

Sharkman details exploits in book

By Pat Copeland

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Captain Bill Goldschmitt got his name, The Sharkman of Cortez, from Channel 13's colorful sports-caster "Salty Sol" Fleishman after pulling in a large shark off Bean Point in the 1970s.

Now it is the title of the book written by he and his wife, Marisa Mangani, and details his adventures as one of the area's most famous shark fishermen. The book will be available next week.

"I ran away from home, which was Pittsburgh, to Siesta Key in the 1970s," Goldschmitt recalled. "I always wanted to be a commercial fisherman.

"I worked at the Siesta Key Fish Market and that's how I got into commercial fishing. I got into shark fishing because it was good bait for crab traps."

Goldschmitt started his own business capturing marine life for tourist attractions such as Sea World and then began selling sharks to Mote Marine. However, after a couple of years of severe red tide, he lost his business.

"I migrated to Longboat Key and rented beach cottages," he continued. "I kept my boat at Land's End and had to work my way into Cortez. They were very tight.

"Then I migrated to Anna Maria Island. I caught a lot of sharks off Egmont Key and from Bean Point south to Coquina Beach."

He also became the subject of articles and photos in every local newspaper and came up with an idea for a book.

"I found that when I was bringing in sharks, the scientists didn't know one shark from another," he explained, "and fishermen called everything a sand shark or a mako. I thought I'd write a book for fishermen and divers – a how to book."

He hired G.B. Knowles, a local outdoor writer, to write it, but Knowles faltered. Then he hired Jerry Hill, who wrote outdoors' articles for the Bradenton Herald at



Goldschmitt

the time, and Hill completed the manuscript in 1985. It was called "Shark Hunt."

"Commercial fishing was taking a nosedive because of overregulation," he said, "so I threw the book in the closet. One day, my oldest son dug it out, and I restarted it.

"Four years ago, I met a Marisa, a professional writer, in Cortez and turned it over to her. She wanted to rewrite it as a memoir. A year later, we fell in love and got married."

The pair will have a launch party and book signing hosted by the Sea Hagg, 12304 Cortez Road, Cortez, on Saturday, June 26, from noon to 4 p.m. and a book signing at Capt. Curt's Crab and Oyster, 1200 Old Stickney Point Road, Sarasota, on Sunday, June 27, from 1 to 4 p.m.

"I never made much money catching sharks, but it looks like this book will be a success story," he said. "We've gotten more than 2,000 pre sales, and there's talk of a movie."

A future book signing is planned for the Anna Maria City Pier. Readers can see Goldschmitt on YouTube at "Sharkman book trailer" and in a trailer of the movie, "The Shark Con," at www.thesharkcon.com.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Captain Bill Goldschmitt brought in this 13-foot tiger shark at Coquina Beach in April 1980.