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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

### Something Interesting. Maybe.

I really wish I had something of interest to write. Oh yes, an update on boats on stands and the end of the year yacht club tidbits is appropriate, but what about something exciting? How about this? I mentioned the book *Sailing Around the World Alone* by Harry Pidgeon in my last yacht club edition, so here is an update.



It's about 1922 and Harry is in the "Marquesas" Islands, Nukuhiya, I believe, and he's meeting the locals there who treat him with dignity and shower him with staples of bananas and breadfruit. They guide him all around and give the best verbal communication they can give with language barriers. It is brought to his attention about eighty years prior a fellow named "Melville" was also a visitor. So, this perks my interest in Herman Melville and the classic novel *Moby Dick*. Melville first wrote *Typee* about his time there as a young man in 1842. He was in New Bedford, MA and took a position on the *Essex*, a whaling vessel which made a landfall exactly where Harry is in 1922. Herman hates his life on this vessel and jumps ship with his companion "Toby" and together they venture into the tribal communities of the *Typees* and the *Haggars* who are enemies of each other and are suspected cannibals.

So off to New Bedford Lisa and I go to see the harbor and visit the whaling museum. This museum is well worth the effort. It is open daily from 9 to 5 with an admission fee of \$19, and \$17 for "seniors"! So great to be a senior! Here's some highlights. A suspended skeleton of a Blue Whale has been exuding oil out of the bones since 1998. Whales dive to about 1000 feet and their bones are flexible enough to compress and bend under the pressure. The heart of the whale is large enough that a model of it allows children to crawl inside of it. The whale's brain is divided into halves that allow for one side to sleep while the other keeps working so the whale can keep moving and eating all the time. Millions of years ago whales were land animals that adapted to the water to survive. This is evident from bones in the fins which replicate fingers and the remnants of bones that reveal hips in the first third of its tail. Whale oil lit the lamps in those days and the "ambergris" from the intestines was used to stabilize the scent of fine perfumes. Whaling began to phase out with the drilling for oil on land in the 1890s, but it still had special qualities that made it sought after.

Yes, and all the boats are put away (with minor exceptions). Don't forget to check your stands when you can get in there and report any abnormalities to me if you wish.

I hope all the partakers who attended the end of the year dinner enjoyed themselves and our next meeting is on tap for February 11<sup>th</sup>, to set up the 2023 calendar.

-Terry

## Vice Commodore's Comments

by John Chesbrough

SV Aquarell



### That Awkward Time

This time of year is always a bit awkward for boat owners in this neck of the woods. Enthusiasm tends to be a bit low while we are all busy with the holiday season and end of the year preparations and obligations. If you attend a cocktail party or two, which this season is

known for, however, it is always very worthwhile to trade stories, spin yarns and even learn a thing or two. Here are a few tales or bits of trivia that I learned on Thanksgiving Day. You are welcome to guess the identity of the key role player.

Two boat owning sailors were arguing about where exactly the bow starts on a sailboat until a third person stood before them, glaring with annoyance, and put an end to their conversation by declaring: "The bow starts at the chock." This same person is reported to have stated once upon a time that there are only two colors to paint a boat: black or white, but only a fool would paint his boat black. Our mystery guest also explained that the big racing boats didn't have any lifelines, nor stanchions of course, because the racing took place close to shore. All this is from many years ago and doesn't represent as many adherents today.

I'll have to rifle through the history of sail picture books to look for lifelines, chocks, and color. Let me know your opinion on these matters above, I'm sure you have some.

- John

## Port Tacks

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# Rear Commodore's Comments

by Don Swanson

SV Independence



## Lake Effect

Not to be overly dramatic about it, but I have dreaded this moment since the end of April. That's because if I am writing this column, the sailing season is in the books, the boat is on the hard, and the long cold wait for spring has commenced. On the other hand, there are those on-the-hard sailing projects, home projects, holidays, and outdoor activities to help fill the void. So, it

may not be all that terrible after all. But I still miss being on the water and will be counting the days until the splash date for the 2023 season. But let's not get ahead of ourselves. We still have 2022 to finish off and since this is the final issue of Port Tacks for the calendar year, it seems fitting that we look back at this past season and take stock.

As the sun sets on the 2022 sailing season, I think it was a smashing success. Personally, I sailed a lot, but of all the times I was under sail, the moments that burned into my consciousness occurred on the racecourse. For this season as Rear Commodore my objectives were to: 1. Adhere to the schedule as much as reasonably possible. 2. Communicate effectively, and 3. set a variety of courses to keep things fresh. Hopefully, I have managed to fulfill these goals and if you have any thoughts or feedback, I welcome it along with any help you can provide.

If you race, you know there's more than a few items to check off when running a race and if not for the combined efforts of the FLYC Race Committee and the generous help of racers, we could never have pulled it off so deftly. So, just be clear... a HUGE THANK YOU to everyone who helped out, especially when setting and retrieving marks!

So here we are, on the cusp of winter in the Finger Lakes. The boats are wrapped and snug under their covers. The firewood is stacked and as I write this western New York is being hammered with more than five feet of lake-effect snow, yet only a hundred or so miles to the east it's clear and sunny here in the Finger Lakes. On account of geography Seneca Lake doesn't generate that much lake effect snow, but the lake definitely has an effect upon me. And as a sailor I now have a new meaning for the term: Lake Effect; It's all the ways that my time on the

water brings a deeper and more profound meaning to my everyday life.

My lake effect is when I commune with the world around me by taking note of all the gifts that nature has to offer. My lake effect is the reverberating thrill of victory (and the agony from defeat) as I recount the races we had. My lake effect is the comradeship of other sailors who, through their shared passion, bring together a divergent company of perspectives and backgrounds. That's my lake effect. And no shovel is needed.

## 2022 Racing and Sailing By-the-numbers.

During the 2022 season FLYC conducted a total of 12 races, eight of which were "Summer Series" races. As a whole, we had 18 boats participate in one or more races this season. Of the 12 scheduled races, ten occurred on the scheduled day, two were rescheduled due to weather and one, the Rust Removal Regatta on May 28th, was a total bust as all participants took a DNF on a dying wind. The average number of entrees per race was six. Our largest race fleet was ten boats on August 28th which also happened to be Summer Series race #7. Our smallest fleet was made up of two hardy participants for the Gear Buster on October 8th. Lastly, a high-water mark for the racing season was the participation of six FLYC boats in a field of 17 for the SYC annual Barge Race. We made a great showing and had a terrific time communing with the good folks at the Seneca Yacht Club.

On a final note, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Race Committee (Jim McGinnis, Tom Alley, & Bill Trondsen) for their input, wisdom, and assistance. I would also like to say thanks to Mike Crouse, Tom Keebler and everyone else who helped deploy and retrieve marks. Your assistance was key to helping make this all work.

To all you racers, cruisers, day sailors, et cetera, have a healthy and safe off-season. See you all next spring.

Until then,

Cheers!

- Don

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# Secretary's Column

by Katie Alley



Well, I bet you can't guess who talked me into this...

With time comes change, and this year's change includes a new Secretary. For many of you long-term members, you probably can't remember a time when Sue Morris wasn't secretary. First off, I think it's important that we recognize Sue for keeping our club organized for so many years. THANK YOU, SUE!

For the newer members who may not know me as well, I am a life-long sailor with most of my sea-time spent on Seneca Lake aboard *Tomfoolery*, a 1965 Alberg 35 sloop. I have been crew and a Finger Lakes Yacht Club member since the time I could walk. Presently, I am also a crew member aboard the famous schooner *True Love*. Outside of sailing, I am a 2021 graduate from Alfred University and currently work in print production and marketing in Ithaca, NY. I certainly have big shoes to fill as Secretary but considering the lack of objection during elections at our annual meeting last month, I'm assuming you all trust me!

Our club's annual meeting was held at *Horseheads Brewery* in Watkins Glen on November 6<sup>th</sup>. A taco buffet was provided by *Lakeside Eatery*, and everyone was able to enjoy craft-brews, wine, and cocktails from the bar. The gathering was well-attended by club members and Commodore Terry Stewart's crew from *True Love*. It was a warm and humid evening, so we were able to spend some time out on the deck admiring Seneca Lake. The night was even topped off with what some might call "entertainment" (spontaneous stand-up comedy from a couple of our club members)...

The club was also able to recognize our 2022 Racing Series winners – the crews from *Brewster*, *Tomfoolery*, and *Independence*. Thank you to our race committee and to all participants who made this summer competitive and exciting! As if the bragging rights weren't enough – I have also been enjoying

SV Tomfoolery

some drinks out of my new custom-engraved *Tomfoolery* YETI mugs!

It's hard to believe that just a couple weeks ago, on November 10<sup>th</sup>, I was aboard *True Love* for our end-of-the-season crew celebration. We had a special sail during which we flew *True Love*'s spinnaker under a gorgeous south wind in sunny 65-degree weather. I don't think I have ever been sailing on Seneca Lake in November before then! Now it seems so soon that I'm thinking about putting up my Christmas tree and planning for the new year.



Figure 1: Under spinnaker aboard *True Love*. In November!

Speaking of the New Year, I am ready for you all to send me your 2023 membership renewal forms! There will be more details to come, and you will be reminded again, but membership forms are due May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Our club's annual dues remain at \$45. Please take note of the new address to send your forms to. **Do not** send them to Sue. The form, with the new address, is on page 8.

I am pleased to share that we already have some new members from the *True Love* crew! I am looking forward to the coming year of racing, picnicking, cruising, and "secretary-ing".

- Katie, FLYC Secretary

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# From the Treasurer

by Denis Kingsley

SV Tark



In spite of efforts by the Board of Directors, there's still money left in the bank.

- Denis, still cooking the books.

# RIP: Mike Schamel 1942 - 2022

*Those of you who have been in the Watkins Glen Village Marina for any period of time have met Mike. Mike passed away a few weeks ago and the following obituary was shared by his family.*

## Michael J. Schamel

March 22, 1942 - November 12, 2022

Age 80, of Hector, NY, died on Saturday afternoon, November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022, surrounded by those closest to him.

He more than almost anyone, embodied the spirit described by Hunter S. Thompson: "Life should not be a journey to the grace with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well-preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out, and loudly proclaiming "Wow! What a Ride!"

Though not religious nor outspoken, Michael had a strong faith and truly lived his values every day of his eighty years. He was passionate in his love of Seneca Lake and shared all that he had so others could also experience the (highly contagious) joy of life on The Lake. After spending summers in Hector throughout childhood, he moved here full time in 1969 and he and his brothers started Schamel Brothers Contractors, now owned and operated by his youngest son. A couple of years later, he and his bride-to-be purchased land and built what was to become their lifelong home overlooking Seneca Lake.

Mike is survived by his wife of fifty years, Karen, and their children Kathleen, Michael, Matthew and Adam (and their spouses Samantha, Shannon and Brit); as well as his slightly insane doodle Tipper, whom he may have loved more than all the rest. His grandchildren Callan, Finn, Aiden, Charlotte and Easton will sorely miss their Pops, whom they adored. Schamel siblings Jack, Gail, Guy, Pat, Tony, Norman and lifelong best friends Lee and Honker will share their memories and laughs in his absence.

Mike also leaves behind a thirty plus-year tradition of annual October canoe trips he planned with his sons, brothers, and other friends. Initially conceived on a whim, this trip grew to be a lasting and very important part of each autumn after the summer dock-building busy-ness had subsided, and before the start of pulling boats. The tradition evolved into many iterations, including a 20th-year celebratory RV trip across Alaska, certainly a highlight of Michael's recent years. Covid limitations were no deterrent and found Pops out building a lean-to in the woods (a

tribute to Raquette Lake, his second favorite place on earth) so that he could continue the camping tradition with his grandsons.

Mike gave literally everything he had, to anyone who asked. He donated enough blood and plasma to sink a small ship and was insistent that his body be used for science and

learning ([upstate.edu](http://upstate.edu)) when he was finished destroying it. In lieu of flowers, his legacy can be honored by supporting Seneca Lake Pure Waters Association ([senecalake.org](http://senecalake.org)) or Habitat for Humanity in Hector, NY.

The world won't be the same without this larger-than-life figure who embodied on a daily basis what it

means to live the good life and share that abundance with all those around him. He truly did live one of those lives that dreams are made of. But not for one minute did he ever forget how lucky he was to have done so. He was a remarkable man and an exceptional role model.

The Schamels look forward to hosting those interested in sharing a story, a laugh, and a beer at the Grist Iron Cafe ([gristironbrewing.com](http://gristironbrewing.com)) in Hector on December 1<sup>st</sup>, from 3-6 pm. Undoubtedly a SLAD (Seneca Lake Appreciation Day) or twelve will follow when weather permits.

Arrangements with Royce-Chedzoy Funeral Home, Watkins Glen.

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# Off-Season Sailing

By Bill Trondsen

SV Ellawicious

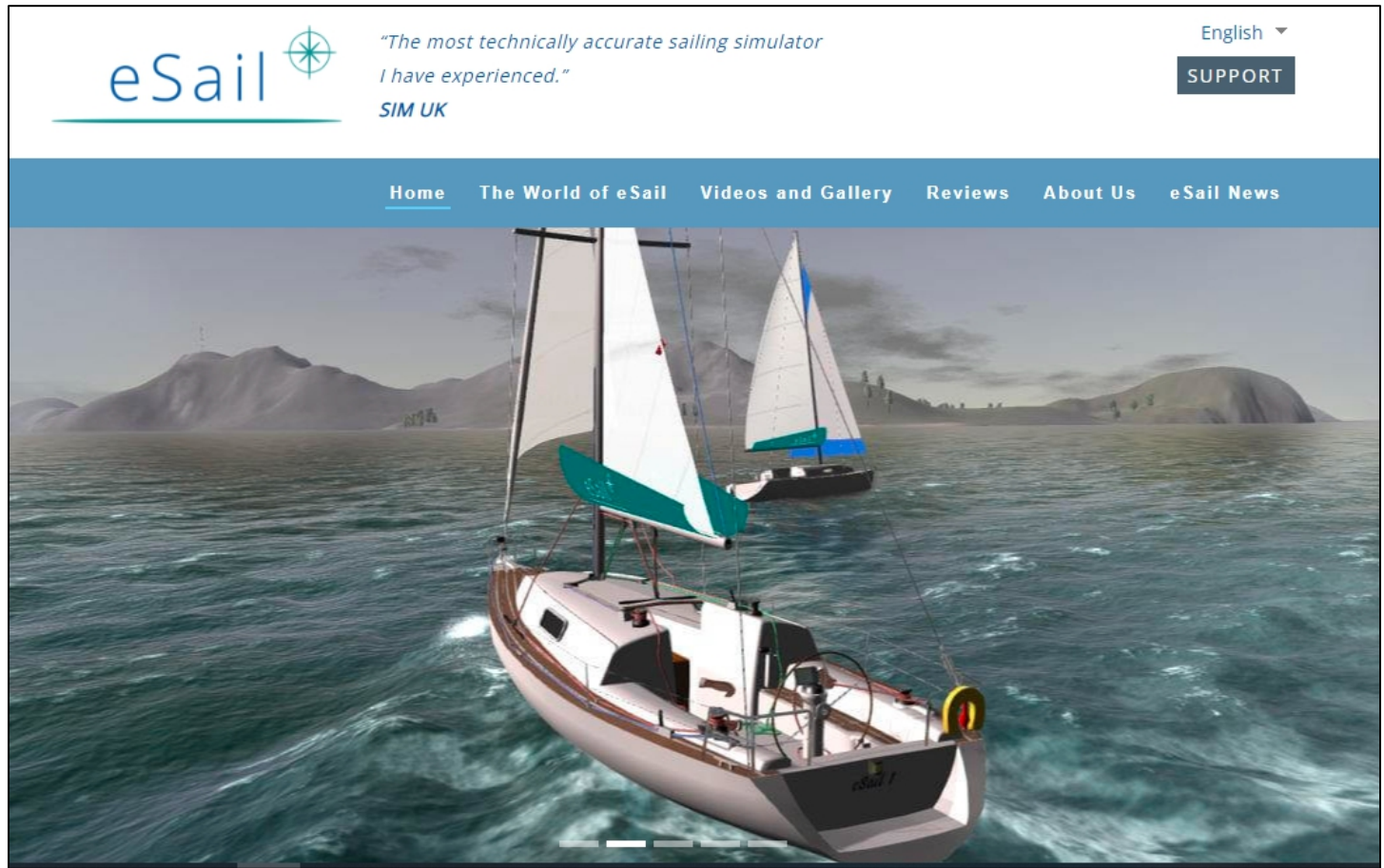


Figure 2: Screen shot of the eSail sailing simulator.

Sailboat on the hard, and snuggled in for a long winter's nap? Hankering for some boat time, with the months ahead still filled with short days and snow? Look no further than your laptop to do some virtual sailing, with simulator software that I can highly recommend...

eSail sailing simulator is an immersive experience that allows you to sail a boat with all of the common controls, in an environment of constantly changing wind and wave conditions. The simulator includes tutorials that walk you through the basics of motoring, anchoring, and reefing, as well as advanced skills of optimizing sail shape. It includes practice scenarios such as berthing in a marina. And racing challenges around ocean marks, or within a Tuscan harbor and waterways...

The simulation allows you to tweak your traveler, main sheet, Cunningham, vang, down-haul, backstay, ...all while showing the effects on boat speed and heel. Using the simulation is a great way to help understand how each of the control lines on your boat will affect performance, all while relaxing by the fire-place!

Simulation software cost is around ~\$30 and can be downloaded from the link:

<https://www.esailyachtsimulator.com/>

Cheers!

- Bill

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# Editor's Corner

by Tom Alley



## It's Time

We're all familiar with the saying, "It's time." The usual context is that we're being told that we'd better start doing something we don't necessarily want to do, like go to the dentist, pay our taxes, or leave a party. Well, for us

boaters it's time to batten down for the winter.

For most of us that means no sailing (at least not on Seneca Lake), no hanging out at the dock, no regularly scheduled FLYC activities, and no vexing decisions about whether or not to fly the spinnaker. Bah! Humbug! Although the "off" season is kicked off with some significant distractions such as Election Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years in rapid succession, the next three months could best be summed up in the words of British author Douglas Adams as "the long dark tea time of the soul."

Not much going on there. At least not much where someone must tell us "It's time." No, the first three months of the year are just cold, and dark, and generally unpleasant outside.

## Distractions, Anyone?

Even though we won't be on our boats, there are some alternatives available to us. Some of us will travel, likely to warmer climes where sailing is still an option. Others will pursue substitute hobbies like skiing that take advantage of the weather or can be done indoors (e.g., woodworking, reading, Netflix binging).

SV Tomfoolery

For members of the various club committees and the Board of Directors, however, there will be some respite from the long winter as events and activities are planned for the 2023 season.

If I might, I would recommend challenging yourself with a boating class. If you haven't tackled a basic safety course, time is running out before Brianna's Law goes into full effect. This law makes completion of a boating safety course compulsory for all New York boaters by 2025, so don't procrastinate. If you're looking for something more advanced, I would suggest reaching out to the Finger Lakes Chapter of America's Boating Club for one of the many courses they offer. Their web site at [www.abc-flx.org](http://www.abc-flx.org) is chock full of information. Check it out.

## Next FLYC Event

In early February the FLYC Board of Directors will meet to set the 2023 club calendar. If you have suggestions or requests, contact any of the club officers, committee members, or directors to make your wishes known! Their contact information is on page 2.

Until then, enjoy the Christmas holidays, stay warm, and think spring!

- Tom

*Well, your editor has opened his big mouth again. If you wish to agree, or (more likely) to tell him he doesn't know squat, please send your comments to [editor@flyc.us](mailto:editor@flyc.us).*

# Finger Lakes Yacht Club

## Membership Application

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

Finger Lakes Yacht Club, Inc.  
c/o Katie Alley, Secretary  
218 Pleasant St.  
Ithaca, NY 14850

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 \_\_\_\_\_