

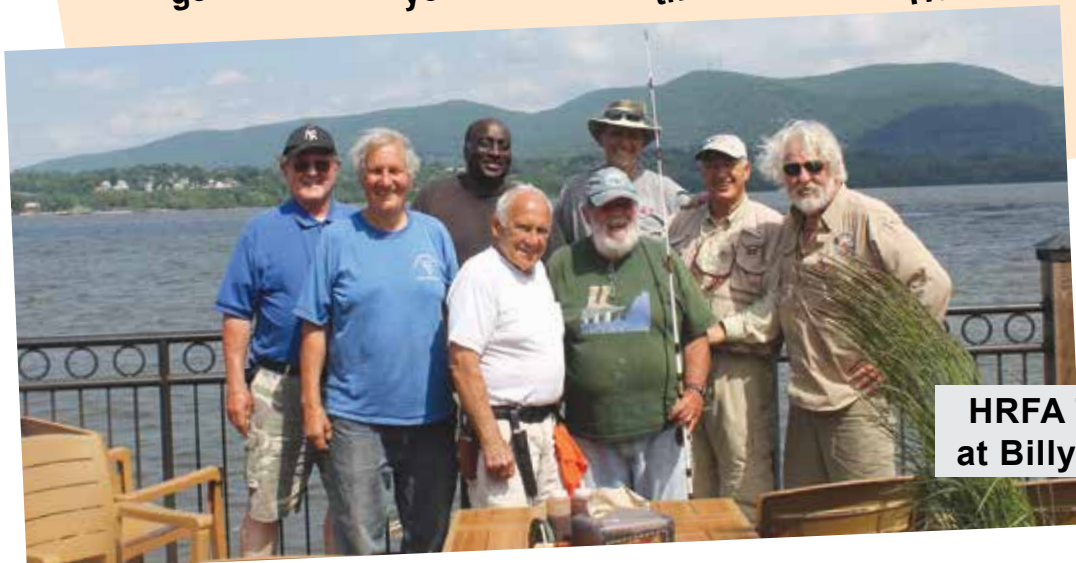
by Samantha Ryan

The Catfish Derby and how it Changed my Life

Hi my name is Samantha Ryan every year John Vargo and his group have a few catfish derbies. I have been going to them for a few years now and they have changed my life. In the first year that I went to one of them I was in 4th grade and I won first place for catching a 14 inch catfish. That day was one of the best days of my life. It showed my that even a girl at the age of 8 could beat everyone on the Hudson River. That a girl can beat boys almost double her age at a sport that men usually conquer. But here everyone is able to compete no one is rejected. It doesn't matter the skill level of the amount of experience you have. For the contests they have bait for you and most of the time they will have poles set up for you to use. In the middle of the contest they bring out food like sliders and hot dogs for you to eat. All the people that run the derby are all loving and wonderful people. They love to see young people interested in the competition and come back year after year. There is usually an entry fee of 5 or 7 dollars to compete. All the money they make go to the cleaning and help the Hudson River. And it is just fun in general. You meet many new people and learn many skills that you use in everyday life. I hope to see you at the next catfish derby on the Hudson River.



Sam and Fresh water Drum



HRFA Team at Billy Joe's