

RUBY AWARD GIVEN TO HEATHER SEARS AND WENDY HOLLOWAY



For many decades, Soroptimist Clubs have given an award to an individual or organization for “Women Helping Women”. A few years ago, the award name was changed to the “Ruby Award”, after Ruby Lee Minar, Washington D.C.’s first Soroptimist Club President, and later the first national Soroptimist club President. She helped form the International federation of Soroptimist clubs and to form its charter aims, which included fostering work peace. She was a mover and shaker in her personal and professional life.

Which brings us to Captain Heather Sears and Wendy Holloway, movers and shakers themselves. They are partners and owners of the Princess Deli. They met in 2003, when Heather

docked her (then) fishing vessel, the Papoose, in Eureka. They became fast friends and Heather talked Wendy into crewing and having a fishing adventure. They worked side by side on and off for many years, fishing from San Francisco Bay as far north as Alaska, in all kinds of weather and seas, good times and bad times, and have amazing stories to tell.

A little bit about these two amazing women: **Heather** has always been into fishing—she bought her first boat at age 21 and worked her way up to The Princess— a 42-foot freezer trawler and highly respected member of the Noyo Harbor fishing community.

Wendy on the other hand, did not envision herself fishing on a commercial boat. She came at it from an entirely different angle---she was into science and got a degree in fisheries, then she worked with Idaho Fish and Game and worked her way west. She worked different jobs up and down the coast—including doing seasonal fishery studies for Campbell Hawthorne for about 11 years.

Today, both women are content to stay local and not make long ocean treks to far away fishing grounds. They have the best of both worlds-- the Princess boat, and her all-woman crew bring in fresh salmon, crab, tuna, ling cod, halibut, sablefish and everything else. Then they have the Princess deli and restaurant to sell their catch to very happy customers from near and far.

Why the Ruby award? Women who want to fish may not be so comfortable with a mostly-male crew on a commercial fishing boat for days at a time. But they can work on the Princess with other women, satisfy their true passion, and make good money too.

You might be surprise to learn one of their crew members was recently selected to be the Noyo Harbor Master. It seems the Princess boat world may be our “oyster” for more unknown pearls. (bad pun!)

Our club is in awe of these two women, and we humbly acknowledge them with our Ruby Award. The award comes with a small check on their behalf to their chosen non-profit organization.