

Annual oyster roast
PRESS RELEASE

The Tenth Annual Oyster Roast will be held from 2 to 5 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 30, at the Ocracoke Seafood Company.

This all-you-can-eat event attracts locals and visitors alike to dig into more than 30 bushels of oysters, 300 pounds of shrimp, homemade fish stew, and, new this year, shrimp-crab bisque. The price for all this, including crackers, water or soda and live music is \$25 or \$30 for “heavy hitters.”

“We do this in appreciation of everyone who supports the Fish House all year,” said Patty Plyler, who manages the retail store and helps organize the event.

While not technically a fundraiser, proceeds will help fund Ocracoke Working Watermen’s Association (OWWA) education and outreach activities. OWWA operates “The Fish House,” as it is called, that supports the activities of about 30 commercial fishermen.

“This is to get everyone to know how important the seafood industry is to North Carolina,” said Vince O’Neal last year, who owns Pony Island Restaurant and who made the fish stew. “Visitors come to Ocracoke to enjoy the seafood and all of the bounty of the sea and nature.”

For this annual homage to the oyster, the group sets up two rows of plywood tables on top of saw horses. Then they dump piles of steamed oysters on the tables while patrons, who are asked to bring their own oyster shuckers, stand and shuck away.

Dessert and hot cider follows starting at 3 p.m. in the Working Waterman’s Exhibit in Community Square. Islanders and visitors alike are asked to bring a dessert to share.

Availability of food is first-come, first-served and there are no advance ticket sales for this rain-or-shine event. The fish house closes for the winter after Thanksgiving weekend and opens again in the spring when the waters are warmer and the fish return, usually in March.