekends, they come out. On the weekends, I would definitely never go to my best spots because you're always afraid that other guys are going to find your good spot. So, you don't want that happening because then for the rest of their life they know that that's a producing spot.

NS: [laughter]

JS: Because the same spots always seem to produce.

NS: About how many commercial bay clammers are around this area now?

JS: In our area, in the summer there are about twelve or fifteen guys. In the winter, the hardcore guys about seven or eight. But in the summertime, you get guys that come out. It's warmer out and it's a lot easier, a lot less clothes to wear. It's just a lot easier in the summer. You got to worry about just breaking down in the winter.

NS: What is a good catch in terms of bushels these days?

JS: Five or six bushels is a pretty good catch for the day. Even on a day you have three, three and a half bushels, sometimes I'm satisfied with that. You go in early sometimes because you could be tired, or what I call clammed out, and you need a little break. Sometimes you can't catch that many every day.

NS: Do you catch fish at the same rate as when you first began?

JS: When I first began, I caught one. It's hard to say. Some species I catch more nowadays. Some I caught more back then, thirty, thirty-five years ago. Every year lately seems to be a little different. This year in particular is the weirdest year I've ever seen in my whole life. Usually, when you go fishing, things are in a pattern. If you caught certain stuff today, you figure you're going to catch it tomorrow. This year is the only year I can ever remember every single day being different than the next. I don't never remember any year like this one, which is very strange to me. When I say a pattern, you might get the same fish for almost a week and then it'll taper down. Let's say it was mostly blues, it'll taper down and then maybe it'll be bunkers for a while. It gradually goes up and gradually goes down. But every single day this year is different. Even the other day I had about fifteen or eighteen albacore and the next day one. Some days five or six big sharks, and the next day none. Yesterday or the day before, I had one albacore, one thresher shark and one Spanish mackerel.

NS: [laughter]

JS: Usually, those three fish, they swim around the same water temperature.

NS: What I was trying to find out is, how long you have to set your nets now versus when you were first beginning in order to catch the same amount of fish.

JS: Right now, actually when I put my net out, I don't let it stay long at all. Because I'm afraid to catch too many fish. That's the way it's been lately.

NS: So, how long is a typical set for you now?

JS: I even took one net off my boat. Because if I put three different nets in the water, by the

time I get back to the third net, it's just going to be too, too many fish and it's so hard to handle. So, sometimes there's times when you could put your net in the water for two hours and not have to worry about catching too many. Oh, boy. Lately, it's you put them out not for much more than a half hour and then just start picking them up.

NS: So, do you think there are more fish now than there used to be? Sounds like it.

JS: Certain fish there are more now, definitely. This year happens to be good for butterfish. They're a small fish and it must take at least three of them to make one pound.

NS: I am curious, how much of the fish is for food? How much of the fish do you catch is for bait?

JS: In the spring, it's seventy-five percent bait, twenty-five percent food. From the end of the summer into the fall, it's maybe eighty-five percent food and fifteen percent bait. As the fall cools down, then it's fifty-fifty, half bait and half food. So, it depends on the season. Right now, as we speak, it's not much bait, mostly food.

NS: What are the bait fish that you catch?

JS: The bait fish are bunker, butterfish, herring. But it depends. There's plenty of times I can get more money selling those fish for food, so I won't even bother selling it as bait. Then there's other times when it could be worth a lot as bait, so I'll sell some of it as bait. Bunker is always bait. I know very few people in this whole world that eat bunker.

NS: [laughter]

JS: But there are a couple. I don't know why, but there are some people that do eat it. But bunker is usually mainly always bait.

NS: Are there things that you catch that you need bait for?

JS: Yes. I put bunker on my crab traps. Sometimes when I fillet bluefish for my own dinner, I put the head and the tail and all the rest of the fish, everything but the meat, I put in the crab trap.

NS: You did not tell me about your crabbing. So, can you talk about what kinds of crabs you catch? When you catch them and what they are used for?

JS: Blue claws, I catch a lot of different ways. In the summertime, we go out with nets, at nighttime with lights. We call that jacking. In the winter, I catch them with my clam rake sometimes. They bed down in the mud and not all of them get up and lift off and travel with the tide and head down to the Chesapeake. A lot of them go into the mud and they usually all do that when they're together. They all go down together. So, sometimes I can rake up baskets and baskets of crabs that are in the mud. Other times in the summertime, you could be in the water clamming and they will just walk right up to you and just bite you right on the toe.

NS: Oh God. [laughter]

JS: [laughter]

NS: Do you sell these for food, the blue claws?

JS: Yes, we sell them. We sell crabs for food. Another special license just for that reporting how you caught it, how many, what's the percent that you catch in traps. Because you're also catching them in traps. So, there's three ways I catch them. It's even four. Sometimes in the winter, I go out on the boats with dredges that dredge them. Which is similar to hand raking them. You're digging there and the crabs are in the mud. They bed down in the mud. You have to figure out, you have to add it all up, how many you caught in your clam rake.

NS: So, you just go for the blue claw crabs.

JS: Right.

NS: How many crab traps do you have? Do you build them? Do you buy them?

JS: I only have a few. I stay pretty busy with clamming and fishing. I mainly sell the ones I catch in the winter that I'm raking, I sell those. In the summer, I catch them in traps just for family and friends and just to eat. Because we really like them. A matter of fact, when we're done, I'm going to take you to my boat where I have a trap. I put some fresh bait in it yesterday, and so I can give you some crabs.

NS: Yes. [laughter]

JS: [laughter]

NS: Do you build your own traps? Do you buy them?

JS: I just buy them because I don't use many. I just use a couple. If I catch four or five crabs overnight, that's enough for me. In the winter, I might catch three or four bushels a day, which is good. But in the summer, you could scoop them off the docks with nets or you can catch them in your traps or you go out at night with the lights. So, there's always more than enough for the summer. It's simple to catch them in the summer. It's pretty easy, pretty basic. Just catch them for the fun, for eating. Just for the fun of it. It's fun to eat them. That's mainly why.

NS: I think we have covered quite a bit of your background. I need to ask you when you were born.

JS: I was born in the end of November in 1959.

NS: How do you see the future looking for you?

JS: I see it looks okay. I'm a pretty simple guy. I don't need much. I don't go out and spend

money. I just basically try and make every day count, whether it's fishing or clamming or crabbing. I don't really need much, as long as the price of fuel doesn't really put us all out of business. It's tough. You might ask me that same question on another day and I'll tell you, "Oh, it's all over. The world's coming to an end." Then you might ask me today and I might tell you, "Everything looks great." It's a tough question. But I'm not sitting in traffic and I'm not spending six hours of my day in traffic going back and forth to Manhattan. I'd rather do it this way than that way. That's for sure.

NS: Thank you very much Joe. This is the end of our interview. This is Nancy Solomon talking with Joe Scavone again. We are talking about regulations.

JS: I did mention that I don't know how good regulations are and how bad they are. But one thing I do know is that if you were to go fishing every day and never catch anything, you'd stop going fishing. If you were going fishing every day or clamming or crabbing, and you were catching a lot every day, you'd keep going. So, it seems to me that the laws are put into effect so that you can over harvest. But it also seems to me that if you're not catching, who can afford to spend all the money on the fuel to go and keep trying? Eventually, you're going to give it up. That's why I don't think that the regulations are really fair, in a way that I don't know how this earth got here or how this earth got started. But it shouldn't be left to a few individuals to make law about what we could take out of the water and what we can't. Who put them in charge? They in a way turned us into criminals instead of worrying about the real problems they have. A fish that (is too small?). Or you can't go clamming here today, but you can go there tomorrow. What's the point in that? It doesn't make sense. If you go out there and you're not going to get anything, you're not going to keep going. So, there's no way in the world you're ever going to catch all the stuff. It's never going to happen. You cannot catch all the stuff. You can't catch every clam. You can't catch every fish. It is just not going to happen. We're talking about good clean food. Everybody's saying the world's going to end. Well, if the world's going to end, let us catch the fish. [laughter]

NS: [laughter]

JS: Earthquakes and tsunamis and hurricanes.

NS: That is very important for us to know. Thank you for sharing that with us.

JS: [laughter]

[end of transcript]