

December 2020
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Port Tacks

The Finger Lakes Yacht Club, Village Marina, Watkins Glen, NY

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Please send any comments, questions or corrections to:
editor@flyc.us

Commodore's Comments

by Terry Stewart

SV Syren

From the New Commodore

Hello everyone. Terry here. Dirk and I enjoyed putting all the boats away. Hope you did too! It's a fine idea to take a walk around your boat once in awhile, checking your pads and stands. Make sure you are still sitting straight up. The wind can make the whole rig vibrate and if you're on stands sometimes things settle and change.



That said, launch time is right around two corners (Christmas & Easter) and down the hallway a bit! My former stint as "Commodore" was 2004. We still raced to Lodi and the "theme" was the "Great Explorers". Denis Kinglsey was Thor Hyderdahl, Tom Alley was Desoto and Emmit Nester rented elaborate costumes to represent an explorer I can't remember the name of.

A big thank you to Dawn for her efforts to stay on top of things last year, I hope I can do as well. It was (and still is) quite the year. Even as restrictive as policies were, our actual ability to get on the water worked out fairly well. Let's hope for the best in 2021. Now sail on thru the Holidays.

-Terry

Vice Commodore's Comments

by John Chesbrough

SV Sacré Bleu



I'll join those saying, "Aw gee, where did the summer and our sailing go so quickly," and add, "Where did all the water go?" Right now, the water level at the marina is alarming but the winter drainage accounts for that. If we have a normal winter weather

season, we can hope for replenishing the lake, but normal weather seems to be scarce.

Speaking of scarcities, I hope there will be a dearth of political flags / banners / posters at the marina but I suppose that's a tall order, asking someone to stop kicking the dead horse.

As winters develop a milder character, we can work on our boats in the storage yard more often.

Thank you, Terry and Dirk, for squeezing 50 pounds of boats into a 40 pound bag.

- John

From the Treasurer



by Denis Kingsley

SV Tark

The balance in our checking account has remained relatively static throughout this unusual year. The only recent activity has been depositing the few checks which have been received for next year's dues.

Only about 5+ months to launch. Stay well.

- Denis, still cooking the books.

Port Tacks

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Webmaster
Tom Alley webmaster@flyc.us

2020 Final Race Results

by The FLYC Race Committee

The following table represents the final standings of the 2020 race season. Thanks to everyone who helped out with managing the races, setting and retrieving race marks, and and with all of the other details involved in running a race. Most of all, thanks to everyone who helped recruit a new racer this year. Keep

Tony Kutyna, Jim McGinnis & Tom Alley

inviting more, because racing truly is a great example of, "The more, the merrier!"

See you in 2021! Your race committee:

- Tony, Jim & Tom

FLYC Season Race Scores - 2020

			Throw-Outs		2								
			Date ->		6/6	6/27	7/5	7/25	8/9	8/23	8/29	10/10	
			# Boats ->		7	4	7	3	6	3	5	4	4.9

Secretary's Column

by Sue Morris



Happy Thanksgiving to you all!

2020 has been quite a challenge and not over yet! A different experience as we had no social events and the end of year dinner for nominations into next year was canceled. Thanks to everyone who was a part of FLYC for 2020. Your help is greatly appreciated.

The following is the Slate of Officers 2021 FLYC:

Commodore: Terry Stewart
Vice Commodore: John Cheesbrough
Rear Commodore: OPEN
Directors (2-year term):
Sean Zimba
Nancy Sisbarro
Directors (1-year remaining)
Jim Morris
Tom Alley

The following have volunteered to continue in their current roles when appointed by the new Board of Directors:

Treasurer: Denis Kingsley
Secretary: Sue Morris

Other positions to be appointed by the new Board are as follows:

SV Sails Call

Social Committee:

Co-chair: Maggie Martin
Co-chair: Lynne McGinnis

Race Committee:

Chair: (Traditionally the Rear Commodore)
Members: Tom Alley
Jim McGinnis

Thank you to all who have been appointed and volunteered. 2021 is a new and exciting year!

Finally, for all 2020 members, a reminder that the Board of Directors voted to reduce renewal dues to \$10 because of the extremely limited activities the club was able to hold in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Stay safe and healthy!

- Sue, FLYC Secretary

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Send any membership forms and checks to the following address:

Sue Morris
P.O. Box 14
Pine Valley, NY 14872

Socially Speaking

by Maggie Martin & Lynne McGinnis



FLYC Social Committee Report

We hope that this finds you all well. COVID-19 has affected us all in ways that we could not have anticipated one year ago. We are Thankful for our boating community and for being able to get out on the water this year.

At this time of year, we are planning the social calendar for next season. Having had to give up nearly every 'normal' activity last year, we are thinking about some ways to modify what we have done in the past. The social gatherings that we had were outside – a good start with fresh air, but to avoid close contact we had to give up large gatherings. We are looking for creative

SV Aquarelle & SV Brewster

solutions; maybe shared dinners that are 'take out' - back to your boat? We can do the lighting up the harbor even if it is not a community event, maybe a boat parade on a holiday weekend? Your suggestions are always welcome.

With the election behind us, we can put away our political banners and fly the flag of our country.

Wishing of all of our marina friends a Happy Holiday Season however you celebrate!

- Maggie & Lynne

Contact: Maggie 607-621-7247
Lynne 607-426-7914
Email both at social@flyc.us

Winning the Barge Race

By Jim McGinnis

September 12th, 2020 was a day I will not soon forget. That was the day we won the Barge Race on *SV Brewster*. It's in the books. Most of you know that the Barge Race is hosted by the Seneca Yacht Club the weekend after Labor Day each year. It starts at the outer marker buoy to the Cayuga-Seneca Canal and consists of one lap around the Navy Barge (11 miles south) and back. 22 miles round trip.

Seems simple enough. Yet other notable winners in our Watkins Glen Marina are quite proud of the accomplishment. I know of Mike Crouse, Tom Alley and Al Barton to name a few. (Let me know if there are others in the group.)

On that Friday afternoon, September 11th, Lynne and I motored up into a chilly and brisk north wind arriving in Geneva at about 5PM. Mike Crouse and Dee were a couple hours behind but arrived before dark. Mike did run aground in the shallow State Park marina and had to tie *Seek Ye First* up to just the bow to the nose of a pier. *Brewster* was able to slide into a rental slip since we only draw 4½ feet. We had a nice dinner on the boat and headed off to bed fairly early, as the pre-race meeting is at 9AM.

Mike's race crew showed up Saturday morning and were ready and raring to go. And there was some trash talk that needed to be attended to with other racers. Maggie Martin and John Chesbrough drove up on Saturday morning and met us at the boat to crew on *Brewster*.

The handicaps are calculated for the boats prior to the race. Every boat gets a start time based on distance and PHRF rating. 13 boats entered the race with just two from FLYC. The sun was shining, and air was light as we left the dock.

The gun sounded and the first boat was off at 10 AM, heading south into a south wind. We started at 10:45 and Mike at 10:55. Mike was sporting new, all black head and main sails. I remarked to my crew that it looked like a race between the Good Humor Ice Cream Man (me on the beamy white Hunter 336 - *Brewster*) and Darth Vader (Mike on the dark blue with black sails Islander 36 - *Seek Ye First*). "Luke, I am your father." (ie. - I will own you)

So, we headed south down the lake into the south wind tacking back and forth. From time to time, our crew screaming "Starboard!" when getting a little too close to the 13 crossing boats as we gained on the fleet.

The wind started picking up and were seeing some waves building at the same time. It seemed in no time that we were

SV Brewster

in 25 knot winds from the south and 3-foot waves. A Marshall Cat Boat that was being single handed dropped his main and called it a day. All others pressed on. Seneca Lake is two miles wide at the north end so the tacks are long, but you have to watch the depth – at one point we saw 10 feet of water on the depth sounder and decided to tack quickly.

About two hours into the race, Mike had caught us and was preparing to pass ahead. Just then his jib sheet let go and was flapping in the heavy air and could not be recovered. Later we learned that he was trying to change the headsail to reduce sail area. He turned back to Geneva and pulled down the sails.

Winds were now gusting to 28 and occasional bigger waves caught our attention as the spray blasted across the deck. (Note to self – consider a spray dodger for *Brewster*). Thankfully, John was taking the full force of it and Maggie and I tucked in behind him. Lynne was in her typical racing position - below decks.

Everything in the boat was tossed onto the cabin sole as a result of the wind and waves. The dingy and spinnaker bags hopped off the V berth and dishes we had not seen in years flew through the air. Our heavy cooler jumped over the door sill in the main cabin and into the head. Maggie said that if the wind passed 30 knots – maybe we should consider retiring. But we pressed on.

We were in the lead as we approached the Barge after three hours of pointing to weather. The wind continued to increase, and we saw 31 knots on the anemometer. So, we were able to round the Barge and turn back to Geneva.

Dead downwind we were flying. We hit 9.2 knots on the speed indicator as we could feel ourselves surfing down a wave with the sails wing and wing. I furled the jib as we were yawing down the waves and didn't need to sail area. (No, we never did put a reef in the main.) The ride back was quick, and we could only see a few other boats still in the race.

It turns out just five of the original 13 completed the course. We crossed the line with fresh beers all around and were thrilled to be able to pull down the mainsail and head into calm water in the marina. We headed over to the Seneca Lake Yacht Club building to watch the remaining boats come in. Just about everyone had a tale of something breaking on the boat under the load.

Yes, it was a blast. And a day we will long remember on *Brewster*.

-Jim

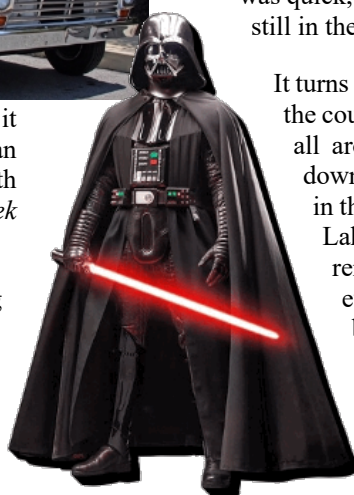




Photo 1: Winning crew of the 2020 Seneca Barge Race. L to R: John Chesbrough, Maggie Martin, Jim and Lynne McGinnis.

I am a Sailor

By Katie Alley

A trip down memory lane... This article originally appeared in the Nov/Dec 2016 issue of Good Old Boat Magazine and is reprinted here with permission.

o o o o o

I am a sailor. I always have been, and I believe I always will be. Most people, when they hear the word sailor, picture the stereotypical image of an older man with a prickly white beard and large, worn, blocky hands. Plenty of the sailors I know match that description. The majority are retired and purchased a boat in which to invest their time. However, there are other sailors. Families with children buy boats on which to pass summer days. Young couples, who typically have a strong interest in sailing from former experiences, purchase boats too. All these sailors gather in one spot and form a community: The marina. I like to think of the Watkins Glen Village Marina as my genuine home because it is where I am truly happy. It reminds me of what I am.

I became a sailor because my dad – whom I refer to as Captain – was drawn to both the sky and the water. When he could not become a pilot, he acquired a Grampian 26. During the 1990s, he earned the status of senior navigator and obtained a captain's license. He even purchased a larger boat, an Alberg 35 that I sail on today. My parents circumnavigated Lake Ontario while Mom was pregnant with me, so I am not exaggerating when I say I have been on boats since I was in the womb.

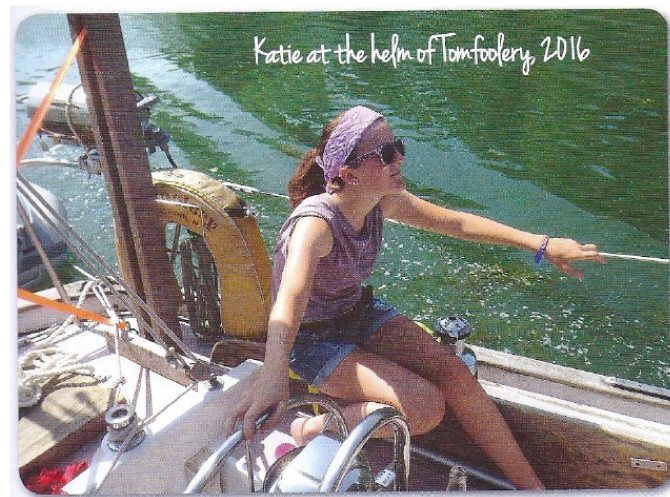
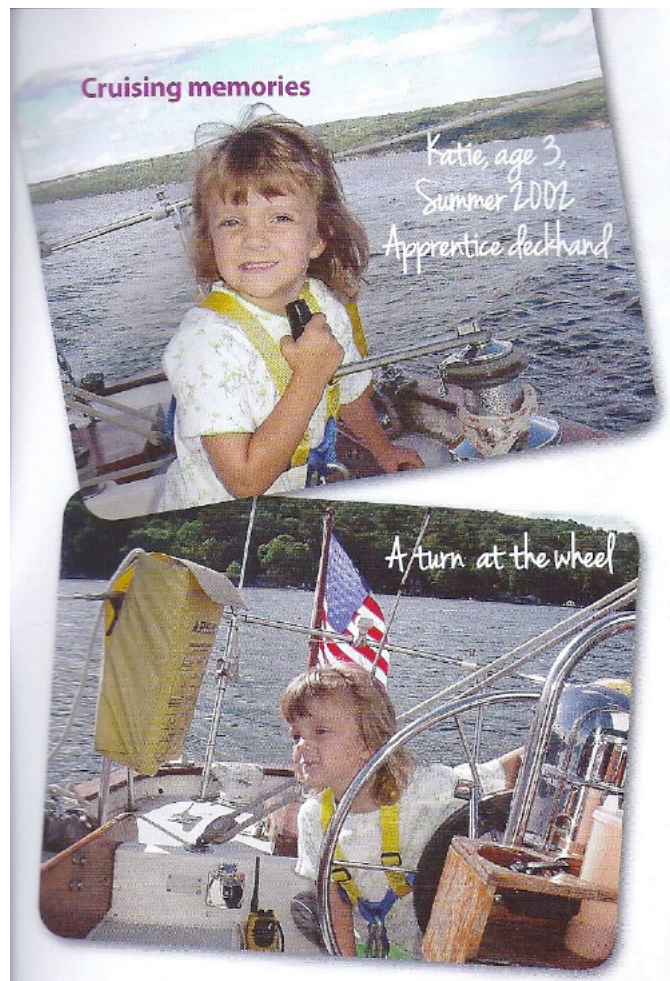
Early Days

During my childhood, I spent the endless, hot, dull summer days on *Tomfoolery*, the Alberg 35. Captain would put me in a harness and tie me to the jackline running along the sidedeck so I wouldn't fall into the cold waters of Seneca Lake. I enjoyed sitting on the deck, feeling the cool, crisp breeze in my thin hair while watching other boats shift their tall white sheet-like sails across their foredecks.

On Saturday afternoons, the local yacht club had races and I came along with Captain's crew. They became good friends of mine. On Sundays, Captain, my mom, and I would sail for the luxury of it. We would always sail past the salt plant on the west side of the lake. Occasionally, when I behaved well, Captain would let me touch the steering wheel or the winches. The old men back at the dock would say, "Captain Tom, I believe you have a sailor in the works."

As I grew up, I developed a familiarity with the loose boards and liveaboard boats of Dock 4 and the adults I saw regularly at yacht club picnics. Everyone knew me as Tom Alley's daughter. My younger brother tagged along to these picnics occasionally and sailed infrequently. He preferred the television and comforts of the house. My mom generally stayed home with him, leaving me to join Captain and the racing crew.

SV Tomfoolery



Acquiring Skills

When I was 14, I took my first boating class and earned my boating card. I learned sailing terminology and could finally put a name to that rope I had been grabbing all those years and recognize terms Captain used frequently. Sailing made more



placed well. We practiced man-overboard drills despite Seneca's cold water. We sailed the entire length of Seneca in windy, rainy, and wavy conditions. We learned how to swap out a sail in stormy weather. We navigated to an unfamiliar lake when original plans did not work out. We challenged ourselves in circumstances in which other experienced sailors may have chosen to stay put. Sailing demands passion and a sense of adventure, and we certainly possess these.

Confirmation

Along the way, I'd acquired several new titles including "veteran junior sailor," "youth committee co-chair holder," and even "the dockboy's girlfriend" for a while. One of the junior sailing coaches told me, "Young lady, get a good education, make a lot of money, and buy yourself a boat." I thought about his advice regularly while lying in my berth on *Tomfoolery* awaiting sleep. I know now what he said is what I want to do. It is exactly what I want to do.

Another retired sailor I knew made money by charging people for rides on his boat and then took his wife and his boat down to Georgia for the entire winter. I listen to all the experienced older sailors' stories of sailing in Lake Ontario races with hundreds of boats or navigating the vast ocean and meeting new faces in unfamiliar harbors along the canals and coasts. One day I will visit and experience these places, because I am a sailor.

Captain routinely recited an old proverb, "A smooth sea does not make a skillful sailor." I do not need the luxuries of TV, air conditioning, or WiFi; all I need is the luxury of the wind in my sails. I can navigate the shifty winds of Seneca Lake, make my way through the canals, travel anywhere in the world, and never come back. I will forever treasure the oranges, pinks, and yellows of the vibrant Seneca Lake sunsets. Our dock neighbor, an older man who lives on his boat, said to me that sailing "is tomfoolery, all of it." I am passionate about the foolishness of putting a big sheet up in the sky to push me slowly through the water. Another older sailor in the marina, watching his boat being launched for another season, said to me, "Gee, Katie, the older I get the more unsure I am about all of this."

As I get older, I feel ever more confident and certain. I am a sailor.

-Katie

sense to me. There's more to it than just hoisting your sails and sitting back waiting for the wind to magically move your vessel. Being a sailor is not simple.

By age 15, I had learned more sailing tactics and taken on a leadership role at the marina. To increase the number of younger members, the marina created the Seneca Junior Sailing Program. The dockmaster's son, my best friend whom I call my first mate, and I became very involved in the program. As coaches, the Captain and several other older sailors taught the club's teenagers how to efficiently dock, cruise, and race their sailboats.

There is a process to leaving the dock. The correct lines have to be taken off the cleats in the right order. The wheel must be turned to the correct spot so the boat can glide out of the slip without hitting a piling, the breakwall, or another boat. We must remember to watch the boat's speed and look for traffic as the boat makes its way out of the marina. The vessel must be steered into the wind and the mainsail cover removed. Someone with powerful biceps needs to hoist the mainsail up the mast. The halyard needs to be secured to the cleat. The jibsheet will likely get caught on a stanchion as someone turns the winch handle to pull it out. Is anyone still watching for traffic? The tactician had better be planning tacks and jibes down to the second so the boat will be in the best spot near the starting line for the race.

I continued to develop as a "sailor in the works." My first mate and I cruised with Captain and became his foremost crewmembers. With more experience we could run the boat ourselves under his supervision. We raced *Tomfoolery* and

Editor's Corner

by Tom Alley



Ground Hog Day

Are we there, yet? Seems like we're listening to a broken record that keeps repeating the same thing over and over, except that it's getting louder and louder and we're not getting any closer to the conclusion of the song.

Let's see, there must be something new happening. Well, we just decommissioned our boats for the winter. No, we do that every year. OK, we just had a presidential election, and everyone is arguing about the results. Wait, that sound just like the 2000 election in Florida, except now it's in a half dozen states or more. Our own club just had an election of its officers with unanimous results! Except, we've done that ever year for the past decade (if not longer) because there are no contested seats. Surely, the rise in pandemic cases and the restrictions being made by our governor are new? Sorry, we did back in the spring as well. How about the act of putting together a club newsletter and badgering people to write articles? No, that's a re-run as well, and unfortunately, it's one that seems to be rebroadcast every 60 days. Where is Bill Murray to help us figure out how to get us out of this repetitive rut? Or Monty Python dropping in to announce, "And now for something completely different"?

Maybe a better question is: What are WE doing to break out of this rut?

Being between boating seasons, it's a great time to set some goals and to set sights on a goal that's just outside of our comfort zone. From the day I began boating, I never ceased to be amazed at the number of boats that only make two voyages each year: The trip from the launch slip to their dock in the spring, and from their dock to the haulout slip in the fall. Similarly, I'm convinced that the vast majority of boaters never sail out of sight of their home port. Admiral Grace Hopper summed it up nicely when she said,

"A ship in port is safe, but that's not what ships are built for."

When I've asked boat owners why they don't do more with their boats, a few say that this is all they want to do. Most, however, say that they'd like to do more, but "can't" because they don't know how or because they don't have the experience or confidence to try.

This leads to an interesting paradox. To do, one needs confidence. To have confidence, one needs experience. But to gain experience, one needs to do. But to do, one needs...

An endless loop. A re-run. Ground Hog Day, and neither Bill Murray nor John Cleese are present to help us. Fortunately, there is not just one way, but multiple ways to break this cycle.

First, you can find a mentor. Our marina is full of them, and the vast majority absolutely LOVE to pay forward the mentoring

SV Tomfoolery

they received when they were pushing their own horizons. The hardest part is just asking someone, but there's an easy way to get past that, too...

Second, you can sign up for a class. Not only will this break you out of the cycle of hesitating to do something new, but it will introduce you to like-minded boaters and, most importantly, a number of instructors who would be happy to serve as a mentor. An additional benefit is that many of your classmates will become life-long friends.

The FLYC is fortunate to be affiliated with America's Boating Club. Through this affiliation, FLYC members have access to the dozens of courses taught by ABC. These aren't just boring classroom lectures but are hands-on instruction aboard boats right out of the Watkins Glen Marina.

Full disclosure: I am an ABC instructor. Although it's a volunteer position, the payback is astounding, especially when you see a timid student show up the first day and, after completing the class, taking their boat out beyond the breakwall and sail over the horizon to explore Seneca Lake. Also satisfying is when the experienced student who has been boating for decades says, "Hey, that last thing you showed us made the whole course worthwhile!" At the risk of being accused of writing an advertisement, I'd encourage you to check them out. Their web site is:

www.abc-flx.org

Bermuda Update

Our fair sloop, *Tomfoolery*, is nestled up on stands on the shore of the Hudson River and has been winterized and decommissioned. In a little over five months, she will be relaunched with the hopes of continuing on to Marion, MA in order to compete in the 2021 Marion-Bermuda Race. Crew spirits are high, but somewhat tempered by some recent rumblings about the possible impact of COVID-19.

In this captain's opinion, the race represents a nearly ideal circumstance. Boats are naturally distanced from one another and crews spend four to six days in "isolation" on their way to Bermuda and again on the way back. Plenty of time to allow for testing and possible symptoms to appear, therefore allowing for appropriate preparations to be made before any crew makes landfall.

While the race committee reviews the safety of the race in the context of a pandemic, people continue to sign up for it. As of this writing, there are 33 boats registered.

Stay tuned. More to come.

- Tom

Well, your editor has opened his big mouth again. If you wish to agree, or to tell him he doesn't know squat, please send your comments to editor@flyc.us.

Finger Lakes Yacht Club

Membership Application

Membership renewals are due by May 1st. **Annual dues are \$45.**
Please send this form and a check to:

Finger Lakes Yacht Club, Inc.
c/o Sue Morris, Secretary
P. O. Box 14
Pine Valley, NY 14872

Are you also a member of the
U.S. Power Squadron? If so,
please check this box.

☐

Application: ☐ New member ☐ Renewal

Important: Please be sure to include the names of all of your "dependent" family members.
This will ensure that membership privileges are awarded properly.

Name(s): _____

Please indicate which areas interest you:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Racing | <input type="checkbox"/> Web site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cruising | <input type="checkbox"/> Sailing classes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Junior Sailing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

Address: _____

Phone: Home: (____) _____ Work (____) _____
Cell: (____) _____

E-mail: _____

Boat Name _____ Type: ☐ Sail ☐ Power

Make/Model _____ Length _____

Boat Year _____ Location/Slip# _____

By this application, I/we promise to uphold the By-laws of the Finger Lakes Yacht Club, Inc.
and to comply with its rules and regulations.

Signature(s) _____ Date _____