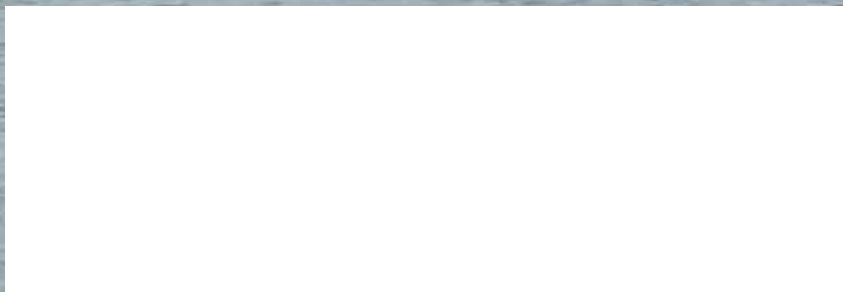


# The LOG



## Chili Cup 2020 Edition







## Thank You for standing by us through these tough times...

During these uncertain times the Erie Yacht Club and the publishers of their LOG magazine would like to send out a heartfelt thank you to all the advertisers in the LOG magazine both past and present. It is through your advertising that we are able to put together this informative magazine and bring it to the members and guests of the EYC.

Without your generous LOG advertisers none of this would be possible. Even as they deal with the difficulties placed upon their own businesses they continue to support the Club and this LOG magazine. Therefore we strongly urge you to support them in return. Whether you are looking to repair your car, doing some home improvements, or looking for a caretaker for an elderly relative, please consider all the LOG advertisers first when making your choices. Just as they have considered the EYC members when deciding to support the continuing publication of the Club's LOG through their advertising.



## CONTENTS

Chili Cup's Tenth Edition .....	4
Nereus the Last Log .....	6
On Thin Ice .....	8
2020 Thompson Trophy Presentation .....	12
Exploding Buoys .....	16
If These Docks Could Talk .....	20
EYC Cruisers Looking Ahead .....	22
What's the Good Word .....	24

## From the Bridge

by Commodore Vincent Cifelli

HAPPY NEW YEAR !!

I look forward to serving as your 100th Commodore this year. With high hopes for a return to the old normal that we all still remember from last year at this time, we still have a ways to go to get there safely. I want to assure all members & staff that we are still doing everything we can think of to keep our Club the safe place it has been this past 10 months of the pandemic.

With our air purification system in place and the knowledge we have gained and implemented I feel that we are in a safe environment whenever at our Club. We will continue our commitment to keeping our Club the place we all want to be, having as many events as we can while staying within the state approved guidelines.



I would like to welcome Michael Squeglia to his position as Fleet Captain, along with Carrie Knox and Neal Baker to the Board of Directors, It will be my pleasure to work with you this year.

I have several things that I would like to see happen this year and I will be reaching out to all of our members for your help, so if you can please get involved.

Finally I would like to thank Peter and Amy Lund for their leadership this past year, you inspired all of us to be our best.

## Directory

Club House .....	453-4931	Club House Fax .....	453-6182
Fuel Dock/Guard House.....	456-9914	Canoe House .....	453-6368
EYC Web: www.erieyachtclub.org		E-mail: eyc1895@erieyachtclub.org	

EYC Catering: Elizabeth Dougan 453-4931 or catering@erieyachtclub.org

Mailing address: P.O. Box 648 • Erie, PA 16512

LOG Photographer Volunteers: Tom & Cindy Madura

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2741 West Eighth Street, Suite 6, Erie, PA. 16505 (814) 455-2757

## On the Cover...

Magic, VooDoo and Pigs at Sea fight for position as they approach the finish of the 2020 Chili Cup Race.

Photo by Tom Madura



## Officers

Commodore Vincent Cifelli ..... 450-2448  
vcifeli@roadrunner.com

V/C David Sanner ..... 450-0667  
House Committee  
dsanner@outlook.com

R/C Harvey Downey ..... 434-2517  
Dock Committee  
hdowney@navitekgroup.com

F/C Mike Squeglia ..... 392-8491  
Grounds Committee  
hmsqueglia@bfields.com

David Wagner ..... (Club) 453-4931  
Secretary / Treasurer  
secretary@erieyachtclub.org

## Directors

P/C Peter Lund ..... 840-4392  
svua@aol.com

Alex Nagle ..... 397-9389  
alex.nagle@gmail.com

Jeffery Benson ..... 397-9784  
jbensondmd@yahoo.com

Russ Thompson ..... 434-0485  
russ@dbconsultants.com

Michael Mashyna ..... 881-8203  
mmashyna@roadrunner.com

Carrie Knox ..... 566-3334  
cknox@crweberrealtors.com

Neal Baker ..... 440-7334  
nealalanbaker@gmail.com

## Contributors to this Issue

Tom Madura  
Rev. Capt. Mark Middleton  
R/C Harvey Downey  
P/C Dave Heitzenrater  
Gene Polaski  
Paul Jenkins  
P/C Gib Loesel  
Dianne Cunningham  
Dan & Kathy Dundon  
Fredrick Whitehead



Scan to learn about the Erie Yacht Club



# The Chili Cup

## 2020 EDITION

Story & Photos by Tom Madura

It was touch and go for a while – should we or shouldn't we hold the 12th Annual EYC Chili Cup Race during a global pandemic? Early in the summer it was questionable whether there would be any sailboat racing this season. However, as the summer progressed, the ingenuity and indomitable spirit of the sailors prevailed, and with proper precautions, a modified sailing season was successfully completed.

But as the season drew to a close the question remained - what to do about the Chili Cup? After 11 years, the combination boat race and chili cook-off remains a hugely popular event, but with typically well over 100 people packed onto the EYC West Deck and everyone digging into multiple pots of chili, it hardly seemed possible to pull it off safely given the recommendations for social distancing and imposed limits on crowd sizes.

After much discussion among members of the Racing Fleet Committee, and consultation with Catering Manager Elizabeth Dougan, we decided on a modified Chili Cup event. We would hold the race, but in place of the usual chili cook-off, the Yacht Club kitchen would provide the chili, served up by staff members.

And it worked! Participation was somewhat less than in previous years, but still pretty good with 14 boats on the starting line. With good weather conditions and a 3-mile course, the racing was very competitive as usual. Under our "Family JAM" racing format, even several Windmill class dinghies participated, and it was Pat Huntley's Windmill number 5707 that took the bottle of wine for first place. Coming in a close second was A. J. Ficcardi's J29 "Joker", followed by Dick Robertson's legendary 27-footer "Pigs at Sea".

After the race, the skippers and crews gathered at the Lighthouse for the traditional keg of beer and Chef Michelle's outstanding chili and cornbread, cheerfully served up by the mask-wearing EYC staff.

And so, the very unusual 2020 sailing season closed successfully with a modified but still very fun day of sailing, chili, and camaraderie. Use your shutdown and quarantine time to work on those chili recipes, because we fully expect that next October we will be back to hosting the chili cook-off, and we hope it will be bigger and better than ever!





# NEREUS

## the Last Log

by Rev. Capt. Mark L. Middleton

### The Penultimate Log Entry of S/V NEREUS • US #662 485

September 18, 2020:

N 30° 18' 47" W 87° 34' 10"

(near Day Marker 74 Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, Maritime Alabama across from Orange Beach.)

The sailing cutter *Nereus*, age 40, described by a knowledgeable admirer as “a Bad A\*\* boat”, finished her course against the northern-most seawall of Barber Marina on September 16, 2020 after a three hour encounter with the eye wall of Category Two Hurricane Sally. She traveled approximately 200 yards. Our vessel was still afloat and dry inside except for the bilge.

A prior owner gave her the name of an ancient shape-changing god of the Aegean Sea. Her sailing hull was 22,500 displacement pounds, all stainless steel topsides, no frills, but with solid teak and comfortable interior below decks. Her dimensions were 39' LOA (47' counting bowsprit and Monitor self-steering gear), 31 LWL, 11.3 feet' on the beam.

Her height was 54' from waterline to top of her mast... She featured a 10' draft with swing keel extended to aid any off shore beat to windward. As a cutter, she could carry up to three head sails along with a fully-battened mainsail. Younger athletic sailors enjoyed wild rides in her crows nest at spreader level. A 30 horsepower inboard Yanmar diesel hummed when we desired motor power.

At 00:00 UTC on September 10, 2020, the National Hurricane Center (NHC) studied a pattern of disturbed weather over the Bahamas for possible development. Convection over water organized into Tropical Depression 19 by September 11, an anniversary of some infamy. Following the storm's course into the Gulf of Mexico, the NHC now named the tropical storm “Sally”. Straightaway the storm became a Category Two hurricane with lowest pressure of 985 hPa.



Sally's erratic slow-moving course initiated *Nereus*' penultimate journey as the north eye-wall buffeted her directly for more than three hours at Beaufort Scale 12 (winds of 105 mph and brief gusts up to 125 mph.) I watched Sally's landfall helplessly via Texas Storm Chaser's streaming camera adjacent to the Pink Pony pub in Gulf Shores, Alabama. The air was filled with foam and spray; sea completely white with driving spray and rain; and visibility very seriously affected. Although *Nereus* had eyes painted on her hull, I suspect our vessel was also blind.

*Nereus*' final course was a function of her northbound heading from her slip, the layout of Barber's Marina, and the hurricane's winds. We had securely moored her by 8 sturdy lines, web fashion, centered in her slip to southernmost floating concrete “F” dock, finger pier, and pilings. Everything broke loose and at sundry moments during the next three hours she smashed her way northwards for 200 yards, through and over other boats and drifting docks to complete her voyage at the concrete northern seawall of the marina. She survived all this mayhem as the “last boat afloat.”

Upon review of her condition after the storm, we could only weep at her condition. Her stays snapped, tabernacle, mast, crows nest, and spreaders torn asunder with stanchions and railings mangled. Radar mast and solar power array were gone. We could barely recognize any feature of her topside equipment. Boat USA declares both the marina and our boat a catastrophic loss, with dozens of boats in her path sitting on the bottom. A remnant of her “F” dock finger pier, to which she had been attached, was just above her upon the northern seawall.

Eight people along the coast died in the storm. Our intrepid friends who tried to ride out the storm aboard their boats in the marina sur-



Happier times with Captain Mark at the helm.

vived but will suffer PTSD for years to come. Barber's Marina will take up to a year to rebuild.

*Nereus*' Macedonian eyes looked up at me from her deep green hull, her rudder slightly moving in the currents, as if to say, “I was a good cetacean, captain.” After tenderly lifting her ashore with a 50 ton crane, a further review showed her hull, deck, and cabin to be scarred, but functional. Stepping into her interior, all was as it should be. Our ship's navigation station, salon, sleeping berths, galley, library, bar, humidor, and lockers were all dry and intact. I enjoyed a shot of Middleton's Irish Whiskey and smoked a pipe.

The weather gods fashioned our sailboat's end out of her storm-wrought conception in late 1979 by the pen of marine architect Burg Borges with a design which served her well until 2020's Hurricane Sally.

In August, 1979, 303 sailing yachts started the Royal Ocean Racing club's 28th regatta for the climactic fifth race in the Admiral's Cup series. The starting line was off of Cowes, Isle of Wight, with a race direct to the Fastnet Rock then finish after

608 miles of sailing near Plymouth traveling south of the Isles of Scilly.

Heavy weather wrecked havoc on the race. Myriad distress calls summoned emergency services, naval forces, and civilian vessels from the western English Channel for aid in what became the largest ever peace-time rescue operation. The Irish Naval Service's entire fleet of helicopters, commercial boats, and lifeboats sprang into action. Surviving competitors believe the winds reached Force 11 on the Beaufort Scale with air pressure dropping to 979 hPa. The storm capsized 75 vessels and sank five Nineteen sailors or observers died. Media mogul Ted Turner skippered his Sparkman and Steven's yacht, *Tenacious*, to finish first by design handicapping rules; but his Fastnet victory in '79 reminds us of the 1970, 333 mile Chicago to Mackinaw island race. Where 88 sailors of 167 starters withdrew due to fierce wind and wave conditions. Turner, racing aboard his *American Eagle*, called Lake Michigan a “mill pond.” He later retracted his statement.

(continued on next page)



## NERSEUS The Last Log

(continued from previous page)

“Heaving to” proved to be the best storm survival tactic for the Fastnet yachts. We highly endorse this survival strategy for keeping calm and building character...

Beyond tactics, the Fastnet storm forced a major rethink of racing, risks, and yacht design. Barry Sharf, owner and C.E.O. Of Horizon Yacht Company of Largo, Florida, commissioned Borges, famed for his many Morgan designs, to draw up a new “robust” boat. A year later, Horizon yacht company’s Hull #007 came out of her manufacturing facility for the company’s chief carpenter. He spent the next three years fitting her out: The first owner launched his custom one-of-a-kind cutter in 1984 and Nereus began her cruising career.

The April 1998 issue of Cruising World famously published an article about the top boats for optimal safety and performance in offshore cruising and racing. Our Horizon 39 was among them.

We purchased her in 2002 after I retired from 20 years of weekend racing *Lunie*, a 24’ Sparkman & Steven’s Rainbow on Lake Michigan.



Showing her battle scars.

After years of wandering, and sometimes just waiting, we found our cruising leviathan a home berth at Barber’s Marina across the waterway from Orange Beach, Alabama.

She provided us a home away from home and also much fun and adventure in equal measure. My wife will assure anyone these terms are not synonymous! The boat’s performance under all weather conditions proved the quality of her design.

Funeral arrangements are private. Perhaps the goddess Aphrodite will accompany our worthy vessel on her final voyage across the nearby River Styx. I conclude with a loud echo of Queen Elizabeth’s November 1992 Guildhall speech:

“2020 is not a year on which I shall look back with undiluted pleasure. In the words of one of my more sympathetic correspondents, it has turned out to be an annus horribilis.”



# Share Your Story...

You don’t have to be a professional writer to contribute to the Erie Yacht Club’s LOG magazine. You don’t even have to be a sailor, just someone with a tale to tell.

A tidbit from the history of the Club, an unusual vacation destination, or an epic boat race are all good story topics for your LOG magazine. Interesting stories come in all shapes and sizes.

LOG stories can be informational, like how to patch a hull, inspirational, as in the Lake Erie Solo challenge, or perhaps you’d like to call some well deserved attention to another member’s generosity to the Club or community. Stories can also be just plain entertaining like surviving that cruising vacation with your in-laws.

Although a picture is worth a thousand words they are not a necessity when submitting an article to the LOG. (Although if they help tell the story they are still worth at least a couple hundred words!). Pictures are greatly appreciated however, when at all possible, especially when dealing with specifics or a difficult explanation.

There are also no word count requirements, all article lengths are needed. Heck, you don’t even need to use proper grammar! The Log staff reviews and will correct any grammatical mishaps. Writers also have the opportunity to review the finished article before it goes to press if they choose. You don’t have to be a great author like Mark Twain or William Shakespeare to submit a LOG article, but you may feel like one after seeing your story in print.

So c’mon all the cool kids are doin’ it!



# On Thin Ice...

## An Ice Safety Reminder

By Rear Commodore Harvey Downey

I was recently asked by the Erie Yacht Club's Safety Committee if I would rerun this article on Ice Safety. The article previously ran in the January/February 2019 edition of The LOG. Back when I originally wrote the article in December 2018, there was an El Niño forecasted for the 2018 - 2019 winter season, which was to give our region an unseasonably warm winter. I often say that I have a good memory - But it's short. So, I do not exactly remember if the forecast of the El Niño held true, but I do remember I was only able to get out on my iceboat twice that season. This year I have turned to the tried and true Farmers' Almanac to get the extended forecast for Winter 2020-2021. Here is what I found; "Cold and Snowy in areas from the Great Lakes and Midwest, westward through the Northern and Central Plains, and Rockies. Drought in the West and Everything Crazy In Between!" I don't know about you, but I have had enough "Crazy" to last me awhile and am happy to take cold and snowy over more craziness.

If you are planning to venture out on the ice this season for some winter fun, the EYC Safety Committee wants to remind you of some safety precautions that could help keep you safe.

The most important rule to remember is *Ice Is Never Completely Safe*. According to the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, a good guideline for ice thickness is: 2" or less is unsafe, and you should stay off the ice. 4" thick ice can support 400 lbs. of weight; which is in the weight range for most ice fishing, ice skating, or other foot activities. 5" of ice can support 800 lbs. of weight, such as snowmobiles and ATV's. I couldn't find any cold hard facts on safe ice thicknesses for ice boating, but articles on the sport stated 4" - 5" of ice is a safe ice thickness for this thrilling winter activity. But please keep in mind, these stated ice thicknesses are only general guidelines.



There are other signs in addition to the ice thickness you need to look for when determining the integrity of the ice. The color and shade of the ice can tell you a lot. In general, ice that forms is either clear ice, (also known as black ice) or white ice. Clear ice is generally newer ice, and

you can see through it fairly well. White ice has air pockets that have formed in it, which can compromise the strength. Snow, which is often part of our winterscape here, often mixes with the ice as it is forming, which will also create white ice. Other conditions that effect the purity of the ice is an inconsistent freeze/thaw cycle. Clear ice is the best ice and it forms when there is a consistent period of subfreezing temperatures during a period of little or no snowfall. Clear ice is twice as strong as white ice. If you observe ice that is grey and opaque, this condition indicates the ice is in the process of thawing. Grey ice typically has a layer of slush on top, which makes the true thickness underneath difficult to determine.

Lastly on the topic ice condition awareness, look for cracks and deformities. Cracks can indicate weakening ice in that area. Ice can lose 40 percent of its strength along a single crack. If you happen upon an area where two cracks intersect, you will be standing on ice that can

Ice Safety	
Ice Color Meaning	
SAFE	transparent blue/black lake ice
WEAK	white opaque ice - use extreme caution
WEAKER	gray ice - stay off
WEakest	white and grey mottled - stay off

be up to 70 percent weaker. Keep an eye open for pressure ridges and water on or near edges of cracks and along the shoreline, all indicators that it may be time to get off the ice or stay off it all together.

Another condition that can jeopardize the ice consistency are the currents beneath. The currents can be caused from natural flow, springs, and runoffs from streams. You can't see them, so you need to rely on local experience and knowledge.

As I mentioned earlier in this article - Ice is Never Completely Safe. If you venture out on the ice this winter to partake in your favorite hard water activity, it's always good practice to wear a flotation vest and take a set of ice picks or screwdrivers along with you to help you climb out if you do break through.

If you do fall through, you have more time than you might think, per Professor Gordon Giesbrecht of the University of Manitoba. According to an article in the New York Times, Professor Geisbrecht studies the physiology of being cold. Geisbrecht has something he calls the 1-10-1 principle when someone falls through the ice: "One minute to get control of your breathing. Ten minutes of meaningful movement. One hour before you become unconscious."

**Treading water**  
Do not panic and thrash about. Resist the urge to gasp, slowly tread water or grasp the edge of the ice to keep your head above the water.

**Kick and pull**  
Keep your hands and arms on the ice and kick your feet. This brings your body to a horizontal position, parallel to the ice surface.

**Horizontal kick and pull**  
Once horizontal, continue to kick your feet while pulling with your hands. Draw yourself up onto the ice.

**Roll onto the ice**  
Keep your weight spread out as you roll, crawl, and slide across the ice until it will support your weight.

Once you enter the cold water, your body's reaction will make you want to gasp for a breath of air and hyperventilate. This is because your heart rate will accelerate rapidly. Don't thrash, and try to stay calm. The initial shock typically wears off in one to three minutes. Even though the shock has passed, you are still in danger of quickly developing hypothermia. You need to focus your energy on getting out as quickly as possible. DON'T WAIT for someone to rescue you.

Here are a few tips that could help you rescue yourself:

- If you are under water, look for the hole you fell through and look for contrasting colors. The hole will appear darker with snow covered ice and lighter when there is little or no snow on the ice surface.
- On the surface of the water, get your body horizontal and swim as quickly as you can towards the point of entry. Once at the edge, grab onto the ice and keep kicking your legs as you lift as much of your upper body as possible out of the water and onto the ice. Use your elbows and forearms to prop yourself up. Once you lifted your upper body onto the ice, wait a few seconds to allow some of the water to drain out of your clothing.

• Next, keeping your legs horizontal, kick them as hard as you possibly can to propel yourself out of the water. If you are carrying ice picks, use them to dig into the ice to help pull yourself out.

• Once you are out of the water, resist the temptation to standup. Instead, stay lying flat and roll away a safe distance from the edge of the breakthrough.

Here is a link to a very good self-rescue video:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=QK-pAzvXSldA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QK-pAzvXSldA)

The EYC Safety Committee wishes you an enjoyable and fun-filled winter season. Please use these safety precautions as guidelines. Use good judgement and never venture out onto the ice alone. Our Bay is special place, any season...

Have fun and stay safe!





# 2020 THOMPSON MEMORIAL TROPHY PRESENTED TO WALTER P. RYBKA

NOVEMBER 20, 2020

Captain Walter Rybka

In recognition of his Contributions to the world of wood ships he started his love of wooden ships in 1983 as training officer at the South Street Seaport Museum, USS Constellation and master of the US Brig Niagara in Erie, Pennsylvania. After his retirement as Captain he became Senior Captain of the Erie Maritime Program at the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Captain Rybka delighted people of all ages with his lectures of the War of 1812. It was his belief that the only way to preserve and to train the crew(s) to sail all of which made the War of 1812.

Awarded this the 20th day of November

BY P/C DAVE HEITZENRATER



We, the 2020 Thompson Trophy Selection Committee are highly honored to be part of this important Erie Yacht Club award and tradition. We have made our choice after considered discussion and believe our candidate, Walter P. Rybka truly epitomizes the intended qualifications of Outstanding Service or Achievement in the World of Yachts and Yachtsmen/Women locally and far beyond the Great Lakes. We have summarized his lengthy list of accomplishments here.

- Karen Carnes
- Alex Miller
- P/C Dave Heitzenrater, Chairman

## SENIOR CAPT. WALTER P. RYBKA

Captain Rybka was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1950. He and his wife Penny, a Texas native have a daughter, Elizabeth. He acquired his B.A. degree at Macalester College in Saint Paul, Minnesota and carries the Tall Ship rank of Sailing Master with a USCG license of 1,600 tons, sailing auxiliary, ocean going.

His nautical career began at South Street Seaport Museum in New York City from 1970-1976 with the 102' metal hull and framed schooner Pioneer. He moved to Galveston, Texas where he worked with the Galveston Historical Foundation 1977 to 83 as the Restoration Project Director of the three-masted 141' barque Elissa. He also served as a Maritime Consultant and the sail training deck officer there.

Mr. Rybka has served on multiple vessels from 1984 through 1990 including the Tall Ships Westward, and Corwith Cramer, a 134-foot steel brigantine with the homeport of Woods Hole, Massachusetts. He was appointed Master on the 145' schooner Californian of the homeport Santiago, California. In 1991 he took command as Master of the United States Flagship Niagara, a 198' wooden brig with the homeport of Erie, Pa.

He planned and choreographed a re-enactment of the Battle of Lake Erie for Tall Ships America. This huge event which coordinated 16 tall ships in the open waters of Lake Erie occurred over the 2013 Labor Day weekend near Put in Bay, Ohio.

In 2014, Walter participated in creating the International Sail Endorsement Scheme, a policy for the Sail Training International. The project organized in the United Kingdom by the Nautical Institute to provide ship officer endorsements for their licenses measuring competence via written exams and sailing skills.

He also served as an advisor to the American Sail Training Association as well as a project with the U.S.S. Constitution birthed in Charlestown Navy Yard in Massachusetts. Rybka received the Don Turner Award for historic ship preservation in 2006 and Sail Trainer of the Year in 1993 and 2006 from the ASTA.

He helped in the formation of the Erie Maritime Museum that open in 1998 and was a Flagship Niagara League officer through nearly 30 years, 1990 until his retirement in July, 2020. In 2016 Walter became the Site Administrator of the Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission, Erie, Pa. until his retirement in July, 2020.

A little known fact is that he served as a pilot with the Civil Air Patrol with the Pennsylvania Wing, Composite Squadron 501, which is a Search and Rescue Squadron of the US Air Force Auxiliary. Captain Rybka was also involved with various other Maritime Institutions including Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, CT; the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, D. C. and the Nautical Heritage Society, Peekskill, New York.



On Deck: P/C Gib Loesel, William Sabatini - Executive Director Flagship Niagara League, P/C Dave Heitzenrater. Capt. Walter Rybka and Capt. Christopher Cusson, Flagship Niagara.

Walter was the author or contributor to these publications, U.S. Brig Niagara Crew Handbook (1992); Sea History Magazine: "Designing a birth for Elissa" (2010); The Lake Erie Campaign of 1813: I Shall Fight Them This Day (2012) and the Coffins of the Brave: Lake Shipwrecks of the War of 1812. 'We have met the enemy and they are ours' A contributor to this Ed Rachal Foundation publication (2014).

He also served as an educator and lecturer with both the Jefferson Educational Society and the US Maritime Museum in Erie, Pa. He expanded his outreach with three C-SPAN Television network presentations aired in June 5, 1996 and September 16/17, 2013.

The presentations covered the history and construction of the battleship Niagara, part of the fleet of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry fabricated in the port of Erie, Pa. during the war of 1812 as well as his book; The Lake Erie Campaign of 1813: I Shall Fight Them This Day in which he chronicles the Lake Erie Campaign during the War of 1812.

Captain Rybka received the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Sail Training Association and the Rodney N. Houghton Award for the best feature article in Sea History Magazine (2012) from the National Maritime Historical Society.

(continued on next page)





# THOMPSON TROPHY PRESENTED

(continued from previous page)

Walter Rybka who currently resides in Erie was congratulated and presented with the 2020 Thompson Memorial Trophy in an informal ceremony held outside at the Erie Yacht Club on November 6th and further recognized at the Club's Annual Membership Meeting on November 20th, 2020.

Walter P. Rybka believes the only way to preserve a historic vessel is to keep her sailing and to train the crews to sail toward the ship's greatest potential. He recognized from the outset Niagara's safety liabilities but knew that a strong commitment to sail training was the best way to keep her afloat to continue sailing to other ports, rather than remain just another stationary museum replica. The selection committee is truly proud to add Capt. Rybka to the assemblage of previous awardees.

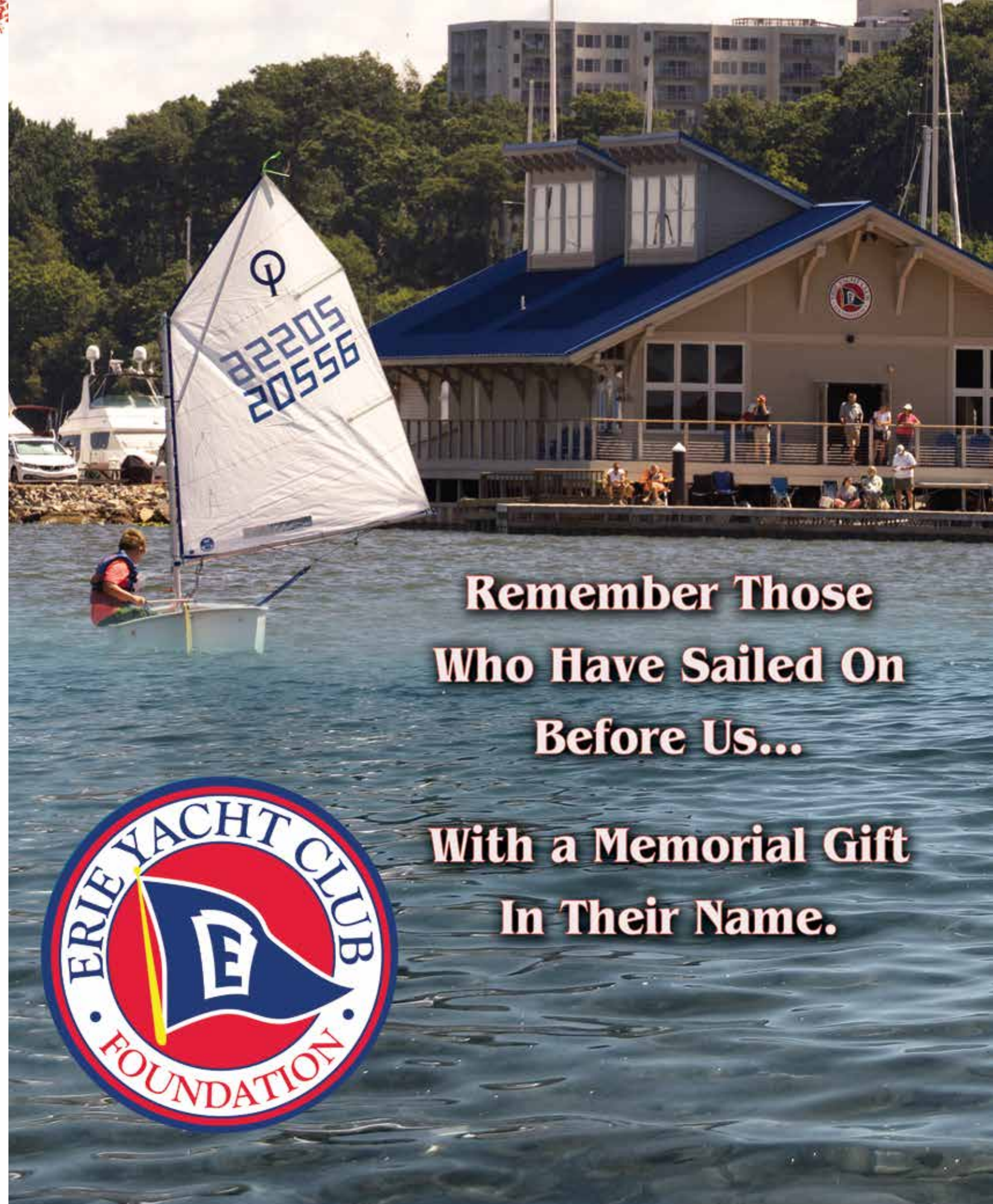


The Flagship Niagara pays a visit to the EYC in 2011 with nearly 500 members there to welcome her home.

## THOMPSON MEMORIAL AWARD RECIPIENTS:

1954 Joe Thompson  
1955 Not Awarded  
1956 Eben Gunnison  
1957 Ken Welsh  
1958 Morril Bauman  
1959 Dean Klahr, Sr.  
1960 Byron Cooley  
1961 Durker Braggins  
1962 Ted Schuler  
1963 Kennedy M. Eckerd  
1964 Not Awarded  
1965 Not Awarded  
1966 Not Awarded  
1967 Robert Dodsworth  
1968 Robert B. Way  
1969 Harold Ogden  
1970 Nat Reyburn  
1971 Gail Garren  
1972 Douglas B. Nagle Jr.  
1973 Charles Curtze  
1974 Frank Zurn  
1975 Not Awarded  
1976 G. Wm Ambro  
1977 George O. Loesel  
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1980 David B. Schuler  
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1987 William J. Behr  
1988 Chester J. Curriden  
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1992 Bobby Johnson  
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1994 Howard Miskill  
1995 Edward C. Irvin  
1996 David Sample  
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2005 J. Boyd Bert  
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2007 Rich Eisenburg  
2008 Bill Vogel  
2009 John Murosky  
2010 Dan Dundon  
2011 Jim McBrier  
2012 Ron Busse  
2013 Matt Niemic  
2014 Bill Walker  
2015 Bill Lasher  
2016 Hadley Jackson (PDYC)  
2017 Karen Imig Carns  
2018 Monica Bloomstine  
2019 A.J. Micelli  
2020 Walter P. Rbyka



**Remember Those  
Who Have Sailed On  
Before Us...  
With a Memorial Gift  
In Their Name.**



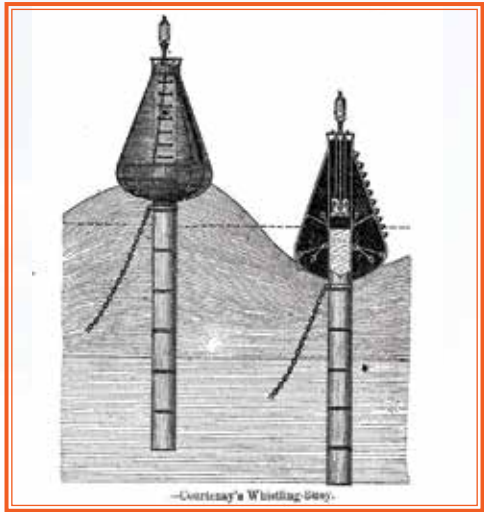
[www.erieycfoundation.org](http://www.erieycfoundation.org)



No matter whether you are a power boater or a sail boater, one of the first encounters in boating is learning about floating navigational aids called buoys. These markers are placed in the water to guide boats through a waterway such as a channel, to mark various obstructions or to mark a race course. The buoys are various colors and may have lights of different colors and patterns of blinking, and even have bells or whistles.

Early navigational aids, namely lighthouses, are documented from ancient Egyptian days while the first recorded floating buoys were recorded as existing in the 13th century in Spain to guide mariners into Seville. A short time later, wooden casks with iron bands, chain, and a stone were used in northern Europe. "Light fees" were collected from the mariners to maintain them and it was several hundred years later that the governments took over their maintenance.

Maritime commerce was a vital part of the new English colonies which realized the importance of having safe sea lanes. Again, lighthouses were the preferred aid to navigation. In the late 1700's, cask buoys and spar buoys (poles made from juniper or cedar) were recorded as being used in the Delaware River. These existed up until the



1876 patented "Whistle Buoy" produced a whistling sound as air was forced up a submerged tube by the motion of the waves.

mid -1800s and by then the Federal government's Department of the Treasury had taken over the responsibility of navigational aids.

There was no standardization for the buoys so size, colors and shapes were determined by the manufacturer and varied for each port. Floating buoys were limited on size due to the lack of available boats to handle them and there were no good ways to accurately place them other than taking bearings off of landmarks. In 1848 Congress established what is known as the "Lateral System" still in use today. That is where the familiar "red right when returning from sea" had its origin.

In 1852 Congress established the Lighthouse Board, which after studying the much more advanced system in Europe, implemented red and black riveted iron buoys and also set the size and shapes. About the same time, Charles Babbage of London, published a paper about putting lights on buoys. This started a flurry of activity by inventors one of which made an electric system with a motion detector that when a ship approached. A flare was set off! Some spar buoys near shore had an electric line run out to them for a light. Compressed gas buoys came along and would hold tanks of fuel for 12 months. However, these were dangerous to service and one man was killed during a pressure test.



Bell Buoy at the entrance to the dredged channel here in Erie.

Another lighting system invented by a man named Wilson from Canada, used calcium carbide to generate acetylene gas. One buoy blew up on a calm day so the whole thing was a bit risky!

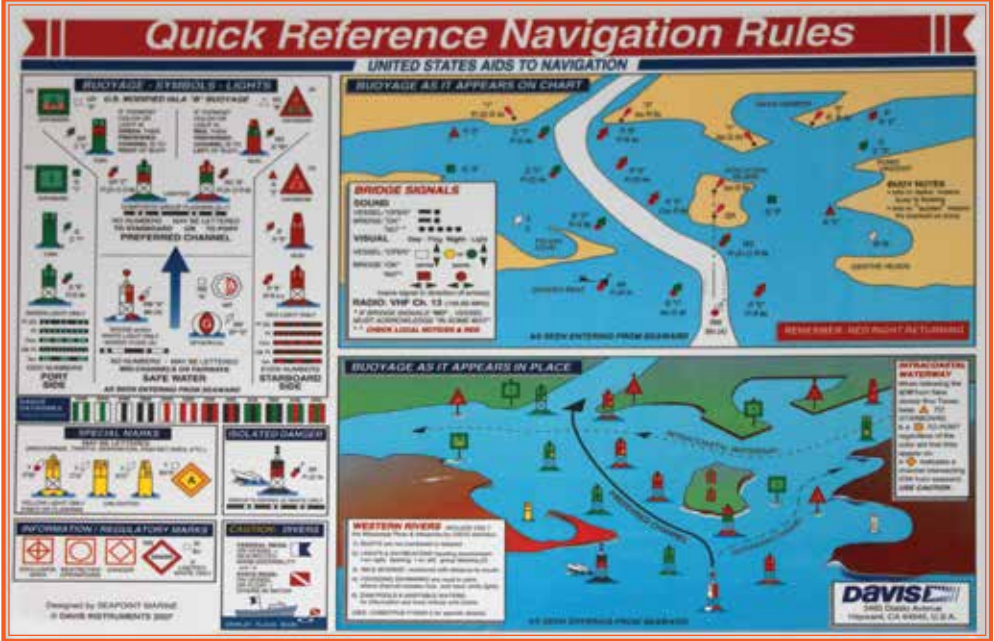
About the same time that the Federal Government took over navigational aids here on the Great Lakes, an organization of the shipping companies, called the Lake Carriers' Association, funded a lot of buoy placement because they were dissatisfied with the government's job saying they didn't understand the needs of shipping on the Great Lakes.



U.S.C.G. ship Hollyhock performing buoy maintenance on Lake Erie.

In 1939, Congress moved the responsibility of buoys into the realm of the US Coast Guard who continued investigation and experimentation to enhance buoys. In the early 1980s, the black buoys were changed to green to effect better visibility. Attempts at using nuclear fueled buoys was a dismal failure. In the 1960's, they investigated using very large buoys (40 feet in diameter) to replace lightships and were found to be very effective. Eventually, lit buoys used batteries and today the batteries are kept charged via solar panels.

While buoys may be different shapes, have lights or audible sounds (e.g. the green bell buoy at the entrance to the dredged channel - see photo) and be different colors, they have to be maintained



and accurately placed. In the Great Lakes including Erie, the US Coast Guard ship Hollyhock is often used for buoy maintenance and to replace summer buoys with winter buoys needed because commercial ships come and go into Erie harbor even as late as the end of January. (see photo)

An unusual buoy can be seen in the Baltimore area (Patabsco River). It is painted like the USA flag. (see photo). It marks the spot where Francis Scott Key penned the Star Spangled Banner. Interestingly, it is not a navigational aid.

Boaters should know the meaning of the buoys in their boating area and if traveling to other ports, should be aware of the types of buoys in the next port.

This can be done via paper charts, electronic charts (ECDIS), the book "Chapman Piloting", or a laminated placard displaying buoys and their meanings available from marine stores. (see photo) The Coast Guard frequently publishes "Notice to Mariners" that lists any changes such as missing buoys, lights that are not functioning and other navigational aids changes.



SOURCES: "Lake Carriers' Association History 1880-2015" by George Ryan.  
"A History of Buoys and Tenders" by Amy Marshall, US Coast Guard Historian's Office  
Coast Guard Mid Atlantic (official blog of the 5th District)



A buoy in the Patabsco River marks where Francis Scott Key wrote the Star Spangled Banner.

# EXPLODING BUOYS?

BY GENE POLASKI



Acetylene Gas Buoy for New York Harbor



# HUNTING IS TIMELESS

BY PAUL JENKINS

Winter is the time of year when a man and his dog get loaded up in the old duck boat with some decoys and head for the open gray waters to hunt the speedy birds that migrate through our area each year.

Unless you have grown up with the love of hunting and enjoy the quiet open water and wind, you might wonder why some normally sane men crave and even enjoy the cold winter days that bring shivers and turn your face lobster red from the stinging cold spray.

No it isn't the wild duck fare on the plate that makes them go, but strangely its a forecast for an early snow that seems perfect for a memorable hunt.

Duck men and even a few ladies really love the quiet time far from the endless drone of TV news and a world that produces a constant clatter that never seems to end. The water and cold winter winds have been the same for eons but the peace they give seems more soothing than ever.

You don't need a big fancy boat, high tech gear or even fellow hunters to make the time just right, but the company of your kindly retriever does makes it more enjoyable. The big pooch seems to know this is also his time and if a duck falls to the water he will give up the comfort of his dry coat to splash overboard and bring back the game. All he asks is a pat on the head after the cold swim and some soft words of thanks from his master.

They say a man was born with the instinct to hunt that goes back centuries and seems now to be lost in present times. It's hard to explain why a guy and his furry friend would sit in an open skiff to wait for far away specks in the sky that might turn their way as they fly down bay. He hopes for a few moments of excitement as his long gun booms out to bring down some fowl if the shots hit well.

If you are really serious about duck hunting you may want to build or buy a duck box and use a powered skiff to transport the box to a desired location and then put a single hunter at a time on board and run other hunters back and forth, giving each a chance to hunt. The layout box rides very low in the water and the hunter lays back out of sight. Then when a flight of birds comes in over the decoys, he pops up to take aim at the unsuspecting prey. This form of hunting gives the shooter a bird's eye view right above the water and often provides a chance for several shots because the ducks have almost landed and slowed down before shots are taken.

While in the box you are totally in harmony with the wave movements and if you aren't careful the gentle rocking can loll you off to sleep. Now that's a relaxed way to hunt.

Even though I have always loved the sport of water fouling I now prefer shooting photos of ducks over my decoys as they swing in. They are beautiful creatures and their flight is as graceful as a ballerina. Another good thing about hunting with a camera is you don't ruffle a feather or add to the declining population of these beautiful creatures.

When I was a teen my buddy Bill Brown and I discovered the best natural duck blind on the Erie lake front. We were hunting from a small wooden row boat with dozen tattered decoys and our old shotguns. After several hours without a single shot we decided to take a long row from our hunting spot near the Perry Iron Works beach to a pile of rocks about a mile off shore, known as the Hammermill cribs. Once we set our decoys and climbed up on the rocks, Bill asked me how many decoys I had set. I told him we used all 12 in our bag. "That's funny," he said, "I just counted 14 our there now." "That's impossible," I said, but as I stood to get a better look, two ducks jumped off the water and flew away.

Bill and I looked at each other in disbelief, and then burst into laughter. They must of flown in while we were tying up the boat. Wow, I said, "this is the best blind we have ever had."

The rest of the day turned out to be a time for learning, as we repeatedly shoot at small flocks of mostly Blue Bills flying in from all directions. Young duck blind hunters like us hadn't had much fun and practice shooting at flying targets that so numerous.

I had my brother's 16 gauge, bolt action shotgun and Bill had a 12 gauge pump. We both only had a single box of shells with 25 in each. With duck blind hunting, that amount would last for an entire season. Finally we were down to a hand full of shells each, with only five ducks to show for it. In the last round of shooting we got the ammo boxes mixed up and Bill got my last couple of 16 gauge shells stuck in his 12 gauge gun. To make matters worse the ducks kept flying in as Bill worked hard to take his gun apart and release the jammed action. As I sat by with an empty gun, Bill was finally able to clear his weapon as the flock of ducks on the water grew larger and larger. In total frustration, I stood up and waved my arms to scare off the hapless birds.

In the last hour of hunting we only managed to down another Bluebill, making our total six. In spite of our miserable shooting, we burned up 50 shells, but didn't make two full limits.

At the end of the day when we pulled in to the Dunn Blvd. Beach, a guy we called Mr. Brooks came out to help land our boat. "Boy, you guys must have downed a lot of ducks because I heard you shooting all afternoon," he said. A little sheepishly, I said, "well we only downed a half dozen but we sure learned a lot about wing shooting... But next time we'll bring home two limits."

Now that I'm much older and still not a great wing shot, I now enjoy hours of sitting in my car with camera ready for some good photo shots, whether it be lake or bay, it still seems best just as a snow squall rolls in. So whether it's a 12 gauge shotgun or a camera with a long lens, give it a try because it just might stir up some instincts that you didn't know you had.

Good hunting.





# If These Docks Could Talk

## Dick Tracy Comes True

by P/C Gib Loesel



I have a good number of stories in the “pipeline”, but they all got set back an issue or two the other day when I was waiting for a plane at the O’Hare Airport in Chicago. It was a long time between flights and I was chatting with a pilot who was also waiting, the conversation was interrupted when his phone “rang” (if that is what you call it now) only thing was he was talking into his wrist!! And I went WOW Dick Tracy came true!!

Next a nice-looking young lady came by and opened a hatch in the center of the waiting area coffee table to plug in her cell phone! WOW A.C. in an airport table!! Next another young lady (also nice looking) sat at the near by counter and started taking into her iPad, not only that her daughter was talking back, and they could see each other!! Imagine that!! Well you guessed it, this got me to thinking (again) about navigation equipment and how it has changed in my lifetime.

About 70 years ago I made my first crossing of Lake Erie aboard Spike Spencer’s yawl “Restless”. Of course this was really exciting for me and for sure I didn’t know much about navigation. On board was my friend Mike Traphagen (younger brother of P/C Pete Traphagen) Spike (I think his real name was Herbert) and Nat Rayburn (long before the sailing school).

Our navigation lesson started by showing us a chart and how to plot a course to Long Point and explaining how you had to steer a compass course, Mike and I both had a turn at the wheel.

Watch the compass they said, (the course was basically N) if you are left of north turn to the right, if you are right of north turn to the left, that sounds simple right!! Well here was the tricky part, the Restless’s wheel was “cross chained” which meant if you turned to starboard the boat turned to port and vice versa.

Our wake was anything but straight. They were trying to show us the various ways you can keep track of where you were and where you were going using charts and dividers. The other “aide to navigation” was a Taffrail, this neat little devise was clamped to the rail, it had a dial which once operational told you how far the shipped had traveled, all accomplished by towing a long line with a small propeller causing the tow line to turn thus causing the gage to show the distance traveled. What a great trip and lessons by two masters, we were lucky boys!



A Taffrail could calculate both speed and distance when properly used.

Years later Mr. Eckerd put the latest new-fangled gadget aboard Enigma, it was an RDF (radio direction finder) and of course the crew thought as they use to say, “we were the cat’s meow”. When tuned in properly it picked up a transmission, as example from the Light on Long Point and this would tell you where you were in relationship to the course. Not very convenient to use, thus the antenna became a good place to hang sail bags from.

My next experience with electronics was the early stages of the GPS, when signals were picked off towers and lat/long were achieved by triangulation. These signals gave you TD’s (time dimensions) which had to be plotted on a special chart. Next they started taking reading from satellites’ and the readings were in actual lat/longs and a normal chart could be used. (WOW)

From there charts were developed for small computers/lap tops where you could actually see the ship in relation to the waypoints developing to what are now wonderful chart plotters that illustrate in real time exactly where you are in relationship to all charted hazards of navigation where the boat is no matter how fast you are going. (WOW again)

Just recently I enjoyed a ride with P/C Doug Nagle in Charlotte Harbor on the West Coast of Florida where there is lots of shallow water, shoals and islands that make up the west Florida Barrier Islands, imagine roaring through these water at 25 knots and watching exactly where you are in relationship to all markers, buoys, sand bars, reefs!! (WOW once again)

Oh, yea Doug still had to keep a sharp eye out for other boat traffic. It is hard to get lost anymore! Which brings be back to Dick Tracy...



An Early GPS (Global Positioning System) receiver.

If These Docks Could Talk, they would say: “Not only can Dick Tracy talk into his wrist, he can use his phone and do all the above”

(WOW POW BANG!!)



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**E**very single one of us has missed our times with friends and the way life used to be. For those of us involved in the Cruising Fleet, that certainly was reality. Plans made. Plans put on hold. As we took the time to plan events, the uncertainty of the event taking place made us uneasy.

Lo and behold, this past summer with the help of the EYC staff, we proudly "pulled-off" the Third Annual Venetian Night, as the signature event for the Club's 125th Anniversary. The event was well-planned and executed, with exceptional attendance.

In the knowledge that hope is never "cancelled", my husband, Bob, and I, joined by the other EYC Cruising Fleet Co-Founders, Karen and Brad Cairns, look forward to getting the group's activities back on track in 2021.

New Club members, landlubbers and all boaters are encouraged to join our Club this year. Events worth noting (once pandemic limitations are lifted) include monthly get-togethers the third Tuesday of the month, "Cruise-Day Tuesdays"; boating day trips, short and longer trips to areas such as Put-In-Bay, Port Dover, Mentor, Ashtabula, Geneva, Erie Bayfront, Buffalo Launch Club and the Cleveland Air Show, and other destinations.

Our spring kick-off picnic, fall events and holiday parties bring fond memories to mind.

As I write this, I reflect over the people I would never have had the opportunity to know, had it not been for the Cruising Fleet. One reality for me because of the pandemic is the fact that I value and appreciate all of those who have been a part of my life, and this certainly includes the dear friends who join the Cruising Fleet soiree's! Our members work so hard to plan such wonderful trips and get-togethers!

Marilyn Russell, Cruising Fleet member says it the best. "I wouldn't have had the opportunity to meet most of those who I have enjoyed boating and events with if it weren't for the Cruising Fleet. It has been a joy to get together with these folks and has truly added to my Erie Yacht Club experience."

Please contact Club Secretary/Treasurer and EYC Cruising Fleet member, David Wagner at the Club at 453-4931; or me, Dianne Cunningham, at 814-873-4756 or [dcunningham@homeinstead.com](mailto:dcunningham@homeinstead.com), if you wish to learn more about our Cruising Fleet.

**We are excited to meet you!  
Happy 2021!**



**EYC Cruisers Fleet**

# A Time to Look Ahead

by Dianne Cunningham



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# What's the Good Word?

by Dan & Kathy Dundon

Will Rogers, who died in a 1935 plane crash in Alaska with bush pilot Wiley Post, was one of the greatest political country/cowboy sages this country has ever known. Will was responsible for tons of sayings and quotations. We hope you enjoy these samples:

Never squat with your spurs on.

Never slap a man who's chewing tobacco.

Never kick a cow chip on a hot day.

Never miss a good chance to shut up.

OK. Now that we have some of Will's "nevers" behind us...

Always drink upstream from the herd.

If you find yourself in a hole, stop digging.

The quickest way to double your money is to fold it and put it back into your pocket.

Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment.

If you're riding' ahead of the herd, take a look back every now and then to make sure it's still there.

Lettin' the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier'n puttin' it back in.

Hero-ing is one of the shortest lived professions there is.

We don't seem able to check crime, so, why not legalize it and then tax it out of business.

Too many people spend money they haven't earned to buy things they don't want to impress people they don't like.

We sure hope you were amused by Will Rogers! How about you? Don't you have some favorite quotes or such words-of-wisdom?

Why not send them to us (dandundon@gmail.com) to maybe include in future EYC log articles?

And lastly a final word from Will:

After eating an entire bull, a mountain lion felt so good he started roaring. He kept it up until a hunter came along and shot him. The moral: When you're full of bull, keep your mouth shut.



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## mind the boom

First launch Gallagher Beach nineteen ninety something

With the stem of his pipe he pointed to the flag on the grain silo

Head directly into the wind lower the center board push the tiller away let the sheet out a bit

When we cleared the shallows he sat higher on the rail

More relaxed than I expected for somebody in a tiny boat with a first time sailor

A steady light breeze pushed us on a run along the breakwall

Small talk sprouting in any pause in instruction it was a good day

I didn't keep the boat more than a few years but one lesson stuck with me

One I use whenever I change course in life...

Always mind the boom coming across

- Fredrick Whitehead -

Search Fredrick Whitehead on Amazon.com for More by this Author



## January Calendar of Club Events

1st Centennial Tom & Jerry  
11 AM -1 PM

Please be advised that with the everchanging Covid -19 precautionary guidelines in place Club events may be added or canceled on short notice.

Please check the Club website often to determine the status of any Club event you are interested in attending

### If 2020 was a mathamatical word-problem:

If you're going down a river  
at 2 miles per hour and  
your canoe loses a wheel,  
how much pancake mix  
would you need to  
re-shingle your roof?



## February Calendar of Club Events

13th Valentines Dinner  
Live Entertainment  
Make a reservation 453-4931

Be sure to check on the status of this and other Club events by going to the Club website at:

[erieyachtclub.org](http://erieyachtclub.org)



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