

Mayor Van W. Johnson, Sr.  
45<sup>th</sup> Annual Florida Seafood Festival  
Welcome Speech & Introduction of King and Queen  
October 31, 2008

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It is an honor for me as Mayor of Historic Apalachicola, to welcome each of you to the 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Florida Seafood Festival.

As you enjoy our hospitality and partake of the wonderful bounty from our seas, please remember the seafood workers that made this day possible. It is by their labor and love for the industry that keep the economic engine of Apalachicola and Franklin County going.

The King and Queen of this year's Festival are both unique individuals. Not just because of who they are, but most importantly, because of where they come from.

The Queen is a junior at Port St. Joe High School and the King, which is her actual father, is the owner of 13 Mile Oyster Company here in Apalachicola.

The Queens Grandfather and the Kings Father is the late Buddy Ward. Ward was a local icon within the seafood industry and throughout the Franklin County community. He was known as a fighter and protector of Apalachicola Bay and its pristine environment.

The Queens Grandmother and the Kings Mother, Mrs. Martha Peal Ward served on the City of Apalachicola Planning and Zoning Board and fought to keep the historic appeal of Apalachicola out of the hand of developers.

I don't think that we could have found a better representation or image for the 2008 Florida Seafood Festival then we have found within the offspring's of two of Franklin County's greatest citizens.

Because of this, it gives me great pleasure to present to you, your Queen, Ms. Sara Ward and her father, your King Tommy Ward also as known as King Retsyo.