United States Power Squadrons® is America's Boating Club®

the Ensign®

Winter 2022

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NOAA plots a new course for nautical charts.

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CHARTERING IN THE TIME OF CORONA

Tips for traveling to the BVI during the pandemic

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CRUISING AMERICA'S GREAT LOOP

The final installment of a Great Loop adventure



On the St. Johns River

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FUN, FOOD AND MANATEES ON FLORIDA'S ST. JOHNS RIVER

Ship's Store



Never go out of style with this wardrobe staple

Go from the boardroom to the boat in this classic short-sleeved Oxford shirt. Made from cotton and polyester, this button-down is wrinkle-resistant, so you'll still look fresh even after a full day on the water. Featuring a classic fit, extended tail and left-chest pocket, this shirt is available for men and women. It's the perfect attire for any America's Boating Club member.

UltraClub Men's Classic Wrinkle-Resistant Short-Sleeve Oxford

M–XL $51
XXL $54
XXXL $58

BUY NOW

UltraClub Women's Classic Wrinkle-Resistant Short-Sleeve Oxford

S–XL $51
XXL $54

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WINTER 2022

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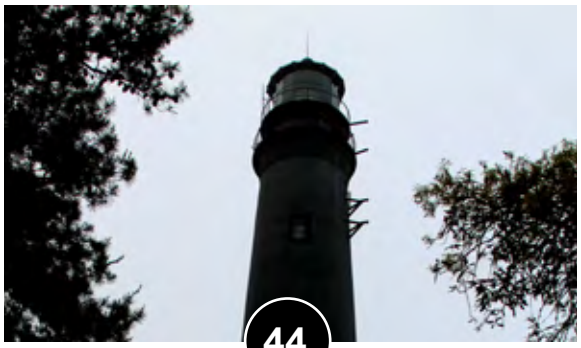
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"I am not afraid of storms for I am learning how to sail my ship.

– Louisa May Alcott

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Mary Paige Abbott
Chief Commander

Listen to the customer

Takeaways from conversations with recreational boating industry leaders

BY MARY PAIGE ABBOTT

United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club, remains relevant and essential to the recreational boating industry as illustrated by our vision of "Increased Boating Enjoyment and Safety" and our mission to "promote watercraft skills on and off the water through member fellowship, education, and civic service."

I recently attended the three-day Boating Industry ELEVATE Summit in Atlanta, Georgia, "where top marine industry visionaries and emerging leaders convene over strategic content to **connect**, **collaborate**, **cultivate** and **celebrate**" (emphasis mine).

Attendees included leading marine manufacturers, marina owners, dealers, and one boating enjoyment and education provider—me. Business discussions focused on the COVID-fueled increase in boating participation, inflation, and supply-chain issues, which are changing the way boats are purchased. I found the conversations extremely interesting and relevant to our organization.

Here are some observations to ponder:

The boating industry emphasizes listening to the customer and providing what the customer wants.

When was the last time you asked your members (existing or potential) what they want from your club? Did you supply it? How is your membership doing—increasing or decreasing? Are you giving them what they want?

Not one dealer mentioned the increase in boating accidents; they appeared unaware of the Recreational Boating Statistics provided by the U.S. Coast Guard and states.

Have you asked local marina owners and dealers how you can help them retain customers through America's Boating Club programs, on-the-water education like Jump Start and H.O.T (Hands-On Training), and timely seminars? Have you gently educated them on the value of free vessel safety checks? (A customer who feels safe and confident on the water will remain in boating.)

Our members are our customers; listen to them and give them what they want. Remember: Membership is Job One.

New boat pricing is shutting younger boaters out of the market, leaving fractional share and other boating clubs to expose new boaters to water sports. Dealers fear that fewer new entry-level boats on the market will further reduce the market base. Additionally, they are concerned that families may abandon boating and return to participation in kids' travel sports and other activities when COVID abates, further decreasing entry into boating.

How does this affect our business plan today and in the near future? Can we pivot fast? Are we properly organized?

A panelist said, "Sell memories...boating freezes time."

We've been using this concept in our national marketing campaigns for some time. How can we extend this to market our local courses and membership?

One speaker mentioned the following changes and concerns at the state and local levels:

- the need for boater and community wake surfer education
- a desire to make boating safety and education a priority
- an increasing focus on conservation and environment
- the creation of state outdoor recreational offices to consolidate departments
- an increase in recreation access and infrastructure improvements
- an increase in boaters visiting inland U.S. Army Corps of Engineers sites as opposed to coastal National Park Service locations, underscoring the importance of inland squadrons and districts

Think about these issues and opportunities. While already addressing several items, we are not yet widely publicizing our efforts.

Our members are our customers; listen to them and give them what they want. Remember: Membership is Job One.

I look forward to continuing the work started during my term as chief commander. Thank you for allowing me to take the helm; we are underway and adjusting the course as necessary. ❖

Mary Paige Abbott has been chief commander since 2020. She and her husband, Steve Abbott, are members of Sanibel Captiva Sail & Power Squadron/22. When not working on behalf of America's Boating Club, Mary Paige winds down with regular workouts and long bike rides. She enjoys kayaking in Clam Bayou and is an avid reader of nonfiction. She and Steve spend their summers in the Alaska Range near Denali National Park.

Soundings



Headquarters employees Stephanie Ford and Lena Padro greet members visiting national headquarters.

Our First National Meeting

Member shares impressions after attending the 2021 Governing Board Meeting

BY JOHN YEAMANS

In early September 2021, my wife and I joined members from across the country for the organization's 2021 Governing Board Meeting in Raleigh, North Carolina.

We'd never visited Raleigh or attended a national meeting before. Not knowing what to expect, we looked forward to each event with excitement and a little apprehension.

The conference exceeded our expectations. The hotel provided transportation to and from the airport, and the staff greeted us like family.

During the event, we scheduled a trip to national headquarters. For years, it's been the place we call for help about membership, course materials, and so many other things needed for our work. Upon entering the building, Headquarters Administrative Assistant Stephanie Ford greeted us at the door and immediately charmed us with her hospitality, friendliness, and genuine eagerness to show us the building's myriad operation centers and introduce us to the staff. A highlight of our tour, and hidden gem, is the Memorial Library, which contains over a hundred years of boating and navigational history and memorabilia. If you are in the area, don't miss a visit to headquarters. You will love meeting the dedicated staff and learning how their work supports our efforts.

I enjoy people, their antics, quirks and all the things that make each of us special, but I am also hesitant to jump into a meet-and-greet thing. Putting that hesitancy aside, I decided to reach past my comfort zone to overcome that natural feeling of unease. My advice to new and not-so-new members attending a national meeting for the first time is to introduce yourself. Make new friends, and keep the old, as the old song goes.

On the business day of the conference, we ate lunch with folks from our district and others, including National Executive Officer Craig Fraser. "Whatever are we going to say to each other?" I wondered. Well, we started with "hello," and the conversation flowed from there. We shared something about ourselves: light-hearted conversation about hometowns, boating experiences, and how we became involved in America's Boating Club.

During the meal, I asked Craig how he felt the conference was going, as it looked like many members had showed up for the Governing Board meeting. "Better than expected, given the year we've had," he said. "Members seem happy to be getting out and seeing people again."

And then he said something that surprised me and left me with a positive feeling about the future of America's Boating Club:

Soundings

"Members need to know that the National Board of Directors consists of people just like you. And, to communicate that message, we must be reachable and approachable. And that is why we sit with members, engage in conversation, and get to know district and squadron members on a one-on-one level."

He said that in-person meetings allow for an open dialogue and help build relationships, which is a good thing.

Maybe sitting down with members at dinners satisfies more than one's appetite. Maybe it builds social connections, leading to lifetime collaboration and friendships. Now, isn't that wonderful? Staying involved and meeting new people is what dinners and conferences help people do.

During the next session, National Administrative Officer Ralph Bernard asked members to volunteer their skills and services at the national level. It's simple, he said. Submit a resume and let us know your interests. America's Boating Club wants you and needs your help.

When you think of all that goes into making any organization work, you begin to understand that it takes many people with a variety of interests and skills. Planning, developing and implementing a project takes people and many skill sets.

At the squadron, district and national levels, volunteers manage reservations for conferences and classes, while others track and organize seminars, and present audiovisuals and handouts. Still others plan and decorate for events.

And then we have instructors. Regardless of whether they teach basic or advanced classes, they all love what they do and offer their services for free. Our volunteers are amazing!

Chief Commander Mary Paige Abbott talked about how all the good we do centers around and relies on the volunteers. It also means that members have a special responsibility. Each of us must help grow our organization for the good of boating safety and the security of our families on our nation's waterways. My takeaway from the chief's message was that we must recruit new members to keep our organization relevant and focused on our mission—boating education. Membership growth must be our number one priority.

Although the conference was a lot of work, we had plenty of time for play, sightseeing and socializing. From trips to local museums, high tea at a lovely cafe, a murder mystery dinner, and a retro sock hop, we got a taste of both Southern and America's Boating Club hospitality!

What I learned from the 2021 Governing Board meeting is that we are a membership-driven organization with a mission to help ourselves and the public enjoy our waterways safely. At the same time, we come together for friendship and to support our communities. Now, isn't that just a wonderful way to make a life worth living?

I hope to meet you at the February 2022 Annual Meeting in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. ❖

CORRECTION

In "Why VSCs Matter" on pg. 5 of the Fall 2021 issue, Jack Salisbury's last name was incorrectly listed as "Singletary."

Currents



2022

Feb 19–27
Annual Meeting
Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

Mar 13–16
IBWSS
Washington, D.C.

May 18–22
Board of Directors
Raleigh, N.C.

May 21–27
National Safe Boating Week

Sep 11–18
Governing Board
Raleigh, N.C.

Nov 16–20
Board of Directors
Raleigh, N.C.

2023

Feb 19–26
Annual Meeting
Orlando, Fla.



New member benefit could save lives

Through our partnership with MyMedic, United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club, members can save 25% on all online store purchases (excluding sale and clearance items). MyMedic provides first-aid kits and supplies hand-picked by first responders and medical professionals that can save your life. Get equipped with the tools to always be safe. MyMedic offers custom kits designed for the specific adventure you are going on, whether it's scuba diving, fishing or boating. Visit mymedic.com and use promo code **USPSABC**.



#ICYMI

In case you missed it, here's what's been happening in the boating world on social media.

America's Boating Club of Central Pennsylvania attended the Patton Township Children's Safety Fair in October and brought Sea Vester the robotic boating safety seagull to talk about boating safety.

San Juan Delta Power Squadron honored its September Partner in Command graduates.

Kent Narrows, Annapolis, and Wilmington squadron boats tied-up together on Sept. 11 in Shaw Bay on the Wye River in Maryland for the Shore Rivers-sponsored On-the-Water Concert. More than a hundred boats attended the event.

America's Boating Channel received the National Boating Industry Safety Award for 2021 as the Top Marine Media Outlet.

Currents



Central Wisconsin Sail & Power Squadron/10 members

BOATING NEWS

Help needed at life jacket loaner stations

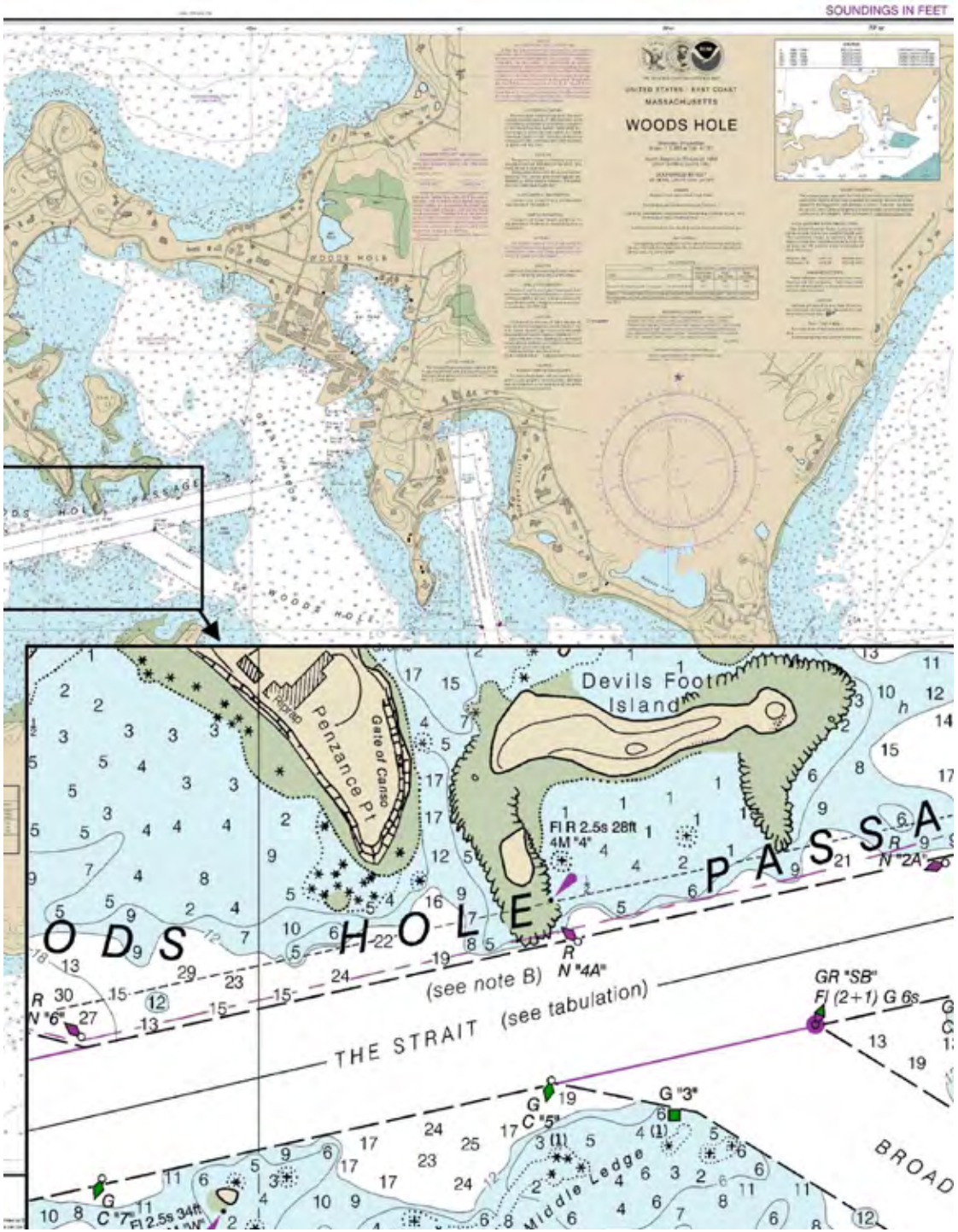
Sea Tow Foundation needs help maintaining life jacket loaner stations in Venice, Florida, and in Maryland's Chesapeake Bay region specifically, but squadron members anywhere can volunteer to help maintain stations.

The volunteer effort involves checking on stations weekly to hang up life jackets, inspect them, remove damaged jackets, and count them for a monthly foundation report. The total time commitment is less than 30 minutes every two weeks. During peak boating periods, volunteers can choose to be on-site to help fit life jackets on children or discuss boating safety tips with adults, which can help promote your squadron and its classes to area boaters.

If your squadron would like to set a new life jacket loaner station, please consider applying for the Sea Tow Foundation's Life Jacket Loaner Program grant. The foundation has a special interest in expanding to Arizona, South Dakota, and Vermont where we don't currently have loaner stations. If interested, fill out the application at boatingsafety.com by Feb. 1, 2022. If selected, squadrons will be notified by the end of March. *–Sea Tow Foundation*

Want a voice in our future? Here's your chance

Last month, the Ad Hoc Reorganization Committee published an article on The Ensign's website on the topic of restructuring America's Boating Club. Everything is being looked at—from doing nothing to making significant structural and policy changes. A great deal of feedback was received, from basic to detailed, from reinstituting uniforms to doing everything virtually, and everything in between. This input is great and stimulates other ideas. Please keep it coming! Read the article and leave your comments online. You can also send your comments to committee members directly. We welcome all suggestions, reflections, criticisms, rants and ramblings. *–Myles Gee*



Traditional raster/printed chart shows details on land and labels all navigation aids.

Chart Changes on the Horizon

NOAA plots a new course for nautical charts

BY BOB SWEET

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has decided to sunset paper and raster digital charts. If you want to replace a paper chart, you will be able to print a vector version of the chart. So, what's the big deal?

Invented for chartplotters, vector charts only contain data rather than a picture, making them easier to store and display. To create the original vector charts, NOAA cartographers traced the paper charts using just the shorelines, contours, and depths. Next, they added prominent features, avoiding most land-based features to save space. Perfect for chartplotters,

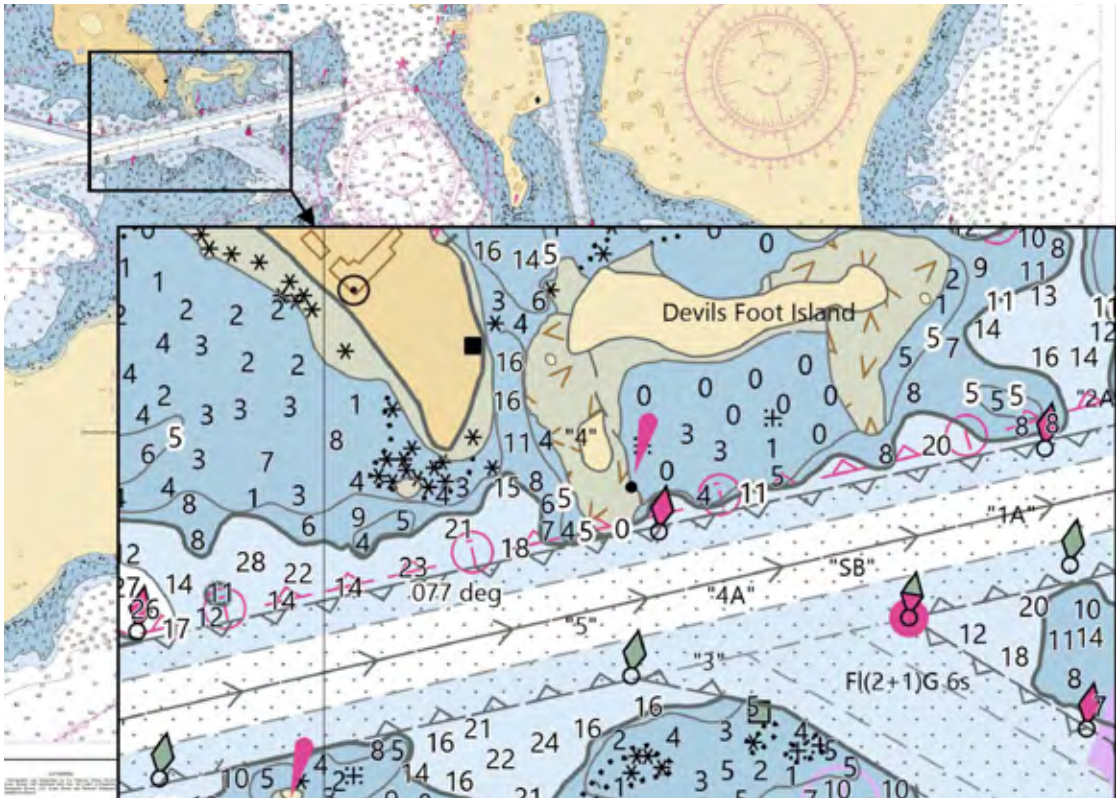
Chart Changes on the Horizon

vector charts allow you to move around, scale in or out, and scroll over a feature to get more information. These charts, called electronic navigation charts, are the survivors.

Since commercial mariners must update their charts, they use ENC charts in lieu of paper charts because they are easy to update. The use of ENC charts is approved if the mariners employ Electronic Charting and Display Information System hardware. In the U.S., ENCs are built through the regularly updated common database and used to support vector, raster, and paper charts.

Prudent boaters use printed charts as backup and to provide the bigger picture, while the chartplotter shows the boat, present course, and nearby details. However, to be useful, a printed chart must contain all the pertinent information. That's where the cartographer comes in. Somebody decides how and where to display that information as well as helpful notes and insets with more details for selected harbors and passages.

This process is called chart finishing, and over many decades, cartographers refined and improved our paper charts. Today, all they need to do is update the chart as changes occur. Traditional paper charts still have all the details that were not traced and stored in the database. However, all of that is going away, and along with it goes any information that was not coded into the database. That is, unless NOAA decides to add that missing information.



NCC version 1 equivalent chart has differing depths, lacks landmarks and labels on navigation aids.

For those of us who need printed charts, NOAA has created a computer application called NOAA Custom Chart. This neat program enables you to print a vector chart of your choosing, at the scale you select, on the size paper you want. It sounds great, and it is, up to a point. Version 1 was released in May 2021. So far, however, it falls short of our cartographers' idea of a useful chart. How so?

Boaters rely on navigation aids and landmarks to help

Chart Changes on the Horizon

If you know what you are doing, you can select charts and get them printed for you. But most boaters are going to need some help.

them navigate on the water and confirm their position. To do that, boaters need to be able to uniquely identify these features on the chart. Unfortunately, the initial version of NOAA Custom Chart fails to label most navigation aids, but NOAA is gradually fixing problems with each update.

On your chartplotter, you can scroll over to a navigation aid, and more information pops up. On your paper chart, what you see is what you get. If the aid is not labeled, you don't know what it is. When finishing a chart, cartographers make sure the labels are included and readable. What's more, all that shore-based information we use for reference and taking bearings is largely missing on these new charts, and when shown, the information is usually not labeled.

Then there is the question of how you select charts. Chart numbers go away, completely. Even the ENCs are being restructured so the present numbers don't mean anything. You will need to find a different way to get your charts by location alone. And what scale chart will you choose? The amount of detail available in the database is largely based on the present suite of paper charts and their respective scales. We will also lose chart insets, folio chart sets, and strip charts that follow coastlines for places like the ICW.

Updates become an issue as well. Presently, we can use the Local Notice to Mariners to know what has changed, but the notices list changes by chart number. Previously, when enough changes occurred, NOAA issued a new chart edition and date. Now, how will we know?

Commercial chart producers are scrambling to come up with solutions to make it easier for you to get what you need. If you know what you are doing, you can select charts and get them printed for you. But most boaters are going to need some help.

Fortunately, NOAA recognizes the challenges and is soliciting input to refine the process. That's where you come in. Go to the NCC application, NOAA Custom Chart, and take it for a spin. PDF charts are created in the size, orientation, and location of your choosing. You can select soundings in meters, feet or fathoms. You can select depth contour intervals and the number of colors. You can also name the charts.

Use the tab on the NOAA Custom Chart screen to provide feedback, report your comments and detail anything else you believe needs fixing. While there's strong priority supporting international and commercial shipping, boaters operate in different waters and have different needs. Recreational boaters in the U.S. number in the millions, whereas commercial mariners are in the thousands. Let your voice be heard. ❖

Bob Sweet, Senior Navigator, wrote "The Weekend Navigator," "GPS for Mariners," "Powerboat Handling Illustrated," and "Using GPS." The former United States Power Squadrons National Educational Officer lives and boats on the waters around Cape Cod.

Boating Gone Bad



That sinking feeling

Quick hull repair prevents catastrophe

BY GEORGE K. WILLIAMS

On a sunny July day, we anchored *By George,* our family's 30-foot cruiser, in Partridge Cove on Lake Champlain using a Bermuda anchoring system. I put the swim ladder over the side and went for a swim. After my swim, I put my foot on the bottom rung to climb back onboard. As I placed my complete weight on the swim ladder, the bottom of the ladder punched a hole through the hull.

I quickly climbed into the boat and started the bilge pump. My daughter got into the bilge, and I handed her a small towel to stuff into the 1½-inch hole in the hull to stop the leak temporarily.

Next, I located two pieces of quarter-inch plywood, about 6 by 10 inches, and some 1-inch screws. I applied a thick bead of silicone around the edge of the wood to form a gasket and preset four screws into the corners of the wood patch. Then, with a flat blade screwdriver tied to my wrist, I went over the side of the boat.

I told my daughter to remove the cloth and hold the first piece of wood against the hole. Then I screwed the second piece over the hole from the outside, going through the hull and into the piece of wood she was holding. That was no small feat, as I couldn't see the slots in the screws under 6 inches of water. It took some quick thinking, but we managed to stop the leak.

With our vacation cut short, we headed home for a permanent repair. We didn't know we had soft wood at that spot, and we were lucky my daughter was on board.

The lesson here is to be prepared: Take an America's Boating Club boating course before something like this happens to you. ❖

George K. Williams is a life member and past commander of Lake George Power Squadron/2. With more than eight decades of boating experience in upstate New York, he is still active and has many fond memories of boating on Lake Champlain with his wife Elisabeth and two children.

Shipshape

QUICK TIPS

Know the rules

Before boating, learn the nautical rules of the road. Like driving a car, boating is safer and more fun when you know and obey the rules.

Please wear it

A great day on the water starts with everyone wearing a life jacket. Each person should wear a correctly sized life jacket in good condition with the straps and buckles adjusted for correct fit.



"Paddlers do not think of themselves as boaters."

– A Boater's Guide to the Federal Requirements for Recreational Boats by the U.S. Coast Guard

BY JIM GREENHALGH

***Because they don't consider themselves boaters**, few paddlers, rowers, and other human-powered vessel operators take boating safety courses. What's more, most paddle sports training focuses on skills, not on the knowledge required to be a safe boater.*

A lack of knowledge regarding boating rules and regulations, safety equipment, and navigation has led to serious accidents over the years. In 2016 a high-speed ferry collided with a group of kayakers on New York's Hudson River, seriously injuring several kayakers.

As with any maritime collision, both parties—the kayakers and the ferry captain—received citations for navigation rule violations. This collision had nothing to do with the paddlers' skills but everything to do with their knowledge and application of the rules. In the six years since this collision, little has changed.

With more boaters on the water, paddlers and human-powered boaters need boating safety education more than ever. Geared toward boaters of kayaks, canoes, stand-up paddleboards and other human-powered vessels, this new column attempts to bridge this knowledge gap.

In each issue, I'll cover subjects such as rules and regulations, navigation, safety equipment, rescues, cold water and adverse weather paddling, and more. Occasionally, I'll review paddle craft accidents to see what lessons we can learn. I also welcome your questions and comments.

I hope that other paddlers in America's Boating Club will join the effort to provide much-needed boating safety education to our fellow boaters in the paddling community.



Paddling with marine VHF

The U.S. Coast Guard recommends that all mariners carry a marine VHF. Fortunately, more paddlers have started using this vital safety device.

Today, you have your choice of affordable, lightweight, buoyant, and waterproof handheld marine VHF radios on the market. All mariners should learn the rules and procedures for marine VHF radio operation before using one on the water.

Recently, a group of four experienced sea kayakers practicing in rough water off the coast of Maine were carrying marine VHF radios and communicating with each other on an approved working channel. However, they weren't monitoring Channel 16 as required by law. Someone on the beach saw the kayakers paddling in rough seas and assumed they were in trouble. The person called emergency services, and the Coast Guard dispatched a medium rigid inflatable boat with an entire crew to the reported location. Upon arrival, they found that the four kayakers did not require assistance.

While paddlecraft aren't required to carry a marine VHF, Title 47 CFR 80.310 requires all voluntary vessels carrying a marine VHF to maintain a watch on Channel 16 when underway. Typically, a vessel operator will monitor and call on Channel 16 and switch to a working channel for conversations. Often a group of boaters will operate together on a working channel and stay off 16. So how does a group comply with the law and still maintain safety? With a simple click of the "dual watch" key, the radio does everything for you.

The dual watch key may look different on various makes and models; however, it's usually labeled "Dual" or "D/W." After enabling D/W, boaters can operate on a working channel while the radio automatically monitors Channel 16. The boaters will hear radio traffic on 16 and respond if needed.

When the Coast Guard receives a distress call, it immediately broadcasts an alert on Channel 16. If the kayakers mentioned earlier had used proper radio procedure, they would have heard the alert and realized they were the subjects of the distress call. They could have responded directly to the Coast Guard via radio and prevented a costly and time-consuming search-and-rescue mission.

Paddlers often operate in groups for safety, so the typical scenario using marine VHF is to designate one of the working channels for group use before departure. Paddlers and other recreational boaters in the U.S. may use channels 68, 69, 71, 72 or 78A. After selecting the working channel, operators click on the Dual Watch key.

Shipshape

Smart paddlers always wear their life jackets and usually mount the radio on the front near their heads. With a lot of hand and paddle action in this area, it's easy to hit the radio keyboard and change the channel accidentally. For that reason, paddlers should use the keyboard lock key. If you need to respond to traffic on 16 or make a distress call while underway, you click off the lock, click on Channel 16 and broadcast.

Take the online seminar, All About Marine Radio, to learn more. ❖

Jim Greenhalgh of St. Petersburg Sail & Power Squadron/22 is a senior navigator, vessel examiner and instructor, having taught boating safety and navigation since 1991. He draws on his vast sail and power boating experience as a lifelong boater and avid sea kayaker. Jim leads trips for the Kayak Adventure Group, a sea kayaking club based on Florida's west coast that he co-founded. He also wrote Navigation Rules for Paddlecraft, a must-read for all paddlers.







Tips for safely boating in winter

BY GINO BOTTINO, MD

As I write this, it's cold and rainy in Connecticut. North of here, it's snowing. The marinas are full of boats on the hard. Looking out in the harbor, I still see boats going out—open boats, fishing boats, sailboats, and even paddleboards. On weekends, frostbiting (winter sailboat racing) is common in most harbors. So, what does it take to boat safely in winter?

First, recognize that you may be isolated and often alone. In many areas, marine police and harbor patrol boats stop operating for the season, significantly increasing the time for help to arrive. For this reason, you should plan and be prepared to fend for yourself in an emergency.

BEFORE LEAVING THE DOCK

- Make an honest assessment of your health and the health of your crew. Can you swim? How strong and physically fit are you? Do you have any allergies or special medical conditions?
- Use the "I'M SAFE" checklist (I-illness, M-medications, S-stress, A-alcohol, F-fatigue, E-emotions) to see if everyone is fit to boat. Once everyone is together, use the "GAR" system: green to go, amber to be aware of issues, and red to cancel the event.
- Assess the captain's and crew's experience and ability to function in trying conditions.
- Check the weather forecast and wind strength. If the wind exceeds 30 kilometers an hour, don't go out.
- Create a plan for the day and file a float plan.
- Dress in layers and don't forget to wear a hat and waterproof gloves.
- Make sure there's a place to warm up on board.

WHILE UNDERWAY

- Be aware that cold weather slows your thinking and reaction time. Exhaustion sets in faster, and physical activities take longer to complete.
- Be extra careful onboard. Falling and injuries are more common during cold weather.
- Stay hydrated. You can quickly become dehydrated in cold and windy conditions.
- Wear sunglasses to protect from eye strain and headaches.

Shipshape



Questions to help you prepare

What happens if you get a cramp while paddling?
If you fall into the water, your ability to swim lasts only a short while and re-boarding can become a significant issue, so don't paddle alone in winter.

Can you or your crew get help and handle the boat if someone onboard suffers a heart attack?
I have witnessed and responded to many more heart attacks in the winter than in the summer. It's important to plan for this possibility.

Is your boat prepared for the cold?
Ensure that everything is in good working order. Batteries don't last as long or charge as well in winter, and restarting the engine can be difficult.

Do you have backup navigation systems?
The weather can change quickly, and your visibility can drop to zero, so make sure you have backup navigation systems.

Are you prepared for an emergency?
Make sure you have backup communication equipment as well as water rescue and re-boarding equipment. Have plenty of food and water onboard. Upgrade your medical kit to include space blankets, warming bags for feet and hands, and a more extensive trauma kit. Air splints can stop bleeding and stabilize a sprain or fracture. Don't forget eye drops and ear drops. Ask your crew about their medications, and consider bringing cardiac and pulmonary medications as needed. Asthma attacks are much more frequent in the cold. Plan how you will manage acute medical conditions, such as heart attacks. If you have the room, carry oxygen and an AED.

MORE TIPS FOR BOATING IN COLD WEATHER

- Take shorter, less strenuous trips.
- Share duties with the crew.
- Rely on lists and notes.
- Avoid alcohol consumption.
- Get regular physical checkups with your doctor.
- Practice boarding and moving around the boat safely.
- Look for easier ways to load and unload the boat.
- Relocate electronic equipment (GPS, radar and radio) to be more accessible and their screens easier to read.
- Add additional rails and safety lines, and use non-skid to help with balance in areas you move about in.
- Check for changing weather conditions often.

MORE TIPS FOR BOATING IN COLD WEATHER

- Practice throwing cold lines for docking when no one is around to help.
- Plan trips for earlier in the day when you have more energy to avoid problems with stamina and fatigue.
- Keep the cabin hatch closed and latched when underway to prevent anyone from falling into the cabin during a sudden change in acceleration.
- Keep your body in shape with biking. Take Tai Chi or Yoga classes.
- Don't overload your boat.
- Evenly distribute gear and equipment.
- Use the buddy system for tasks.
- Keep crew members informed on your boat location in case of an emergency
- Leave a float plan with your friends, family and the marina when you go out on the water. The America's Boating Club app saves your boating information, making filing float plans quick and painless.
- Keep fingers out of lines when cleating, especially if people are still embarking or disembarking, as the boat can move and cinch the line.
- Include emergency medicines in your first-aid kit and have a first-aid manual on board.
- Take a CPR course.
- Practice boating skills in cold weather, including docking and backing the boat.
- Teach your crew how to walk downstairs backward (facing the steps), which is helpful when it's snowy or icy.
- Sail with passengers, when possible, as there is safety in numbers. If you're boating on a paddlecraft, don't go it alone.
- Practice crew overboard procedures to maximize your chances of a successful recovery.
- Lastly: Always wear a life jacket. ❖

Gino Bottino, MD, has had wide experience in medical practice and emergency medical matters. A member of United States Power Squadrons First Aid Support Team (FAST) and the Safety Committee, Gino also has a background in competitive sail racing and is familiar with health-related problems afloat.

Destinations

Third time's the charm

After multiple delays, members enjoy fun, food and manatees on St. Johns River

BY BARBARA TYSON

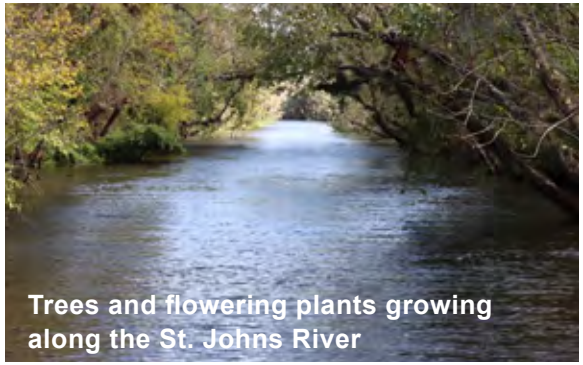
PHOTOS BY DAVE FULLER



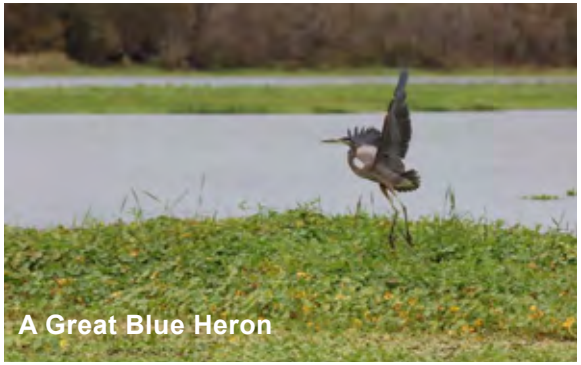
You'll often see alligators along the St. Johns River, like this one taking a sunbath.



Mayaca Native American totem



Trees and flowering plants growing along the St. Johns River



A Great Blue Heron

Destinations



America's Boating Club Atlanta/17 members on the Hontoon Landing trip

After first being blown out by Hurricane Irma in September 2017 and then stopped by COVID-19 in February 2020, 20 America's Boating Club Atlanta members finally made landfall at Hontoon Landing Resort & Marina on the St. Johns River near Deland, Florida, on Nov. 6, 2020.

A brief history lesson

The marina sits just across from Hontoon Island State Park. Established by the Florida Park Service in the 1970s, the island park got its name from William Hunton, the land's original owner in the 1860s. Over time the island's name changed to Hontoon. Before Spanish conquistadors arrived in the late 16th century, the Mayaca Native Americans were the island's first-known inhabitants.

Manatees frequent the St. Johns River and nearby springs. As air temperatures dip, they stay close to the springs, seeking warmer water. November is Manatee Awareness Month, and we were thrilled to be visiting the manatees then.

Our club members have a lot in common with manatees. Much like the gentle giants, we can be found having fun on or in the water and eating (when not working or sleeping). During our trip, we did both.

The fun

We spent Friday and Saturday getting to Hontoon Landing Resort & Marina. It's about a seven-hour drive from Atlanta if you eat in the car and plan bathroom stops during gas stops. Commander Dave and Nan Ellen Fuller trailered the Lees' pontoon boat (plus the couple's own dinghy) from Lake Lanier. Denny and Nancy Warren trailered their Cutwater to a point north on the river and cruised south to Hontoon Landing.

In beautiful weather on Saturday, we spent the day enjoying the sunshine and the river. The Fullers took a dinghy ride. Douglas Townes, a club member who now lives in St. Petersburg, brought his Jet Ski and took other brave members for rides.

On Sunday, we took our first trip downriver a few miles to Blue Spring State Park, known as the home of the manatees. With Hurricane Eta moving in from the Gulf, the weather was warm but cloudy. Visitors to Blue Spring State Park can view manatees in the crystal-clear spring water from the boardwalk, which stretches a third of a mile from the St. Johns River to the headspring.

We only saw one manatee (two if you count the statue). But the beautiful state park was worth the trip, and we did see one heck of an alligator! If you go there by boat, have a small craft you can take ashore. Motorboats must stay away from shore. Thank goodness we had the Fullers' dinghy and a rowboat T.J. Convery had obtained.

Our "tour director" Pam Keene arranged our

Destinations



Dave Fuller, Nan Ellen Fuller, Judy Marcopulos, Virginia Lee and Rhodes Lee sample the local fare.



America's Boating Club Atlanta/17 members sing in the hot tub after a day on the river.

second excursion of the day. Familiar with the area, Pam knew the owner of St. Johns River Eco Tours, Doug Little, who wowed our group with an amazing boating excursion to find wildlife in some hidden places along the river. With the St. Johns running 2 feet higher than normal, most of the wildlife had moved inland. We saw a profusion of birds and vegetation, some of which are only found in this part of the country.

With Hurricane Eta moving closer and bringing lots of rain, Monday was a washout. Some members headed to an oyster joint in Orlando, some went to Kermit's Key West Key Lime Shoppe to buy pies to take home, and others went to Barberville Yard Art Emporium, which has more than 2 acres of brightly painted yard art, statuary and furniture.

The eating

On Friday night, we enjoyed dining at The DeLand Stockyard, and on Saturday morning, Rich Fulgham and his wife, Pam Keene, treated everyone to a four-star breakfast. On Saturday night, we ate dinner at the resort in a great two-bedroom suite with a screened-in porch and a family room. Later, we enjoyed some cool jazz by club members and guitarists John Holland and T.J. Convery.

On Sunday night, we ate at Astor's Blackwater Inn wearing our neon yellow St. Johns River Trip shirts, bright enough to direct traffic. Afterward, we went back to the family room for more music and fun. Some of us decided to see how many members we could squeeze into the suite's indoor hot tub. (The answer is 11— and one guitar!)

Monday evening was the last night at Hontoon for many of us, so we ate dinner at Pitmaster's BBQ. Although Pitmaster's big sign was not lit, we found the place by spotting Commander Dave's yellow Humvee.

Most of us said goodbye on Tuesday as Hurricane Eta blowing across Florida made us concerned about the weather driving home.

This trip provided many wonderful experiences, but one stands out above the rest: It was so good to see our friends for the first time in eight to 10 months that we couldn't get enough of each other! ❖

Barbara Tyson and her husband, Tim, enjoy boating with fellow club members on Georgia's Lake Lanier, Lake Allatoona and Lake Hartwell; the Intracoastal Waterway; Alabama's Lake Eufaula (the Walter F. George Reservoir); and the Tennessee River. Both work for Atlanta Ronald McDonald House Charities and are members of America's Boating Club Atlanta/17. The couple has also set up club programs to support Calvary Children's Home in Power Springs, Georgia, and are planning a day at the lake for the children at Lake Lanier.

Chartering in the Time of Corona

Tips for navigating a BVI charter during the pandemic

BY JOHN FARMER



The Indians

Chartering in the Time of Corona



John Farmer, Jeanette Farmer, Charles Farmer and Sabrina Farmer

Editor's note: Due to the evolving nature of COVID, make sure to check the travel protocols for USVI and BVI for updates prior to traveling.

In November 2021, my family and I took a one-week sailing charter aboard a 40-foot Leopard catamaran in the British Virgin Islands. The four of us flew from the states to the U.S. Virgin Islands then took a fast ferry from St. Thomas to Road Town on Tortola in the British Virgin Islands.

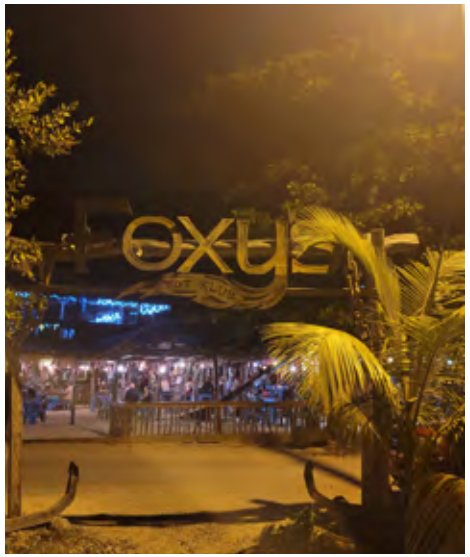
Traveling to BVI

Here's what we learned about cruising during a pandemic:

- You must take a COVID-19 test in the U.S. and receive a negative test result within three days of arrival in the USVI.
- Make a digital copy of your vaccination card showing you are fully vaccinated against COVID-19.
- Submit these documents to the USVI through its online travel screening portal.
- One to three days later you will receive a large green QR code from the USVI for entry permission.
- Fill out the BVI entry forms online no later than 48 hours before travel (you need a digital copy of your U.S. negative COVID-19 test results and proof of vaccination). You may also need travel insurance to cover COVID-19 medical costs in case you get sick.
- Travel to USVI with a valid U.S. passport, proof of full COVID vaccination and the green USVI QR code. You will need a smartphone and BVI cell service for completing and saving forms later. Your U.S. phone will work in the USVI but not in the BVI without international roaming or valid Wi-Fi calling. You also need to be able to access your email on your phone. We rented Wi-Fi for the boat.

Chartering in the Time of Corona





TOP LEFT: Famous metal fire balls during the Trellis Bay moon party

TOP RIGHT: Foxy's on Jost Van Dyke

- Upon entry to BVI, show your entry forms and pay $50 each for a rapid COVID test at the dock.
- Do a nose swab, wait 15 minutes for negative results, and then clear inbound customs with your passport and the entry declaration paperwork you filled out while waiting.

Chartering in the BVI

Once we were in the BVI, we spent the first day after charter check-in on Norman Island, which hosts the famous Willy T's floating bar. The next day we went to Cooper Island to snorkel in the ocean-filled caves, and the following day it was on to Virgin Gorda for The Baths and Leverick Bay.

On the fourth day, we traveled to Anegada to visit the flamingoes. On the fifth day, we traveled to Jost Van Dyke, and the next day, we went back to Norman Island to snorkel in The Indians. On our seventh day in the BVI, we cruised to Trellis Bay on Beef Island to enjoy the full moon party with the famous metal fire balls.

On our last day, we headed back to base to check in by 11 a.m.

Most nights in the BVI, we reserved a mooring ball in advance for $40 or caught a ball for $30 and did not anchor. Keep all receipts of mooring payments as questions sometimes arise.

Leaving the BVI

The process for returning to the U.S. is like traveling to the BVI:

- Three days before returning to the U.S. you must get a COVID test ($50 each). We did ours in a tent near the hospital. (See your friendly taxi driver for advice and transportation. By the way, they drive U.S. cars and scooters on the British side of the road, so be very careful!) You will get the official COVID test results via email, so you still need cell coverage and email access in the BVI.
- Fill out the USVI entry forms through the same online travel screening portal. This is short notice to get another green QR code; if you cut it too close, you can email and ask for an expedited review and approval like we had to do.

Chartering in the Time of Corona



Caves of Cooper Island

- If possible, purchase your ferry tickets back to the USVI in advance. Arrive early with your baggage.
- Fill out the U.S. customs declaration forms. (We had to fill out a five-page CDC form certifying that we were fully vaccinated and didn't have COVID, but we never had to show it to anyone.)

Return to St. Thomas via ferry, clear U.S. customs, taxi to the airport, and check your bags all the way to your destination. We checked our bags to Huntsville, Alabama, but American Airlines pulled them off the plane in Charlotte, North Carolina, our connecting flight, and held them for customs. We had a three-hour layover, and after much discussion, we convinced the airline supervisor that we did not need to go through U.S. customs twice and got our bags transferred to our next flight.

If you have not been fully vaccinated, this process will be much more complicated, more time-consuming (with a quarantine) and more expensive.

The information above was current as of late November 2021, but during the pandemic, everything is subject to change. Be prepared for last-minute variations, and most importantly, research, research, research. Bring cash, as many places don't accept all credit cards. Allow at least one day before and one day after your charter for clearing in, testing, and clearing out. If you are good friends with Sir Richard Branson, you might be able to fly directly on his private jet into the airport on Tortola and then ride his private fast ferry to his private island with its three wind generators. The rest of us must wade through the process above when chartering the BVI. ❖

John Farmer is a retired riverboat captain with 16 years' experience on the Mississippi and Tennessee rivers. A 51-year member of America's Boating Club, he now serves as district educational officer and on the national Navigation Committee. He and his wife, Jeanette, cruised and raced a Catalina 25 for 23 years, winning 14 trophies. They now sail a Catalina 28.

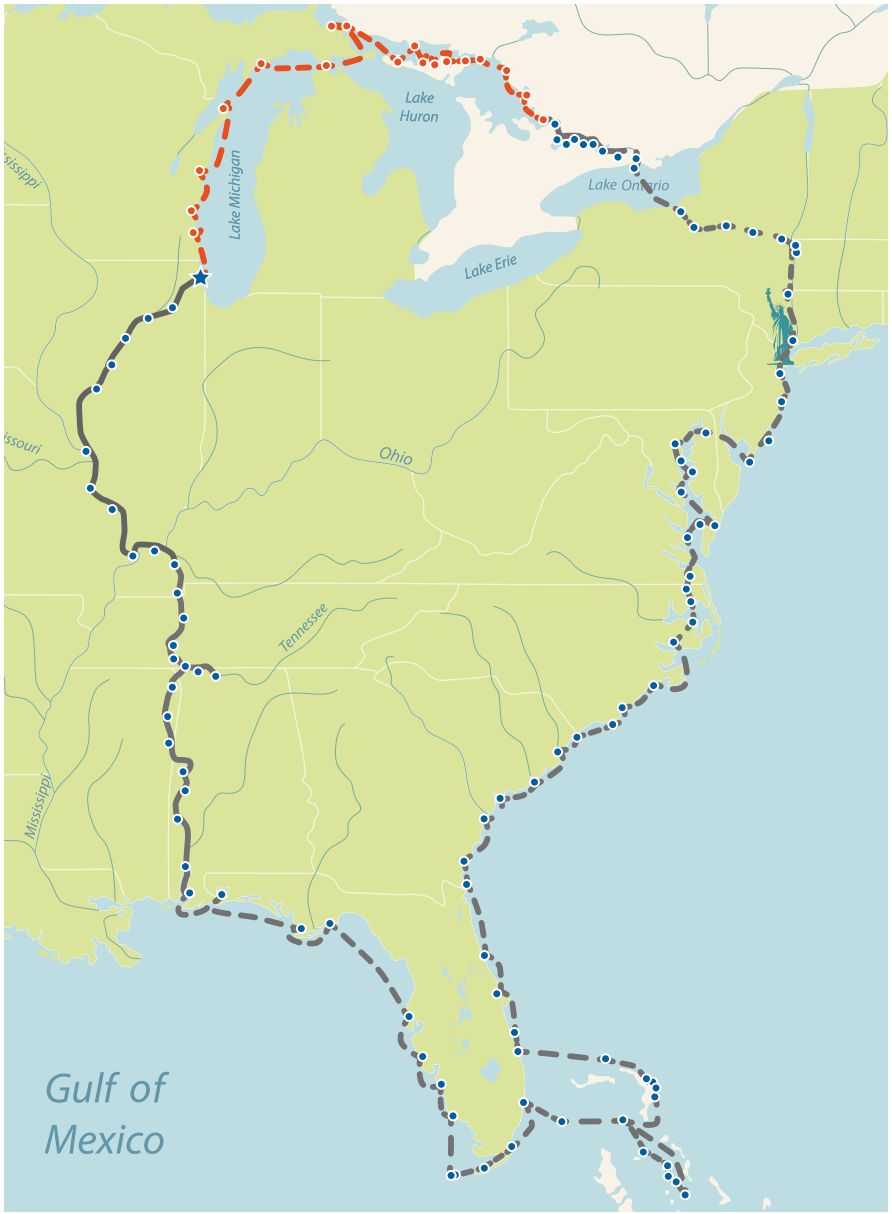
Cruising America's Great Loop

Part 8: Georgian Bay to Waukegan, Illinois

BY JOHN SIMONS

Our Great Loop adventure took one year and covered 6,500 miles. We departed from Waukegan Harbor in mid-September 2015 and, after making a series of left turns, returned to Waukegan Harbor in September 2016. Our crew consisted of John and Priscilla Simons and Dale and Andy Arnold.

Hundreds of "Loopers" make this trip each year. America's Great Loop Cruising Association conducts seminars to help Loopers prepare for the adventure.



If you're just tuning in, catch up on our journey:

Part one — Waukegan, Illinois, to Grand Rivers, Kentucky

Part two — Grand Rivers to Mobile, Alabama

Part three — Mobile to Key West, Florida

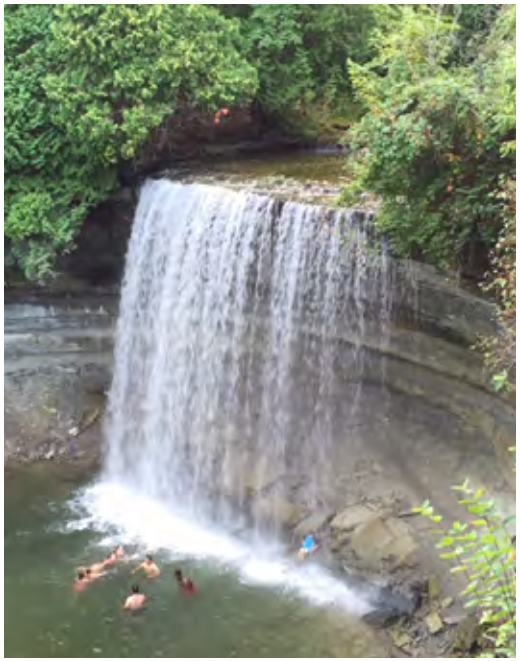
Part four — Key West to the Bahamas and Stuart, Florida

Part five — Stuart to Norfolk, Virginia

Part six — Norfolk to Troy, New York

Part seven — Erie Canal to Georgian Bay

Cruising America's Great Loop





TOP LEFT: People swim the pool below Bridal Veil Falls.

TOP RIGHT: Smoke from the runaway generator

Tied up at Queen's Cove Marina in Severn, Canada, at the western edge of Georgian Bay, we found ourselves at the beginning of the end of our Great Loop Adventure. Before crossing our wake in Waukegan, Illinois, we would transit Georgian Bay, the North Channel and Lake Michigan.

Priscilla and I saw black smoke billowing from our boat's port side while walking back from the Queen's Cove Marina swimming pool. I ran to the boat and unplugged the power cord in case of an electrical fire. I saw Dale in the bilge frantically searching for the generator fuel shut-off when I climbed aboard.

Since our haul out at the Big Chute Railway, the boat's electric water pump has been losing suction, so Dale thought we should also check the generator. It turned out he was right. What's more, the racing generator couldn't be stopped using standard procedures.

When Dale shut off the fuel line, it finally stopped. Onan technicians spent hours trying unsuccessfully to diagnose the problem, costing us thousands. The problem didn't get solved until technicians replaced the fuel injector when we returned to Waukegan.

We had to decide if we could anchor out on a 45-foot motor yacht without a generator *or* an inverter for the remainder of our trip. Could we overcome these first-world inconveniences for a night or two at a time? We wouldn't be able to use Direct TV, the Jacuzzi, air conditioning or heaters, electric stove, microwave, toaster, central vacuum, washer/dryer, hairdryer, water boiler for coffee, or water heater for showers.

While anchoring out, we could only use what we could run off the house battery and recharge with the engines. This included the refrigerator and freezer, lights, water pump, phone and tablet chargers, the hydraulic swim platform, the anchor windlass, and the radio at the helm.

Although it would feel like living on Gilligan's Island, we thought we could cope. Fortunately, we could cook food and boil water on our propane grill. We also have a one-cup water boiler that plugs into a 12-volt outlet. (Thank you, Sam and Denise!) We had

Cruising America's Great Loop





TOP LEFT: The Legend: Roy Eaton broadcasts on the Cruisers Net from the Anchor Inn in Little Current, Ontario.

TOP RIGHT: Rugged scenery in the North Channel

150 gallons of fresh water in our tanks, and we could swim off the boat to wash up.

Severn, Ontario >> Killarney, Ontario

We cast off at 9:30 a.m., heading northwest to Parry Sound, Ontario, Canada. On the way, we stopped for lunch at Henry's Fish Restaurant, a big tourist attraction for boats and float planes. Priscilla had the pike, I had the whitefish, and Dale and Andy had fishcakes. After lunch, we cruised to Big Sound Marina.

Before shoving off, I walked into town to pick up pastries from the local bakery.

Contrary to the forecast, Georgian Bay was a bit blowy. We took 2- to 3-foot waves on the nose until we turned north and took them on the beam. We dropped our speed to 20 mph to smooth out the ride.

After a 59-mile cruise along narrow, twisty channels, we arrived at St. Amant's Hotel and Marina at 1:30 p.m., which turned out to be more of a trailer park than a hotel. St. Amant's has a robust general store with beer, wine and a wide selection of beef jerky. Although we'd been warned off the marina hotel by fellow Loopers, we found the cheeseburgers perfectly fine.

On Saturday morning, I walked south towards Wright's Marina, our other choice. Other than a nice dock, it didn't have much to offer, not even potable water. We had made the right choice. During my walk, I saw numerous piles of bear scat on the road. I guess bears don't always go in the woods.

The next morning, we cast off at 11 a.m. and had a flat ride to Collins Inlet. We arrived at 2 p.m. in the rain. After dropping anchor, we enjoyed the loons and scenery. When the rain stopped, we cooked on the grill and had a wonderful dinner on the fantail.

Sunday morning dawned overcast and cool. We boiled water for tea and coffee on our grill and had cereal for breakfast. At 9:30 a.m., we hauled anchor, and by 10:30 a.m., we were tied up and plugged in at Killarney Mountain Lodge Marina, only 6 miles away. Under new ownership, the marina now has longer, wider docks with 50-amp service.

Herbert Fisheries, our favorite North Channel lunch spot, used to serve fish from a red bus. Although a new restaurant has replaced the bus, the fish tasted as good if not better than we remembered. We

Cruising America's Great Loop





TOP LEFT: Yes, the Georgian Bay channels are very narrow.

TOP RIGHT: Swing bridge at Little Current, Ontario

ordered the six-piece filet meal and received 10 filets. What a great lunch!

After lunch, we swam in the lodge's pool. A solar heating system put the pool at the perfect temperature. The gloomy morning gave way to a sunny and windy afternoon. We met several Little Current locals who'd sailed over on Friday but were waiting for better weather to sail back on Monday. The channel through Killarney looked like a narrow river. The rose granite cliffs shone in the sunlight just a hundred yards away.

Dozens of red Adirondack chairs dotted the property including our dock. Sitting at the water's edge watching the myriad boats pass by was magical.

Killarney >> Little Current, Ontario

On Monday, we cast off at 11 a.m. for the 23-mile cruise to Little Current, where we would stay for two days. The town is home of Roy Eaton's Cruisers Net VHF radio broadcast. From the second floor of the Anchor Inn restaurant, Roy broadcasts news and weather updates and invites area cruisers to call in to say where they are and where they're headed.

We made the Little Current swing bridge opening at 1 p.m. You don't want to be late, as the bridge only opens on the hour.

A short while later, we arrived at the Little Current Marina and tied up on the end of dock B14. Ours was the only boat on B dock, which was already lonely at the end of August.

After returning from a 45-minute dinghy ride, I learned that Canadian Customs had visited for a passport check. The customs officer had it easy, as ours was the only U.S. boat in the marina.

On Tuesday, we attended Roy Eaton's penultimate broadcast of the season at the Anchor Inn.

Little Current >> Meldrum Bay, Ontario

On Wednesday, we cast off at 11 a.m. and cruised 17 miles to the Kagawong Municipal Marina on Manitoulin Island. Bridal Veil Falls is a 1.1 kilometer hike up the hill. Many people swam in the pool below the falls.

Although we'd planned to anchor out in Beardrop Harbour, the forecast was blowy from the north. So, after waiting for the waves to flatten, we cast off at noon for the 17-mile cruise to Gore Bay.

Cruising America's Great Loop



***Changing Latitudes* in Beardrop Harbour**

At 2 p.m., we tied up at Gore Bay Marina. I bought a propane canister at Canadian Tire. We needed more propane now that we had to boil water for tea and coffee on the grill.

With north winds at 15 to 20 mph and even higher gusts, the afternoon and evening were very blowy. By early morning, the winds finally died down. A trawler tied up next to us. The crew said they rocked and rolled all night anchored in the Benjamin Islands, confirming our good judgement in spending the night safely tucked into the marina.

For the next few days, the forecast called for light west winds. That morning, I took a long walk and bought banana bread with chocolate chips from the farmer's market. I wanted something simple for breakfast since we planned to anchor out for a couple nights in Beardrop Harbour.

The well-protected cove has granite ledges and pine trees all around. The name Beardrop comes from the Indians who chased bears up the cliff, forcing them over the edge. The area is part of the Serpent River Indian Reserve.

When we arrived at Beardrop Harbour at 3 p.m., we found one other boat in the anchorage, a Canadian sailboat named *Heimat*.

With only light overnight winds, the cove was flat as glass in the morning. I took the dinghy fishing, pulled into a small cove and hooked a whopper—by far the biggest fish I've caught in Canada. I got the hit on the first cast. That fish almost spooled me until I was able to reel it in. If I'd had a net, I would have gotten it into the boat, but when I lifted it by the line, it broke, and away that monster swam with my chartreuse Rapala.

At 1:30 p.m., we hauled anchor and cruised to Meldrum Bay on Manitoulin Island, home to our favorite restaurant, the Meldrum Bay Inn. Once again, ours was the only boat in the marina.

After a month, we spent our last night in Canada eating a superb dinner at the Meldrum Bay Inn. We spent every penny of our Canadian money on dinner, so we didn't have any Canadian cash to bring home.

The favorable weather continued, and we enjoyed another quiet night in the North Channel plugged into the dock at the Meldrum Bay Marina. Although the temperature dropped into the mid-50s, we delayed turning on the heaters to avoid admitting that it was getting colder.

Cruising America's Great Loop



Meldrum Bay Inn Restaurant

Meldrum Bay >> Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

Leaving Canada, we cast off from Meldrum Bay at 11 a.m. and cruised to Drummond Island to clear U.S. Customs. After we tied up at Drummond Island Marina, two customs agents visited our boat. One agent looked at the rose bush Melanie and John Allen had given us as a boat gift and asked if we had any plants. We surrendered the bush for agricultural inspection.

After clearing customs, we cruised a mile to Harbor Island to anchor for the night. With brisk winds forecast from the south, we tucked in behind a long peninsula. The island provides good protection all around. I went for a swim in the harbor, which had a water temperature of 80 degrees.

At 9 a.m., we hoisted anchor and cruised up the St. Marys River to the George Kemp Marina in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, just south of the Soo locks that connect Lake Superior to the other Great Lakes.

Since it was windy, we would stay at the marina and enter Lake Superior on Tuesday. Few Loopers go to Lake Superior unless they live there. Most head south to Lake Michigan once they've crossed Georgian Bay and the North Channel.

The next day, we cast off and headed to the Canadian Canal Lock to transit to Lake Superior, where we were lifted 21 feet. We cruised up the St. Marys River to Lake Superior. The lock master confirmed that if we rounded the Gros Cap Reef Light, we'd officially be in Lake Superior's open waters. We had achieved our goal of cruising in all five Great Lakes—the grand slam of Great Lakes cruising.

On our way to the lighthouse, it started to rain, and visibility dropped to near zero. We saw a ship on our AIS, a 700-foot freighter coming toward us. We kept to the right, and the ship passed at a safe distance.

Sault Ste. Marie >> Manistique, Michigan

Departing Sault Ste. Marie at 9:30 a.m., we found St. Marys River and northern Lake Huron to be flat as glass as we turned the corner at Detour Pass to head to St. Ignace. For the entire 90 miles, we cruised at 26 mph except when we slowed for small fishing boats and a short stretch of boats on docks.

In St. Ignace, we said goodbye to butter tarts and hello to pasties, a familiar food in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. We thank the Cornish miners, who brought this meat pie delicacy from Cornwall, England.

The following day started out with light drizzle and heavy fog. When the fog started to lift, we headed to the fuel dock to fill up and were on our way by 11:30 a.m. The forecast called for light winds, but we encountered 10- to 15-mph west-southwest winds as we headed west down the Mackinac Straights. By 1:30 p.m., winds were 20 mph, and waves were 2 to 3 feet with the occasional 4-footer rocking the

Cruising America's Great Loop





TOP LEFT: Gros Caps Reef Light on Lake Superior

TOP RIGHT: It's a little blowy at Sister Bay Marina.

boat enough to ring the ship's bell. The entire trip was lumpy and rolly, so we went to Manistique instead of Beaver Island, where we tied up at the municipal marina. Ours was the only transient boat there.

Downtown Manistique's stores and restaurants are just a short walk from the marina. We walked to a winery and microbrewery, whose tasting room overlooked the marina. They had eight microbrews on tap, including an IP-EH, a play on Yooper English or Yoopanese spoken on Michigan's Upper Peninsula, UP for short. Yoopers say "eh" at the end of every sentence, eh.

Manistique, Michigan >> Manitowoc, Wisconsin

Leaving the Manistique dock by 8 a.m. on Friday, we cruised the 73 miles to Sister Bay Marina in Door County, Wisconsin. Dead flat for the first 30 minutes, the big lake started to get lumpy again. When our course took us behind Washington Island, the water flattened out.

That night we ate dinner at the Sister Bay Bowl, so-called because it's also the local bowling alley. It was perch night, and the perch were delicious. Our waitress was a fourth-generation family member of the owners.

On Saturday, we woke to the sound of waves crashing over the breakwall and hitting our boat. With howling winds and pouring rain, we stayed where we were, safely tied up at the Sister Bay Marina.

Despite 35-mph winds with 50-mph gusts and 4- to 6-foot waves on Green Bay, we felt only a gentle rocking in the harbor.

The weather determined our schedule the next day. Since it would be blowy again for two days, we headed out of Green Bay and into Lake Michigan for the trip to Manitowoc, Wisconsin. The trip from Manitowoc to Waukegan is 117 miles. We could easily be home in one day from there.

After departing Sister Bay at 9 a.m., we cruised 30 miles to the Sturgeon Bay Ship Canal, which connects Green Bay to Lake Michigan. The 9-mile canal has three bridges. The cruising guide lists them as 14, 15 and 42 feet. The first bridge opens on the hour and half hour. The second bridge, only 100 yards away, opens at 15 and 45 past the hour, which meant we had to wait in the small space between bridges for the second bridge to open.

Cruising America's Great Loop



We cross our wake in Waukegan Harbor, Illinois.

Manitowoc, Wisconsin >> Waukegan, Illinois

We arrived in Manitowoc at 2:30 p.m., fueled up and pumped out. With our home port of Waukegan only 117 miles away, we could be crossing our wake tomorrow, but we had no reason to rush home. We would become CLODs (cruisers living on dirt) soon enough.

With blowy weather forecast for Monday, we spent two days in Manitowoc, which has a nearby maritime museum and a nice walkway out to the lighthouse on the breakwall.

On Tuesday morning, we cast off at 11 a.m. and cruised 52 miles south to Port Washington, Wisconsin. The wind had lightened and shifted to the west so the seas laid down, and we had a flat, fast ride. We tied up at the Port Washington Municipal Marina at 1:30 p.m.

After two days in Port Washington, we pulled into the fuel dock at McKinley Marina in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on Thursday. After 360 days on the Loop, we learned that the only thing to fear was that someday the trip would end. We were 47 miles from Waukegan.

The next day, after cruising 362 days, we crossed our wake in Waukegan, Illinois, making us officially Gold Loopers. Friends and family greeted us at our slip with a wonderful welcome home party. All in all, we cruised 6,381 miles and burned 6,397 gallons of diesel.

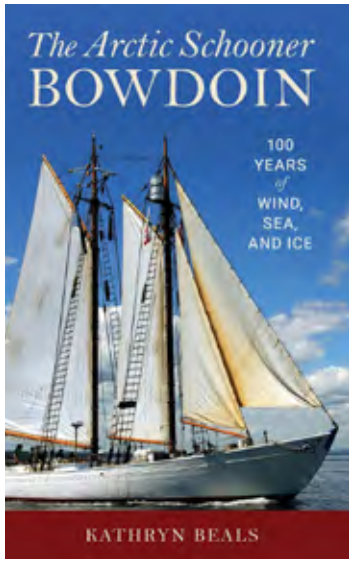
I hope our adventure inspires you to cast off your dock lines and begin the adventure of a lifetime. ❖

A member of Waukegan Sail & Power Squadron/20, John Simons has a USCG Masters License 100 ton. In his second career, he's a broker for Weber Yachts, *which sold* Changing Latitudes *two weeks after his Great Loop cruise. If you need help finding your ideal boat or selling your current one, you can contact John at* John@weberyachts.com. *Look for more of his work on his* blog.

"It is good to have an end to journey toward, but it is the journey that matters in the end."

–Ursula K. Le Guin

Ship's Library



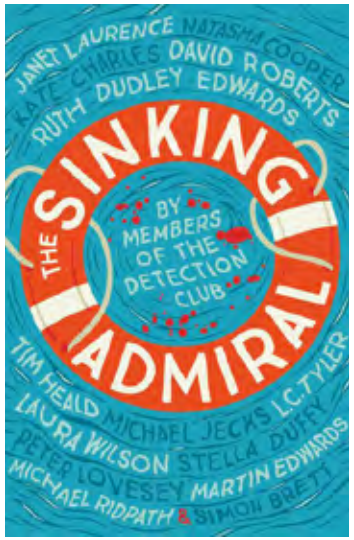
Intrepid vessel

Designed and built for sailing Arctic waters, the gaff-rigged, wooden schooner *Bowdoin,* launched in 1921, is the focus of this informative book on Arctic sailing. Using extracts from the ship's log and journals kept by those who sailed on the schooner, the book describes what it was like to sail these waters as the ship conducted its activities. The first section covers the vessel and the explorations undertaken by the captains and mostly volunteer crews.

The following section discusses the schooner's rebuilding after many years of service (including duty as a naval auxiliary ship in World War II). Then the book covers the years when *Bowdoin* was owned and operated by various sailing groups and the Maine Marine Academy. The final section details the centennial celebration and the ship's recent excursions.

The book contains photographs of the schooner, footnotes, a bibliography and an index. This book makes an excellent starting point for those interested in researching early Arctic exploration. *–C. Henry Depew*

The Arctic Schooner *Bowdoin*: 100 Years of Wind, Sea, and Ice, *Kathryn Beals Down, East Books, $26.95* ➜



Must-read mystery

It's murder, of course. The Admiral is going under—the Admiral Byng, Crabwell's seaside pub, not the infamous naval officer. The proprietor, 'Admiral' Fitz, has just learned a secret that will save the pub and its community. Before he can reveal the secret, his body is found face-down in his boat's scuppers near a note suggesting suicide.

Want to know more? Hunt down a copy of this creative mystery co-written by 14 members of Britain's Detection Club. As in its 1931 inspiration, "The Floating Admiral," each chapter of this round-robin novel is written by a different well-known crime writer. It's a romp.

Amy, the analytical bartender, must manage a host of characters: the suave television promoter, the embittered publisher, the London financier, the vamping cook, the female vicar, the town GP, the teacher who is also her lover, the dodgy lawyer, the resentful teenager, the one-man newspaper and, of course, the bungling coppers. Unlike its namesake, will the Admiral Byng survive? *–Richard McCandless*

The Sinking Admiral, *The Detection Club, Harper Collins, $12.79* ➜

Waypoints



2021 America's Boating Club Valley Forge/5 Summer Cruise participants

The cruise that really happened

America's Boating Club Valley Forge/5 members once again joined the club's annual summer cruise on the Chesapeake in July 2021, after missing out in 2020. My husband, Joe, and I shared a 42-foot catamaran with Ginny and Lance Parry, Nick and Rosemary Montalto, and Mike and Karen Gibson. Rosemary and Karen came by land in St. Michaels.

We started the cruise on Thursday night with the threat of a tropical storm looming. Happily, the storm brought only rain and mild winds. On Friday morning, we made our way to the mooring field outside the Annapolis Yacht Basin.

Our first boat crawl took place aboard *Sanguine Odyssey,* where we enjoyed a delicious champagne drink. The following morning, we tested our dingy and wandered toward land. It was touch and go, but we made it. We took the 9 a.m. tour of Thomas Point Lighthouse, which was worth the trip. Later that day, we had a nice dinner at O'Brien's, where Adam Stevenson of the Chesapeake Bay Chapter of the U.S. Lighthouse Society shared some stories about the history of Chesapeake Bay lighthouses, including Thomas Point.

On Sunday, we headed to Herrington Harbour South for a boat crawl on *Sway*. We enjoyed the famous Goombay Smash prepared by the Joneses and Rossis. The following day, we enjoyed a picnic with entertainment by "The World Famous" Eastport Oyster Boys. The crew got up to dance when Terri Drumel joined the band with a percussion shaker.

Next, we moved to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michaels. I hosted my Commander's Cocktail Party on the lower deck of a nice pavilion, where Kristen Greenway also gave a fabulous presentation on the museum.

On Wednesday, we toured around the museum and had a private tour of *Maryland Dove*, a replica of an original English ship that helped found Maryland. We enjoyed a fabulous natural light show at night, followed by a rainbow and parts of a double arc.

Waypoints





TOP LEFT: Cruisers aboard the ferry in front of Thomas Point Lighthouse: Mike Gibson, Patty Pezely, Joe Pezely, Wayne Barrett, Meridith Barrett and an unnamed participant

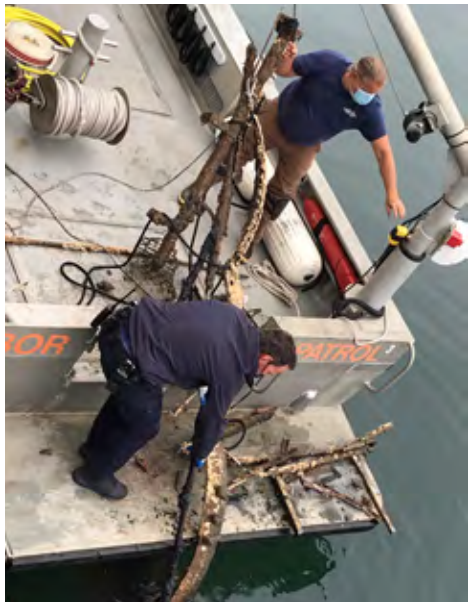
TOP RIGHT: A rainbow frames the fabulous view of St. Michaels, Maryland.

On Thursday, we moved on to Haven Harbour Marina in Rock Hall, Maryland. That first night, we sampled mojitos provided by the *It's About Time* crew, followed by a cookout. The next day, several of us walked around the shops in Rock Hall, many of which were under new ownership. Our crew went to Waterman's for dinner, where we ate out on the deck and enjoyed the band.

The cruise ended with a docktail party presented by the crew of *Lux*—Mike and Georgiana Maszczenski, Terry and Peggy Slattery, and Carol Rechner of the Annapolis Sail & Power Squadron, who served yummy, creative cocktails and appetizers.

We ate our final dinner at Bay Wolf, with entertainment by Gray Armstrong and Joe Pezely, who presented the Forward Throttle Award. Credit for the cruise's success goes to Barb and Russ Jones, who have been organizing the Commander's Cruise for the past 15 years and continue to do a fabulous job. *–Patty Pezely*

Waypoints





PHOTOS BY PEGGY CIOLINO

TOP LEFT: The Harbor Patrol boat supplies extra power to pull up this serpent-like bit of ocean jetsam.

TOP RIGHT: Despite being hard at work, Ron Slocum and Pete Seagoe have a good time on the fishing dock.

RIGHT: Bruce Wagner makes one of many trips to and from the dumpster with debris from the bottom of the seafloor.



Good, clean fun

Santa Barbara Sail & Power Squadron/13 participated in the Harbor Department's Operation Clean Sweep in May 2021. Our squadron made an impressive showing at this fun event.

Some members got filthy hauling harbor seabed sludge, including Ron and Vicki Slocum, Pete and Suzette Seagoe, Rich and Peggy Ciolino, Bruce Wagner, Steve Worthington, Michele Devlin, and Virginia Johns.

The cleanup effort centered around the travel lift pier, the commercial fishing docks to the north and south of the pier, and the Harbor Patrol dock. The most common items hauled out appeared to be lobster and crab pots. Several heavy items had to be pulled out by hoists. We had no trouble filling the dumpster to the brim.

This event marked a new start to the general process of cleaning up around the harbor, a process that takes about seven years going from dock to dock. So, if you missed out last year, you can join the fun in May 2022, this time at a different dock.

–Dennis Johns

Waypoints





PHOTOS BY TOM FRANCIS

TOP LEFT: Members' boats on the Sandusky River

TOP RIGHT: Members disembark for lunch at the Tackle Box II.

Luncheon cruise draws a crowd

Columbus Sail & Power Squadron/7 launched six boats and four personal watercraft from Dempsey Access on Sandusky Bay on Saturday, July 10, 2021. In addition to Columbus Squadron members, members and friends from the Toledo and Port Clinton squadrons participated along with some non-members. Three members who couldn't participate joined us at the launch ramp to wish us a safe trip.

We could not have picked a more beautiful day: The sun was bright and warm, and Sandusky Bay was flat and calm. As we left the launch area, we crossed the bay and entered the Sandusky River on the bay's west side. We saw eagles perched in the trees and flying overhead when we entered the river. The river was beautiful. Birds were everywhere as people skied, swam and sat aboard anchored boats just enjoying the river and the lovely sunny day.

As we arrived at the Tackle Box II, we tied up in front of the restaurant. Since the inside was busy with locals eating lunch, we ate lunch on the patio overlooking the river. Three other couples arrived to join our group during lunch, two from Columbus and one from Port Clinton. What a day, what a group!

On the way back, we saw a young doe on a manicured lawn. The wind began blowing out of the north as we left the river. Out on the bay, the waves picked up, with 1- to 2-footers and an occasional 3-footer.

As we arrived back at Dempsey Access, everyone helped each other get tow vehicles into place and load boats onto trailers. Afterward, several of us ended up at Toft's for ice cream to complete a great day on the Sandusky Bay and Sandusky River.

–Phil Osbourne

Waypoints





PHOTOS BY TINKER MURPHY

ABOVE: Stephanie Murphy holds a smoke flare during the Flare Up.

RIGHT: Banana River Sail & Power Squadron/23 Commander Jim Merker watches Hsiao Ching Lin shoot a flare gun during the Banana River Flare Up.

Banna River Flare Up

Banana River Sail & Power Squadron/23 held a flare demonstration and training event June 5, 2021, at the Eau Gallie (Causeway) Boat Ramp in Melbourne, Florida. Ten people came out to practice using pyrotechnic signaling devices.*–Jim Merker*

Last Horizon

MERIT MARK AWARDS

Senior Member,
5 merit marks

Life Member,
25 merit marks

Emeritus Member,
50 merit marks

⚓ Indicates online obituary

James Charles Addy, P
Naples (FL) Squadron/22

P/D/Lt/C Linda A. Adelman, P ⚓
Pittsburgh (PA) Squadron/7
Senior Member, 17 mm

P/C Clinton R. Albrecht, AP
Annapolis (MD) Squadron/5
Senior Member, 20 mm

Rita W. Bailey
Palm Beach (FL) Squadron/8

P/R/C Edward F. Bauer, SN ⚓
South Shore (NY) Squadron/3
Life Member, 36 mm

P/C Pearl A. Bauer, AP ⚓
South Shore (NY) Squadron/3
Life Member, 34 mm

Catherine B. Brech, S
Staten Island (NY) Squadron/4,
1 mm

P/D/C William D. Bridge, SN
San Diego (CA) Squadron/28
Life Member, 45 mm

David S. Chernoff, AP
Chicago (IL) Squadron/20, 5 mm

Michael G. Collins, JN
San Diego (CA) Squadron/28
Senior Member, 9 mm

Karen P. Cramer ⚓
Cape Fear (NC) Squadron/27

Lt Michael J. Curci, AP
Pensacola (FL) Squadron/15
Senior Member, 5 mm

Bruce P. Derrington
Fort Myers (FL) Squadron/22

Frederick Dreischerf, AP
Fort Myers (FL) Squadron/22,
9 mm

Cheng-Tze "Sue" Dunlap
Spokane (WA) Squadron/16
Senior Member, 9 mm

P/C Braxton R. Ezell, SN
Manatee (FL) Squadron/22
Senior Member, 17 mm

Carol L. Fey, AP
Skokie Valley (IL) Squadron/20
Senior Member, 6 mm

Vincent J. Gabriele, AP ⚓
South Shore (NY) Squadron/3
Life Member, 42 mm

P/C Gordon H. Gaertner, SN
Annapolis (MD) Squadron/5
Life Member, 31 mm

P/R/C William R. Gillette, AP
Key West (FL) Squadron/8
Life Member, 30 mm

P/Lt/C John C. Goetzman, P ⚓
Milwaukee (WI) Squadron/10
Life Member, 35 mm

Marlene Guthrie, S
Cocoa Beach (FL)
Squadron/23, 1 mm

P/C Joan Harris, P
Jones Beach (NY) Squadron/3
Senior Member, 24 mm

James C. Harvey, AP ⚓
Cambridge (MD) Squadron/5
Senior Member, 18 mm

P/C Phyllis J. Hayes, SN
Tacoma (WA) Squadron/16
Life Member, 36 mm

Thomas M. Himmelmann, JN
Annapolis (MD) Squadron/5
Senior Member, 10 mm

Kenneth Hislop, JN
Sebastian Inlet (FL)
Squadron/8, 4 mm

P/C Gerald Walter Iler, SN ⚓
Annapolis (MD) Squadron/5
Life Member, 26 mm

P/C Kenneth B. Jennings Jr., AP ⚓
Charleston (SC) Squadron/26
Life Member, 38 mm

P/D/C James F. Keil, AP
Cape Coral (FL) Squadron/22
Life Member, 26 mm

Stillman D. Knight Jr.
Perdido Bay (AL) Squadron/15,
1 mm

P/C Marvin S. Krainbrink, AP
Port Huron (MI) Squadron/9
Emeritus Member, 50 mm

Last Horizon

HOW TO SUBMIT

Family, squadron commanders or other authorized representatives may submit reports of USPS members who have crossed the bar at theensign.org/last-horizon. Obituaries may be submitted online.

⚓ Indicates online obituary

P/C Ronald L. Lacy, AP
Naples (FL) Squadron/22
Senior Member, 5 mm

Anthony R Lanni, AP
Liberty Harbor (NJ) Squadron/4
Life Member, 26 mm

P/C Ed Lashley Jr., SN
Golden Corner Lakes (SC) Squadron/26
Senior Member, 18 mm

P/D/Lt/C Michael Lebeduik III, JN ⚓
Delhigh (PA) Squadron/5
Senior Member, 22 mm

P/D/Lt/C Glenn C. Mathis Sr., SN
Galveston Bay (TX) Squadron/21
Life Member, 39 mm

Terre Matthews ⚓
Pamlico (NC) Squadron/27

Colletta Joan Montfort, S
Cocoa Beach (FL) Squadron/23
Senior Member, 8 mm

Charles A. Morgan, AP
Stark County (OH) Squadron/7
Life Member, 28 mm

P/C Frederick G. Mueller, AP
Banana River (FL) Squadron/23
Senior Member, 17 mm

P/D/C John "Jack" C. Newman, AP
St. Paul (MN) Squadron/10
Life Member, 44 mm

Robin R. Newton, AP
Peace River (FL) Squadron/22

Stf/C Wayne F. Partie, SN
Naples (FL) Squadron/22
Life Member, 30 mm

P/C Martin L. Resnick, AP
Charles River (MA) Squadron/34
Senior Member, 6 mm

P/C Richard L. Saip, SN
Des Moines (IA) Squadron/30
Life Member, 29 mm

P/C Norman H. Schmotzer, AP
Palm Beach (FL) Squadron/8
Life Member, 26 mm

P/C Richard W. Schultz, AP
Tokyo (JP) Squadron/13
Senior Member, 10 mm

P/C Edward C. Schwartz, SN ⚓
Atlanta (GA) Squadron/17
Life Member, 40 mm

P/R/C Ann L. Scotten, SN
Peace River (FL) Squadron/22
Senior Member, 17 mm

P/C William R. Slye Jr., SN
Annapolis (MD) Squadron/5
Life Member, 35 mm

P/D/C Millie Steffe, P
St. Louis (MO) Squadron/30
Senior Member, 24 mm

P/C Michael J. Upchurch, S
Galveston Bay (TX) Squadron/21, 4 mm

Ann VanNorman
Detroit (MI) Squadron/9

P/C David L. Viers, SN ⚓
Richmond (VA) Squadron/5
Life Member, 29 mm

Lt Charles Weaver, P
Beaufort (SC) Squadron/26
Senior Member, 5 mm

Lt/C James Weaver ⚓
San Luis Rey (CA) Squadron/28, 4 mm

Suzan R. Weaver ⚓
San Luis Rey (CA) Squadron/28, 3 mm

P/C Edwin T. Wood, SN
Hilton Head (SC) Squadron/26
Life Member, 25 mm

P/D/C William E. Wood, P
Portland (OR) Squadron/32
Life Member, 27 mm

Classifieds

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CONNECTICUT MEMBERS Yacht and small boat insurance with USPS or other marine companies. Please call Ross Hatfield at 203-256-5660. Keep your life jackets within reach.

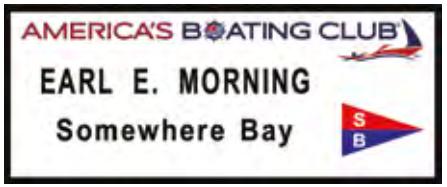
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Bitter End



GEORGE H. DOERNER

Pensacola Lighthouse

To help mariners locate the hard-to-find Pensacola Bay, the lightship *Aurora Borealis* was stationed there in 1824. Construction of the first Pensacola Lighthouse tower began in 1836. However, at only 30 feet tall, the tower received many complaints from mariners.

Construction of the present lighthouse began in 1856, and the new 150-foot tower was lit on Jan. 1, 1859. It sits on a bluff located on the Pensacola Naval Air Station, placing it 190 feet above sea level. Composed of 344 glass prisms in a hollow beehive shape, the 9-foot-tall, 6-foot-wide lens has a range of 27 nautical miles.

Electricity replaced kerosene to light the tower in 1939. Before then, lighthouse keepers had to pull clockwork mechanism weights every two hours to keep the lens rotating. Every two hours during daylight, they climbed 177 spiral steps while carrying two 40-pound 5-gallon buckets of oil to supply the lamp.

We arrived on a foggy day but managed to take a photo after the fog lifted. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974, the Pensacola Lighthouse and Maritime Museum is currently open by reservation only. For more information, see the events page on the lighthouse museum's website.

–Bridget Doerner

This article first appeared in the Skokie Valley Sail & Power Squadron/20 newsletter, Running Lights.

Bitter End



SHIRLEY HEALD

■ Email ensign@hq.usps.org by Feb. 28 with the location depicted above for a chance to win a gift from our Ship's Store. We will choose a winner at random from all correct responses. Carlos Esteves and others correctly identified the Fall 2021 location, El Morro in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The Ensign is always accepting new photos for Where away? Send your photos to the above email for possible inclusion in an upcoming issue!



Transom Tales

■ **When I was a child**, I always wanted a magic carpet. By naming our Hunt 36 Down East Express *Magic*, I could add a carpet with the boat's name on it. Now I have a "Magic" carpet, and the bonus is that I also have a "Magic" hat, too! (The real story is that whenever I'm on the water, it's magical, so the boat must provide the magic.) *–Don Perrine*

Transom Tales

■ **My first sailboat**, *Kuleana* has been on the hard for repairs since November 2017, but I hope to have it back in the water soon. It gets its name from the Hawaiian word "kuleana," which, loosely translated, means a reciprocal responsibility between people and the things they are responsible for. This reciprocal relationship maintains the balance between people and the natural world. *–John Zeigler*



The man who rows the boat seldom has time to rock it.

–Bill Copeland

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