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

Commodore's Comments

by Terry Stewart

SV Syren

On Your Mark, Get Set...

On February 11th our FLYC officers gathered at Panera Bread/Coffee shop to discuss and plan dates for the 2023 events. It was a productive session and maybe it would be nice to hit some of the highlights to begin to get us in the mood for the most probable upcoming spring and summer.



Following the traditions of past years, planned events include a chicken BBQ, a Fathers' Day gathering, Christening, July 8th picnic, Commodore's Dinner, wine tasting, a chili/chocolate cook-off, and our "End of the Year" dinner. In an effort to be fiscally responsible, the plan was to only hire out one cooking event, and that would be the Commodore's Dinner on September 3rd. If a guest for any event is in attendance the "guest fee" is \$20 for one and \$30 for a couple. Our \$45 dues are due on May first and should be sent to our Secretary Katie Alley at 218 Pleasant Street, Ithaca, NY 14850. Thanks to Tom, Katie, Dennis, Denise, Don and Jim for all the set-up work to get this template of dates in place.

As always, as soon as weather permits there will be a posting of these events on the cork board at the restaurant. Of course, this is all to the best of my recollection and some note taking. I retain the right to a blank stare and a shoulder shrug.

As I am writing this, I received a text from Leon and Ileen Fontier, former Village Marina tenants, who advised they anchored last night at dusk in Isla Mujeres off the coast of Cancun, Mexico. Dining aboard their 39-foot Mariner with "west rum and fresh caught mahi mahi. A 76-hour trip. I suspect they left from the Dry Tortugas National Park. They are headed for the Honduras and Rio Dulce. This couple has stories upon stories to tell. Maybe we could get them to an ABC dinner to hear a few.

-Terry

REMINDER:

Your FLYC annual membership dues are due by May 1st. Please fill out the membership form on the last page of this newsletter and send it to the address on the form with your dues so that you don't miss out on any of this year's activities!

Vice Commodore's Comments

by John Chesbrough

SV Aquarell



Voyaging Notes

Recently Maggie and I have been exploring ancient archeological sites in Cyprus, and I have been reflecting on the history of boating. The earliest known depiction of a watercraft is a Bronze Age rock carving, 4200 BCE, from Norway showing human figures in

boats hunting reindeer while the animals crossed a body of water. It is generally assumed that watercraft existed well earlier but no painting or carving or sculpture survived.

A favorite maritime mystery dwells on the Pacific Islands' natives sailing respectable distances between islands. Those sailors passed along knowledge of navigation orally. Their seafaring skills dealt with odors, recognition of birds and fish and different seaweeds, cloud patterns above island groups, ocean swells relative to tide as well as to land proximity, triangulation among different islands, and celestial navigation which must have been particularly tricky north of the equator as they headed for Hawaii. Oral tradition coupled with keen observation is common all over the world. An old Eskimo hunter in Alaska was once asked by a researching anthropologist how well he had memorized a shoreline (the Eskimo had to be taught the use of pencil on paper neither of which he had ever seen). The hunter's outline/contour drawing of the bay's shoreline was almost identical to a photograph taken from above.



Figure 1: Starboard aft showing canoe end and steering boards. Modern sculpture on stern prow not original, but still cute.

Included are photos of an interesting sailboat docked in Limassol, Cyprus. The vessel is a reproduction of those used in the region in early times. I would estimate the overall length as 35 feet, beam 12 feet, depth from gunwale to floor 5 feet. The mast is short, the sail lashed around a spar was tied onto port

Port Tacks

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Club Web Site <http://www.flyc.us>

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

Contact all officers at: officers@flyc.us

Commodore
Terry Stewart commodore@flyc.us

Vice-Commodore
John Chesbrough vc@flyc.us

Rear Commodore
Don Swanson rc@flyc.us

Secretary
Katie Alley secretary@flyc.us

Treasurer
Denis Kingsley treasurer@flyc.us

Directors (Terms ending 2023)
Tom Alley alley@flyc.us
Jim Morris morris@flyc.us

Directors (Terms ending 2024)
Sue Morris morriss@flyc.us
Maggie Martin maggie@flyc.us

Contact all directors at: directors@flyc.us

COMMITTEES & KEY CONTACTS

General Information info@flyc.us

Facebook Administrator
[Open] facebook@flyc.us

Newsletter Editor
Tom Alley editor@flyc.us

Race Committee
Chair: Don Swanson racechair@flyc.us
Asst. Chair: Bill Trondsen rcasst@flyc.us
Jim McGinnis mcginnis@flyc.us
Tom Alley alley@flyc.us

Social Committee Co-Chairs
Denise Trondsen social@flyc.us
Lynne McGinnis social@flyc.us

Nominating Committee
Nancy Sisbaro
Sue Morris

Webmaster
Tom Alley webmaster@flyc.us

side, either a square rig, or a Mediterranean style lateen. At each side of the canoe-end stern is a long steering board which pivots across large wood pegs low/aft and high/fore. Medieval European watercraft such as Viking ships had one steering board on the helms person's right. This is the origin of the phrase steerboard or starboard side.

- John



Figure 2: Peering into interior. Do I see a winch?



Figure 3: Portside fore quarter. Note bow entry straight in. Keel most likely full.

Reference: *The Sea & Civilization* by Lincoln Paine, Knopf, 2013.

Rear Commodore's Comments

by Don Swanson



Spring Preview

As I tear off another month from my 2023 calendar, my smile widens as we inch closer to another season of sailing on Seneca Lake. The days are longer, there is a warmer southerly breeze blowing and the hints of spring are beginning to show, reminding me that now is the time to start thinking about the racing season that lies ahead. This month's column will preview some of

what we have in store for 2023.

2023 FLYC Summer Series

This year we will be hosting a series of around-the-marks races throughout the sailing season. As in years past, most of the timing, procedures, scoring, and culture remains the same. As you may know, our best attempts at scheduling can be thwarted by the conditions present (wind versus calm). We have opted to spread our race dates throughout the entire season but have tried to plan as many as possible when the winds are more likely to cooperate (early and late summer). The resulting schedule has many opportunities for both the serious and casual racer to participate throughout the sailing season. Consult the schedule of events at the end of this month's *Port Tacks* and be sure to mark your calendars.

SV Independence

The Summer Series features a total of eight contests. Races are scheduled on Saturdays and will start about an hour after the skipper's briefing at 13:00 which is held at the flagpole. Our mission is to conduct the race at the appointed time and date, but if necessary, we will default to the following day (Sunday) or the next available "make-up race day" (on the calendar). To make the most of prevailing and forecasted conditions on any given Saturday, we may also decide to adjust the timing of a race. Any last-minute changes or instructions will be posted using our text messaging system. (Info on how to sign up is included below). And racers, please RSVP when a race notice is posted (if you sign up - you will receive notification via text message). Knowing the interest level is a key factor when deciding to postpone, cancel, et cetera.

Our start/finish line will continue to be the same, as will our use of Portsmouth Yardstick for scoring and handicapping. Scoring is done for each race and cumulatively for the whole series of eight races. On race days we will blow a horn to announce the start of the skippers meeting at the marina flagpole and race course communications will be VHF channel 70. The race start sequence of blasts will remain the same: first blast at T-minus 5 minutes, second blast at T-minus 1 minute, START BLAST - extra long - at 00:00.

On race day, a few hours before the race, we'll be on the water setting race marks. Doubtless, it is the setting and retrieving of marks that truly makes lighter work when more hands are applied. Through the dedicated efforts of a few, we all get to

have a fun time and we are asking everyone to pitch in. Setting marks is a great way to preview the course, read the wind and run your engine to operating temperature. Skippers, please let us know if you can help when you RSVP for race notices. If you are willing to lend a hand, and even better – willing to use your vessel (the bigger, the better), plan to meet at the marina at 11:00 on race days. After the race, usually around 17:00, please join us for our “Race Postmortem” at one of the picnic tables. BYOB and a snack to share and relive the thrill of competition or the humiliation of defeat. It's all great fun. Champagne showers for victors are optional.

2023 Other FLYC Race events:

In addition to the FLYC Summer Series of eight races, we also host a number of “stand alone” race events, each tailored to provide an enjoyable and competitive element – sometimes with a twist. These races are not part of the Summer Series and do not impact series scoring. For these events we will be using more geographic “virtual” marks and setting longer courses when conditions allow. Some races will be staggered start (pursuit race) where handicapping is baked into each boat's designated start time. Skippers can expect to see this method in greater use this season. It makes for a less hectic and stressful start. Here is a link to an explanation: <https://www.sailmagazine.com/racing/pursuit-racing-a-great-way-to-start>

This year we will be featuring a new race event: “The Cock of the Walk”, a LeMans-inspired race that starts underfoot and ends with the finish line at the bar (HHBC) with a cold beverage for the winning (line honors) skipper and crew. More details to follow. Like all other race events, this will be weather and interest dependent.

You may also want to mark your calendars to reflect a new weekend for the Commodore’s Cup. We are going to try the beginning of September this year, hoping the wind will be more productive and steadier. As tradition demands, our racing season opens with the Rust Removal Regatta (5/27) and closes with the Gear-Buster Race (10/7). Other highlights of the season include our annual Grape Harvest Race and the SYC Barge Race in September.

Stand-alone events, like other races, are scheduled for Saturdays, with skipper’s briefings as usual.

How To Receive Race Notifications

Below you can find information on how to receive race notices and updates via text. Skippers, please RSVP when a race notice is posted. (If you sign up you will receive the message as a text.) Last minute changes to times and dates will be disseminated using this system.

To sign up to receive automated text messaging from FLYC Racing you need to register with a service called “Remind”:

Text @gk93e3 to the number 81010

If you have trouble with 81010, then try texting @gk93e3 to (563) 265-6842.

You will receive a welcome text from Remind. You will receive my notices by text message. No apps/downloads are needed.

We will use one group (FLYC Racing) for all race notices.

Cheers!

- Don

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Secretary’s Column

by Katie Alley



Rabbit Holes in the Off-Season: The Chenière Caminada Hurricane

I think we all have our obscure interests or rabbit holes that we dive down to fill time. Well, thanks to modern-day capitalism, I have roughly 40 hours a week where I’m performing mundane tasks and need some form of auditory stimulation or

else I will simply go insane listening to my own thoughts. I choose to entertain my obscure interests through podcasts. My topics of choice include true crime, advice, and plane crashes. Recently, I’ve fallen down a hole of learning about natural disasters. I was a kid who used to watch the weather channel for fun, so maybe this one isn’t too obscure. And weather is something very important to sailors. So maybe it’ll be

SV Tomfoolery

beneficial for me to know about historic storms when Terry and I act as amateur meteorologists who determine if the *True Love* should sail or not. (I’m justifying my obscure interest here.)

I recently learned about the Chenière Caminada hurricane and the incredible survival story of a steamship crew. Chenière Caminada was a diverse fishing village located in Louisiana on a peninsula west of Grand Isle. The historic hurricane, also known as the Great October Storm, devastated the coastal village and surrounding area in 1893. With winds up to 130 mph, the hurricane would have been considered a category 4 storm by modern day scales. Almost all weather instruments were destroyed and there were accounts of the storm surge being up to 20 feet high. Half of the population of 1500 people were killed in Chenière Caminada as a result.

The S.S. *Joe Webre* was one of many vessels lost in the storm. The 100 foot, 40 ton wooden steamship, owned by the New Orleans and Timbalier Transportation Company, primarily

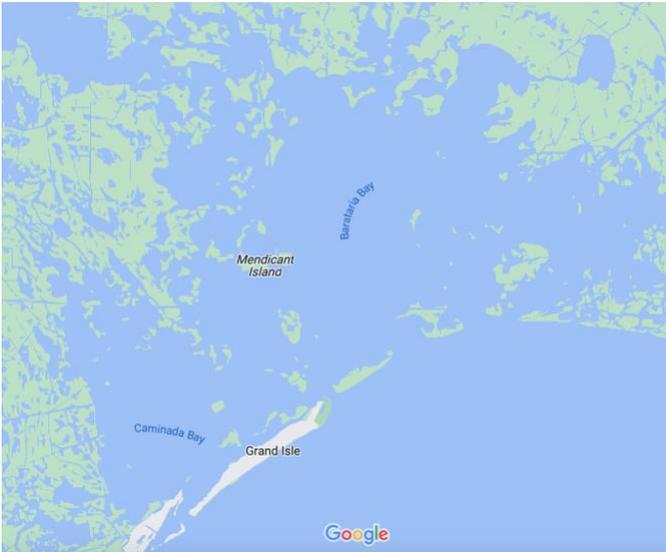


Figure 5: Map of the Louisiana coast near Chenière Caminada.

transported tourists from New Orleans to Grand Isle on the Gulf of Mexico. On the evening of October 1st, the steamship was operating under Captain McSweeney with a skeleton crew of six.

The steamship was tied to a wharf when the storm hit. The wind and waves put constant pressure on the ship's lines. After a large wave passed around 10 p.m., a sudden gust of wind tore the main cabin off the ship. Captain McSweeney knew the ship was going to break apart so he instructed his crew to prepare their emergency sailboat – a yawl.

The crew was able to board the yawl as the eye of the storm passed over. They planned to attempt to make it to the shore a few hundred yards away. The lights of the Grand Isle Hotel were still just barely visible. Soon after boarding the yawl, the lines holding the S.S. Joe Webre were ripped away from their posts and the vessel was immediately swept away into Barataria Bay.

As you probably expected, not too much later, the wind blew the yawl into the air and flipped the vessel completely, dumping the crew into the water. Captain McSweeney was able to swim to an exposed oak tree. He pulled himself and all of his crew members up into the exposed branches, where they hung on through the rest of the storm.

The following day, the crew found themselves in debris-filled water up to their waists. They later found the *S.S. Joe Webre* 250 feet inland, broken clean in half.

It's stories like this one that keep me wanting to hear more about my obscure interests. It's nothing short of a miracle that this crew survived. They abandoned the steamship at just the right time. It's incredible that Captain McSweeney was able to swim to the tree, let alone get all of his crew into the branches. Could you imagine riding out a hurricane in a tree at night?



Figure 4: Source: <https://countryroadsmagazine.com/art-and-culture/history/chenier-caminadas-great-october-storm/>

The Great October Storm was widely unpredicted by fisherman and oystermen. Modern-day meteorologists believe that a low pressure system to the north caused the storm to come from an unusual direction. Chenière Caminada was never rebuilt. Another significant hurricane devastated the area again in 1915, making it largely uninhabitable. Today, there are only a few fishing camps, bait shops, and a cemetery there.

I think this story speaks a lot on the power of mother nature. This storm came with little warning and completely took back an area of land that humans tried to claim. Another example in history that illustrates mother nature as a force not to be reckoned with. While nothing like a category 4 hurricane is going to happen on Seneca Lake, I still think it's important to keep things like this in the back of our minds while playing amateur meteorologist.

If you need something to pass the time until launch, I highly recommend any podcast by Parcast. I listen on Spotify. The information for this article came from Parcast's Natural Disasters show, specifically 2-part episode titled "The Cheniere Caminada Hurricane".

Back in February, some of the directors and I met to layout the 2023 calendar, which can be found elsewhere in this issue. Please let us know if there's anything you'd like to see this year – new race ideas, activities for our weekend in Sampson, something involving one of your obscure interests...anything!

And please mail membership forms and dues to:

Katie Alley
218 Pleasant St
Ithaca, NY 14850

Or hand them to me in the marina in a couple of weeks!

- Katie, FLYC Secretary

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Editor's Corner

by Tom Alley

SV Tomfoolery



On Your Mark...

Get Ready...

Spring is in the air. I've been to the boatyard to check on things and to start prepping for various boat projects and chores that will soon kick into high gear. My calendar says it's a little less than 50

days until my estimated launch date. Sounds like a lot, but after decades of boating I know it will fly by and, no matter how I plan, I'll be scrambling towards the end to at least plug any new holes in the hull so that I can still get launched before mid-June. Like the seasons, I can be pretty predictable!

There are two very important items in this issue of *Port Tacks*.

The first is the 2023 calendar of club events. (See next page.) This shows you what we have planned as a club for the coming boating season. As a member, you can participate in as many or as few of these events as you wish. Please note that there are also some non-club events listed in the calendar. While some are community events, others are events from other boating groups in our area. If they're listed in our calendar, it means that FLYC members are invited to join in. This includes the weekend cruise to Sampson in July and the annual Barge Race at the Seneca Yacht Club in September. If you haven't done either, you really should consider trying out one of these events this year. They're always a lot of fun!

The second important item in this newsletter is the membership application on the last page. It stands to reason that if the event calendar is to your liking, you probably should renew your membership. Reminder: Membership dues are due on May 1st of each year.

Not a member? Consider joining! I challenge you to find a more economical yacht club membership anywhere!

NOTE: We have a new Club Secretary! Please make sure you send your completed membership form to the correct address. The membership form has been updated to reflect this change.

Opportunities from Our Partners

The FLYC has enjoyed a close relationship with the Finger Lakes Chapter of America's Boating Club (ABC) for decades. As a result, FLYC members can sign up for ABC courses at a discount. This year the Finger Lakes Chapter will be offering their *Boat Handling* course beginning in early- to mid-May and continuing through the end of June. The course consists of some classroom time along with several on-the-water sessions where you will get some hands-on experiences that include:

- Marlinespike (knot tying)
- Docking
- Anchoring
- Crew Overboard Recovery
- Maneuvering in tight spaces

...and more! Many FLYC members have taken this course already, and the feedback from them has been overwhelmingly positive. If you're interested in getting more details, contact Andrew Price (the ABC-FLX Education Officer) at:

agprice@stny.rr.com

Whether you've been boating for a year or for your entire life, I guarantee that you'll learn something new in this class. Besides, it's a fun way to spend some time on boats and with other boaters!

What's Next?

Really, there are just three things you need to do...

1. Print out the club calendar and tack it up on your wall.
2. Send in your membership form and dues.
3. Consider signing up for the *Boat Handling* course.

Well, maybe there's a fourth thing...

4. Get your boat launched!

See you in the marina. Soon!

- Tom

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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.

2023 FLYC Calendar

This is the club calendar as discussed at the Board meeting in March. Some dates are subject to change as plans firm up and get finalized. Please check the club web site (<http://www.FLYC.US>) to see the most current information.

Corrections & updates are highlighted.

Regular/Repeating Events

Saturday Morning Kaffee Klatch. Every Saturday at 0900 from Memorial Day Weekend through Labor Day Weekend on the lawn by the marina flagpole.

Post-Mortem Racing Social. After every club race at 1700 on the lawn by the marina flagpole. BYOB/Snack to share. Open to racers and non-racers alike.

February

- 01 **February Newsletter Publication Date.**
- 11 **FLYC Planning Meeting.** Meeting of the Board of Directors to plan the 2023 FLYC Event Calendar. All are welcome. (1000) *Panera Bread, Horseheads.*

March

- 24 **Deadline for newsletter articles.**

April

- 01 **April Newsletter Publication Date.**
- 15 **Earliest possible launch date** (per slip contract).

May

- 01 **Membership renewals due!**
- 25 **Deadline for newsletter articles.**
- 27 **Rust Removal Race.** Practice race. (1300)
- 28 **Memorial Day Flag Raising & Picnic.** BBQ chicken. Bring a side or dessert to share and your own beverage. (1700)

June

- 01 **June Newsletter Publication Date.**
- 03 **Summer Series Race #1.** (1300)
- 10 **FLYC Nautical Swap Meet** (TBD)
- 10 **Summer Series Race #2.** (1300)
- 16-17 **Watkins Glen Waterfront Festival & Cardboard Boat Races.*
- 18 **FLYC Fathers' Day Brunch** (1100)
- 24 **Summer Series Race #3.** (1300)
- 30 **Christening/Rechristening of the Fleet & Light Up the Night.** Village Marina, all docks. Walk the docks, meet your neighbors, and learn about their boats as they are rechristened. Share hors d'oeuvres at your boat. BYOB. (1700)

July

- 01 **Summer Series Race #4.** (1300)
- 04 **Watkins Glen Independence Day Fireworks (2145)*
- 08 **Independence Picnic.** Hamburgers, hot dogs, on the grill. Bring a side or dessert and your own beverage. (1700)
- 15 **Summer Series Race #5.** (1300)
- 22 **Cock of the Walk Race.** A "fun" race not counting toward season totals. (1300)

- 24 **Deadline for newsletter articles.**
- 28-30 **ABC-FLX Cruise to Sampson. All FLYC members invited to join!*

August

- 01 **August Newsletter Publication Date.**
- 05 **Summer Series Race #6.** (1300)
- 11-13 **Watkins Glen Italian Festival*
- 18-21 **NASCAR at the Glen*
- 19 **Make-up Race.** If needed. (1300)
- 26 **Summer Series Race #7.** (1300)

September

- 02 **Commodore's Cup Race.** Destination TBD. (1000)
- 03 **Commodore's Dinner.** Steak dinner with Chef Mike. (1700)
- 08-10 **FLYC Club Cruise to Geneva.** Joint cruise with the ABC-FLX chapter.
- 09 **Seneca Yacht Club Barge Race, Geneva, NY (0900)*
- 09 **Vintage Grand Prix*
- 16 **Summer Series Race #8.** (1300)
- 22 **Deadline for newsletter articles.**
- 23 **Grape Harvest Race.** (1300) Join in this annual reverse-handicap race!
- 23 **FLYC Wine Tasting.** (1700)
- 30 **Make-up Race.** If needed. (1300)

October

- 01 **October Newsletter Publication Date.**
- 07 **Gear Buster Race.** (1300)
- 07 **Soup/Chili/Chocolate Festival.** Bring your best effort in one of these 3 categories to win! Power will be available for crock pots. (1700)
- 05-08 **Annapolis Powerboat Show.*
- 12-15 **Annapolis Sailboat Show.*
- 31 **Marina Haulout Deadline** (per slip contract).

November

- TBD **Member Banquet & Annual Meeting.** *Horseheads Brewery (in the marina). Food by Lakeside Eatery.* (1700) RSVP by November 1st.
- 24 **Deadline for newsletter articles.**

December

- 01 **December Newsletter Publication Date.**

January 2024

- 26 **Deadline for newsletter articles.**

** Non-FLYC events in italics.*

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 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:

- Racing Web site
 Cruising Sailing classes
 Social activities

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 _____