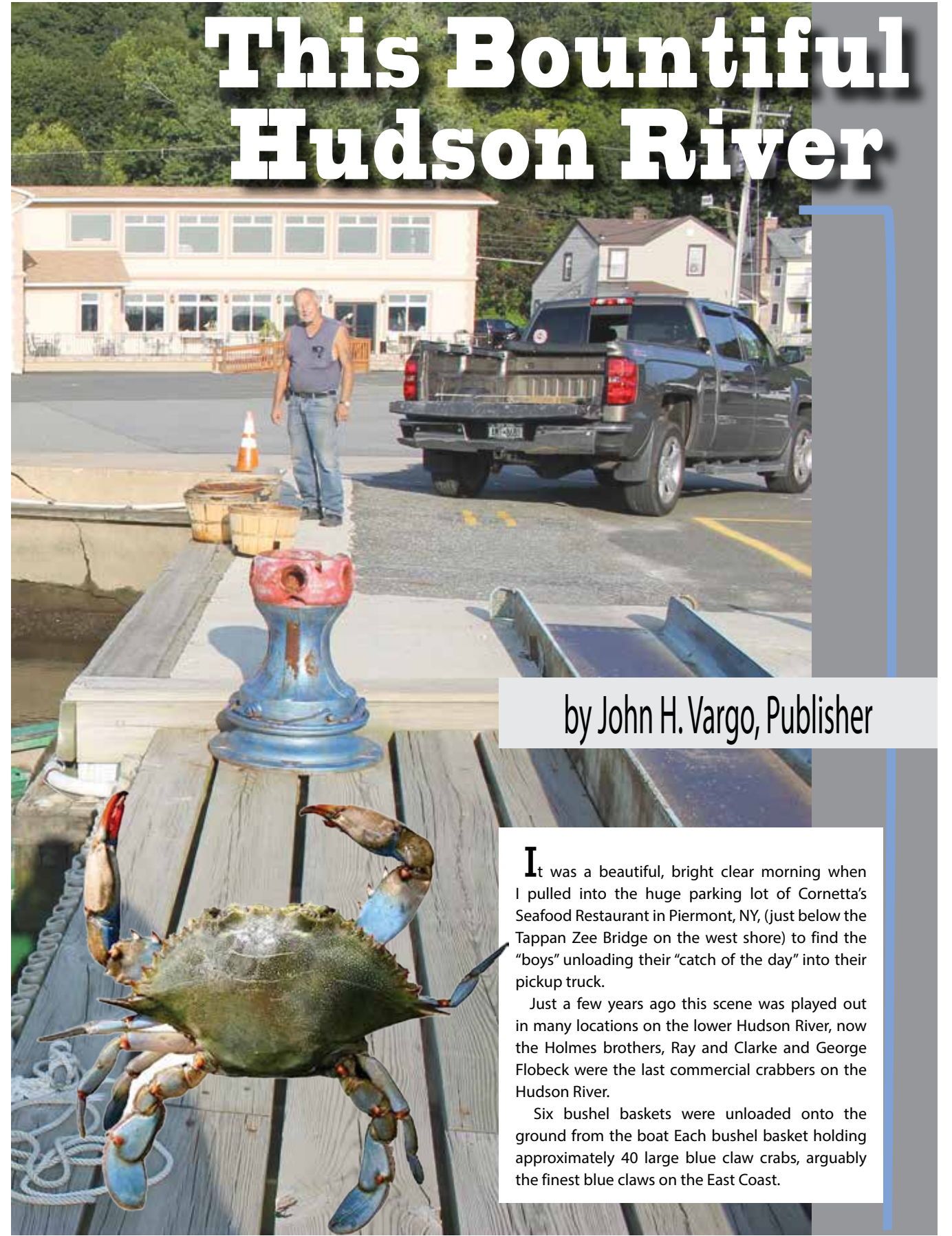




George Flobeck, in blue shirt and Ray Holmes in bow of their crabbing boat, handing up the baskets to Clarke Holmes on the tarmac.



This Bountiful Hudson River

by John H. Vargo, Publisher

It was a beautiful, bright clear morning when I pulled into the huge parking lot of Cornetta's Seafood Restaurant in Piermont, NY, (just below the Tappan Zee Bridge on the west shore) to find the "boys" unloading their "catch of the day" into their pickup truck.

Just a few years ago this scene was played out in many locations on the lower Hudson River, now the Holmes brothers, Ray and Clarke and George Flobeck were the last commercial crabbers on the Hudson River.

Six bushel baskets were unloaded onto the ground from the boat Each bushel basket holding approximately 40 large blue claw crabs, arguably the finest blue claws on the East Coast.



When asked, "Clarke where are you taking these beautiful blue claws?" His reply was "Ray, my brother has a list of customers a mile long, no problem getting rid of them!"

The crabs are caught in what is called "overnighters" these are large, 24' x 24' square wire nets with two entrances and bait in a center basket. The traps are set on a long main line and hauled up to the boat one after another, similar to the way lobstermen haul their traps.

The blue claw crabs that are caught during September and October are the finest crabs you can catch as they have had all summer to grow into their tremendous size.

Clarke Holmes putting baskets full of blue claws in the "Crabman" pickup truck.

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