

The LOG



Great Alaskan Adventure
just for the
Halibut!

Julia Lynn

Alaska

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On the Cover...

The three Amigos aboard the *Julia Lynn* with Capt. Pete Wedin and his first mate Kenny.



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From the Bridge

Commodore Peter Traphagen



Welcome to the new look of our New EYC Log! I felt we were not utilizing the Log as effectively as we could in communicating with you, the membership, or our interested friends. I also felt there should be more member participation in the content. I asked P/C John Ashby if he would come up with some new concepts, approaches and a new look for the Log and form a new Log committee. You are now holding the results of those efforts.

In the past, the officers' articles, although informative, often overlapped in content. In the future, in this section, "From the Bridge", I will ask only one officer to develop a message for this section. It may deal with an important issue of the day, an observation, a recollection

from the past, but hopefully it will be something interesting, informative and beneficial to Club members.

We are trying to make this New Log format stand on its own by utilizing attractive, institutional member generated advertising. If you like what you see and want to help, please contact John Ashby or anyone on his committee.

If you have a story to tell and do not feel confident in writing it yourself, contact Irene Boyles, Log Publishing Coordinator, for assistance.

We are proud of this new effort. We hope you feel the same and will support it with your articles and, if possible, your advertising input. But most of all we hope you enjoy it!

Itchy, Bitchy & Fritzzy's Great Alaskan Adventure... Just for the Halibut!

By: Fritz Curtze
Itchy Penman
Chris Wolford



Day one's catch dockside with the three amigos.

Wow! What a fishing trip. Writing this from 37,000 feet between Anchorage and Seattle, it hardly seems possible that our vacation is coming to an end.

This was an Alaskan Adventure that was nothing short of spectacular. Between breath-taking volcanic vistas and a rip tide that would knock your socks off while battling monster halibut, the minor inconveniences we endured were, well, minor. Sure, we had lost luggage and flight delays, but it couldn't damper the fabulous experiences we had in Homer. "Everything's better in Homer", a local fellow declared to us on our way up the Spit Road. We had stopped to capture two stunning Dall rams (both full curl) on film as they calmly grazed 30 yards away. This was only after swerving to avoid a small run-in with a cow moose. What a place. He was so right.

I don't know what was better, Homer, or the great drive to and from this wonderland. We managed to put about 650 miles on that rental car, and it was a real pleasure to do so. One of our first stops was Anchor Point, just a stone's throw from Homer, to visit my good friend and hunting guide Doug Peterson. He built an immaculate home on the bluff overlooking the Cook Inlet and the very vicinity we fished. Knowing we were coming, Doug had placed two king salmon carcasses on the lawn outside the cabin to let us view the bald eagles "up close and personal". They are awe-inspiring birds for sure. After a bit, we loaded up and headed on to Homer with Doug in tow.

Our next stop was Land's End, our hotel and home for the next couple of days. As is typical, our friend Itchy had done his homework. This place is located on the

very end of the Homer spit. Our room overlooked the inlet with the snow covered crags and glaciers in the background. It was quite a view. After dropping off our bags, we headed for the Salty Dog, a local watering hole where "salty sea dogs" swap fishing stories and drink too much. Since we had no fish stories to tell, we chose the latter and performed admirably.

I didn't meet one person in Alaska that didn't have a smile on his or her face, 'cuz there's plenty to smile about in Homer. In addition to our fabulous accommodations, Itchy "hooked us up" with one of the best (if not THE best) charter captains in the Inlet. An energetic, friendly man with a huge beard and grin to match, Capt'n Pete Wedin has a reputation second to none. He skips the Julia Lynn, a 30' Chris Craft with a fly bridge that is well known and respected by the other captains. Pete is very proud of his boat, as he should be, after several retrofits and a significant amount of "TLC".

We left the hotel early on Saturday and headed for the boat. Since the season had not yet started, it was tough to find anything to eat or drink much more than coffee. Doug had planned to join us for our first trip but when I gave him his "wake up" call, he was less than enthusiastic. Unfortunately, I had left my video camera in his truck, so at 06:00, I had to jump into the rental car and drive 30 miles to fetch my gear. After driving like my wife for 45 minutes, I returned with my camera and hustled over to the general store to catch up with the guys to buy my license and derby chance.

We were one of the last to leave the

dock but Pete knew just where to go. We motored by the fleet and headed north, probably 15 miles, to the kelp beds. While the rest of the fleet was fishing in deep water, we were looking for the 25 to 30 foot depth. No sooner did we make a purchase than we had "hook-up!". Our first couple halibut were 20-30 lbs., dubbed "chickens". Pete asked me if I wanted to keep my chicken since I caught the first one. We all had a laugh when I told him I wasn't here to practice.

Not only is the halibut excellent table fare, it has a lock on being the most unusual looking fish in the sea. With a gaping maw full of needle-sharp teeth, it sports a coat of two colors. The top side is a dignified brown color with camo-type mottling and two eyes on the same



Fritzzy is up to his butt in Halibut on day two's catch.


side of its head! To make it MORE unusual, the opposite side is snow white and smooth as a baby's butt. To really blow me away, they bite just like a yellow perch....a tiny, tiny nibble that is hard to believe is coming from a fish this size. But when you let him have the bait and hook up – hold on. They will wear you OUT!

Capt'n Pete not only put us ON the fish, he helped us land them. Pete's first mate, Ken, was most impressive for his 16-years. This kid was a real hand with a filet knife and gaff. He also never complained when it came time to weigh anchor through kelp beds or bait countless hooks with day old herring. And, we will never forget the magic words "Kenny, get the gun", referring to the stainless steel .410 shotgun for the really big fish. The gun had to be brought out

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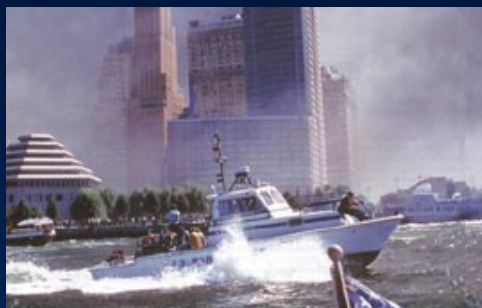
Why “Dobbins Landing”?

By Sandy Will

Daniel Dobbins should rate a prominent place in American history. He had attended Anthony Wayne in the general's last hours. Captured by the British, Daniel escaped while under sentence of death, made his way to Washington, and received a commission from the James Madison administration to build four gunboats at Erie's Presque Isle. Sailing Master Dobbins then assembled workers to build Commodore Perry's ships. First, he personally drew up the plans for workers, and secondly by launching the first three ships of the Perry's navy. Erie's Dobbins Landing recalls the ship-builder's feats. 


Boaters Respond to 911

By Pat Benekos



We have all heard, and seen many reports of heroism by the people in New York City on September 11, 2001. One group of heroes that has often been overlooked is the large number of boaters who came to the rescue. An article in the May 2003 Boat U.S. Magazine puts the spotlight on the boats, their owners and captains, and a new book entitled “All Available Boats”.

According to Boat U.S., over 300,000 people escaped from Manhattan via boat in the hours after the disaster. Rescuers also came to Manhattan by boat with supplies and food. We have all experienced the helpfulness and camaraderie of boaters, but the terrorist attack showed how the boating community can respond in even the direst of circumstances. As Dr. Mike Magee, the book's project coordinator said, “There's a bond that exists in boating that is largely invisible to the general public.”

The book, “All Available Boats”, can be purchased from Amazon.com. All proceeds go to the South Street Seaport Museum in New York City. More information is available on the museum's website at <http://www.southstseaport.org> under Current Exhibits. Photos of the 9/11 boater response can be seen at <http://carolinasalguero.com> under 9/11 maritime. 

Just for the Halibut

(continued from page 3)

twice during our two day charter. Chris landed a 138 pound hog that wanted nothing to do with the JULIA LYNN. After a grueling 45-minute battle with a stiff Fenwick rod and Penn reel loaded with 100-pound braided Dacron, Chris fell to the cabin sole in exhaustion having landed a “floater”. Having the whole battle recorded on film, we were ecstatic. Needless to say, Capt'n Pete's grin was as wide as the Homer Spit when Chris' fish was listed second of six on the Derby leader board for a cash prize. The #1 fish was a 228 pound whopper that was taken on none other than Capt'n Pete's boat. Go figure. We were also quite surprised when Chris had to fill out a 1099 in case he placed.

One of the things that most impressed us was the tide. When we arrived at the kelp bed shortly before 10 A.M., we were at minus 5.8 feet, almost 'slack tide'. As the tide started ripping in, it appeared that our boat was under power even though we were at anchor. By 4:30 that afternoon, high tide was recorded at 19.4 feet, or a swing of 26.2 feet, the highest of the year!


Sunday's charter was no less exciting. Although Itchy was the only lucky angler



Itchy & Fritzzy with Bitchy's 138.4 lb. Halibut and their Captain Pete Wedin.

to catch a king salmon, the day was stellar, with another halibut limit. The highlight for all of us, including Capt'n Pete, was to watch Itchy catch a 55 lb. halibut on a spinning rod that he brought from Florida with 20lb. monofilament.

In all, we kept 13 halibut with a total weight of 635 lbs. Many more were released to fight another day. We shipped 366 lbs. of prime filets to Erie from the Coal Point Trading Company! They cheerfully trimmed, vacuum-sealed and flash-froze our catch and shipped it to my huge office freezer. Yes, I do have burglar alarms.

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A Summer in New Zealand

By: Bill Lasher



Alinghi leads Team New Zealand on a run in the final race.

This past winter I was on sabbatical from my position as a mechanical engineering faculty member at Penn State Behrend, and took my family to New Zealand. Since we were in the southern hemisphere, we got to avoid what I understand was a rather long and miserable winter here, and enjoyed a few months of Erie-like summer weather.

My purpose for the trip was to work on spinnaker aerodynamics with a colleague at the University of Auckland. There is a world-renowned Yacht Research Unit at the University, which was instrumental in helping New Zealand win the America's Cup in the first place and hold a successful defense four years ago. Our project was to use a computer to simulate the flow of air around a spinnaker and compare what the computer says with experimental tests in a wind tunnel. It's basic research aimed at understanding how spinnakers work, as opposed to designing a faster sail.

Since this was a several month project, and a once in a lifetime opportunity to see a unique part of the world, Joanie took a leave of absence from teaching, we pulled Matt and Kaydee out of school, and Joanie home-schooled them while I was working. We had an apartment that was a 20-minute walk from the University and a 25 minute walk (5 minute drive) to downtown Auckland. We left the city almost every weekend, and also took a few longer trips to tour the country.

Anyone who follows the America's Cup (which was going on when we were there) knows that Auckland is the "City of Sails", and has the highest per-capita boat ownership in the world. Twenty-five percent of the people in Auckland are boaters! It's boating heaven – moderate temperatures year round (it does get cold but never snows in the winter),

with oceans and lots of bays and inlets on both sides of the city.

Just how big is sailing in this city of over one million people? The day we arrived (January 15), one of the final races of the Louis-Vuitton cup was being held. On the shuttle ride from the airport to our apartment, the driver had the race on the radio. It was front page news in the paper every day (even when they weren't racing). Every morning I listened to commentary on the radio while we were getting breakfast ready. If you caught a cab on a race day, the driver would give you a report on who's win-



Joanie and Kaydee in a Maori ancestral house used for meetings.

ning. Walking to the harbor on race day was like walking to a college stadium for a football game. There were planes carrying banners, blasting radios, street musicians, and there was a general feeling of vibrancy in the air.

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19th Annual Sailing Regatta for MS

By: Eric Ambro



It's the biggest, best, most fun boating event of the season: a short bay race with a diverse fleet of sailboats and spectator boats, followed by food, refreshments, music and the tension-filled excitement of the Rubber Duckie Race at the big post-race lawn party. And the best part - the proceeds benefit Multiple Sclerosis clients in Northwestern Pennsylvania.

The top spots on the sign-up board in the EYC Grill Room go to the long-time participants. After that, the higher on the list, the greater the admiration and prestige for your yacht and your sponsor. So sign up early. Fill out the entry form and come join the fun on Sunday, August 24th.



Last year's Regatta raised a record \$40,136 with a record fleet of 90 boats! The idea of beating either of these totals may be wishful thinking, but wouldn't it be fun - especially if you were a part of it?



Big Brother, Little Brother & Friends in the BVI

By Pat Geary



P/C Pat at the helm, sailing out of Hodge Creek Marina.

Last February, P/C Dick Robertson and his wife Debbie, and my wife Sue and I, departed Erie's Tom Ridge Field for a week long sail boat charter adventure in the British Virgin Islands. Leaving Erie before dawn in 20-degree weather, the adventure started sooner than we had expected. We were informed that our plane would not be leaving on time because there wasn't any heat in the cabin. Now, if you have ever flown to the Virgin Islands from Erie, you are well aware that you have at least three plane changes and all the flights are close. The good news was the whole east coast was having bad weather so our flight in Charlotte was held until all the late comers were on board.

Arriving in St. Thomas by mid afternoon in 85-degree weather, was the pay off for the early start of the day and all the travel close calls we encountered. Once our baggage was accounted for we were in a taxi heading for the Road Town ferry. The ferry terminal is a busy place yet this would be our first taste of island time. All we tourists were still on normal time expecting a quick trip through the ticket counter. Not a chance. The young lady selling tickets worked at a steady snails pace. We saw our luggage being picked up by some deck hands and could only hope we would see it again on the dock in Road Town.

The ferry's first stop was at the west end of Tortola so everyone could clear customs. Once back on the ferry, we head-

ed for Road Town and a short cab ride to the Sunsail base. The way the cab wound thru the twisting roads made you feel like you were part of a video game. Our cab driver noticed that Dick and I referred to each other as "Big Brother" and "Little Brother" respectively (though not related) and he seemed so impressed with "Big Brother" Dick that at one point he took his eyes off the road and almost drove us all into the water. After that the cabbie announced that he could no longer talk to "Big Brother".

Sunsail, our charter company, is located at the Hodge Creek Marina. We chartered a 33' Beneteau which was just a tad bit small for the combined dimensions of we two PC's, but manageable with some creative traffic planning in the cabin. We had provisioned our boat thru The Ample Hamper's website, ordering our food ahead of time. Although the soft drinks and beer prices were higher than expected the rest of our provisions were priced reasonably and best of all they delivered everything right to our boat.

The next morning we set sail a little after 10:00am with a planned day of sailing to end at Jost Van Dyke and drinks at the famous Foxy's. On our way we made a pit stop for lunch at Soper's Hole. With Dick on the foredeck getting ready to pick up a mooring, we manage to cross the starting line of a sailing race made up of classic 70' to 100' boats. With Dick yelling to go to port and the crews of the racing boats yelling to go below to star-

board, our first day of sailing was shaping up to be just a typical one on Presque Isle Bay. Once full of food and some adult beverages, we make the quick hop over to Jost Van Dyke to anchor in Great Harbor and visit Foxy's. Here the cruising sailor ("Little Brother") and racing sailor ("Big Brother") had their first of many communications breakdowns. Dick headed to the foredeck to launch the anchor, and for not ever having anything that heavy on his racing boats he handled it quite well. I, on the helm, proceeded to dead stop for the first of many attempts at anchoring that all of which proved unsuccessful. After entertaining the entire harbor, a live aboard sailor offered us Foxy's own personal mooring since his boat was away. We explored the island and laid out the plans for the next few days.

Sailing in the Virgin Islands is an experience. Experienced sailors soon learn to leave harbor by 10:00am and arrive by 2:00pm, no later than 3:00pm, to be assured of either a mooring or ample anchoring space. Moorings cost \$20 a night, but you can sleep peacefully knowing you won't be awakened at 2am due to dragging an anchor. Navigating is by line of sight but a good chart, which is provided, helps. A must have is a cruising guide so you can lay out your sail plan and all your stops along the island chain.

The people of the islands are very friendly and helpful. The US dollar is the currency used even though you are sailing in British waters. Dick was our chef and a good one, as no crew member went hungry. As anyone familiar with Dick knows, he has lots of special recipe

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Sue, Dick and Debbie at the restaurant on top of the Baths.

New Front Breakwall Coming

By Matt Bacon
Chairman Breakwall Committee



Easier mooring, wider sidewalks and a great first impression for visitors.

In May of 2002, Commodore Traphagen called a meeting asking for volunteers to head some committees and projects he felt important to the Club. At the time I was Chairman of the Engineering Committee, so when he mentioned the need for a new front break wall committee, I felt compelled to raise my hand. Well, one year later, meeting almost every Tuesday night for two to three hours, we now have a plan for a new front breakwall.

The final design of this wall takes into consideration low water levels as recorded in 1934 and allows for future dredging. It will be a flush wall to allow easy mooring instead of the more expensive sheet pile. It is a design that lends itself to be used in other areas of the basin, hopefully saving on future engineering fees. Included in this first application will be wider sidewalks to better accommodate outdoor functions. The bend in the east end will be removed to give us more

footage without inhibiting the current slip holders. The committee has been reminded many times that this wall is used mainly by visitors and therefore we want to make a good first impression. I hope it's design may be helpful in future "first impressions" when used elsewhere around the basin.

All this has only been made possible with the help and commitment from the other members of the committee. They are, Billy Vogel, you all know him as the guy who solves all your boat yard problems. Thanks Billy. Jon Tushak, the engineer who doesn't quit. You should see



The new breakwall design will handle lower water conditions and future dredging requirements.

the calculations this guy can do!. Thanks Jon. Jim Edgett, construction and design are his middle name. Thanks Jim. Ed Shuler, that little kid that grew up to become a very knowledgeable and committed volunteer. Thanks Ed. George Willis, have you seen what he did with the Club's launch ramp? Thanks George. Andy Hanks, you know him as the guy who will be in charge next year. Thanks Andy. Commodore Traphagen, the guy who's in charge this year.. Boy is he in charge. Thanks Pete. Many thanks to those not mentioned who have contributed to their Club when called upon. We have a great wealth of talent at this Cub and it's great when we can all take advantage of it.



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It's All About You!

By John Ashby

On behalf of Commodore Peter Traphagen, the article contributing members, the advertising supporting members and the members of the Log Committee, we are pleased to present to you the New EYC Log. We hope you will find the New Log to be refreshing, interesting and entertaining.

The focus of the New Log was to create a new concept, new content and a new revitalized membership involvement.

Our goals are simple. We wish to build member readership, invoke member involvement and enhance member enjoyment as well as obtain member advertising support. These are the vital ingredients that have allowed us to breathe a breath of fresh air into this publication for today, tomorrow and far into the future.

The three elements required for the future success of the New Log are members, members and members. Members providing article input, members providing advertising support and members participating on the Log Committee.

Remember, the New EYC Log is your publication, so please help us make it all it can be and more.

Thank you one and all,

Your Log Committee



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Jan Stachelek
Writer/Editor

Judy Emling
Photographer

John Ashby
Editor/Publisher

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Commodore Pete Traphagen

Alex Webster
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Sue Parry
Writer/Editor/Photographer

Doc Bressler
Writer/Editor

Sandy Will
Writer/Editor

Safety First = Happy Boating!

By Pat Benekos



On average, approximately 700 recreational boaters will die this year due to a boating mishap. The vast majority of boating mishaps are caused by operator controllable factors, and not by the boat, equipment, or environmental factors. Below are the major causes of boating fatalities.

1. The majority of fatalities (about 79%) occur on inland waters, such as rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds.

2. Drowning continues to be the #1 cause of deaths in boating accidents. Approximately 80% of drowning victims were not wearing life jackets. Less than 23% of boaters in all boating groups wear life jackets. More than 60% of boating fatalities result from capsizing, falling overboard, or flooding/swamping.

3. Fatality rates decrease significantly when a boater has some boater education. Also 88% of fatalities occurred on boats where the operator had not taken a boater education course.

4. Open motorboats have the highest overall number of fatalities (approximately half).

5. Canoes and kayaks have high numbers of fatalities due to drowning. Personal watercrafts have a relatively high fatality rate due to trauma.

6. Roughly one-third of recreational fatalities occur while boaters are engaged in fishing activities. A smaller number of boater's even die while hunting from a boat.



**Source: Informational statistics from the
National Safe Boating Council**

July Dock Parties

J & K - July 11th


G, H & I - July 18th

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Cruising Through Customs ————— By Sandy Will

Since Lake Erie is bordered by Canada and the United States, active cruisers will be dealing with how to move legally from one country to the other by boat. Both countries are committed to making it as easy as possible for casual cruisers. Most of the Customs exchanges are made by phone on the honor system; however, any visiting boat is subject to boarding, and inspection at any time. With this in mind, the wise cruiser will enter international waters without firearms, and with nothing but personal items to declare. Your folder of ship's papers should include proof of citizenship or a Form

I-68 for all passengers. With that simple precaution behind you, cruising will be shore worry free, and you can expect a friendly reception wherever you go. 



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Aug.21 - Matt Kramer Live
Aug.28 - Potato Sack
Racing

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Accident Prevention Tips By Sandy Will

Most accidents can be avoided with a little common sense.

- Keep your deck and cockpit uncluttered. Organize and stow equipment and keep sheets and lines coiled.
- Wear good shoes. Deck shoes with corrugated rubber soles are an essential part of a boater's wardrobe.
- Use PFDs. This should be something you don't even think about, especially for children. Insist that anyone who comes aboard wear one.
- Use your head. Most men who go overboard are literally caught with their pants down—tossed overboard while trying to urinate over the side. Use your head. That's what it's there for. 

3rd Annual Cast-A-Way Classic Golf Tournament Friday, Sept. 5th

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Summer in New Zealand

(continued from page 5)

We did get out to see a race (actually the final race of the cup) after several aborted attempts. One day it was windy but too shifty, the next day there was no wind, and finally it was just right. I thought they were being too picky (as did, I think, most of the world) looking for Goldilocks conditions. The days we went out when they didn't sail were days we would have raced at any regatta I have ever been to. Wind shifts and light winds are part of boat racing. It seems as though they had sterilized the sport – something I think we will see changed for the next cup.

So how is New Zealand? In a word, incredible. It has to be one of the most beautiful places on the planet, and the people are great. The country consists of two islands – the north island (Auckland is in the upper half of the north island) and the south island. Major features of the north island are beautiful beaches (although the water is rather cool) and thermal activity. There are several active volcanoes, and thermally heated pools and spas are abundant.



Matt and Bill on a hike (note: it's March!)

The south island boasts the more incredible scenery, including glaciers, waterfalls, world-famous Milford Sound (really a fjord, since it was carved by a glacier), and Mount Cook, which is about 9,000 foot vertical from summit to base.

The first people to New Zealand were the Maori, Polynesian settlers who arrived around 800 A.D. They named the country Aotearoa, or "land of the long white cloud", which I presume is due to the fact that the islands are long and thin, so clouds that form over the surface are also long and thin. The first European to discover New Zealand was Abel Tasman in 1642. Europeans didn't start settling in New Zealand until the early 1800's.

Needless to say, several wars broke out, a treaty was signed, and to this day there are feelings of hostility between the Europeans (about 80% of the 3.6 million New Zealanders) and the Maori. If you're interested, there is an excellent film called "The Whale Rider" that was recently released in the U.S. It's filled with Maori culture and history, and gives you a good sense of who they are.

New Zealand culture today is a blend of European and Maori. Most cities, natural landmarks, and many streets have Maori names (which at times can be hard to pronounce). There is a significant population of immigrants, particularly from the orient and from England. Of the people I met at the University, only two were native New Zealanders. The cities are quite cosmopolitan (Auckland is much like Toronto), and since the country was settled only recently by Europeans, it is quite modern.

We finally left on March 15, getting back to Erie just before the war started. It was good to get back home, but we had an excellent trip, and at times we wish we were back there. If it's someplace you've been thinking about going, you need to put it high on your list of priorities. It won't disappoint!



All You Can Eat Perch Fry



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Chief Rugenius Gets New Post By Susan Parry



Senior Chief Boatswain Mate Rugenius

In this issue, Member's Corner shifts focus from the membership to recognize Kurt Rugenius, Chief Boatswain's Mate and Officer in Charge of the Coast Guard Station on Presque Isle since June 1999.

The Erie Yacht Club has always had a close working relationship with Coast Guard Station Erie. Prior to the station getting its new facility not too many years ago, one of the Coast Guard vessels was winter-stored a few seasons on the EYC dock. The Erie Coast Guard Auxiliary responds to the EYC membership requests relative to boating education and owner's boat inspections. For some of the Club's special on-the-water activities Coast Guard Station Erie is contacted and usually stands by to assist with the boating traffic as required. The Erie Yacht Club wishes Chief Rugenius a long and successful career.

The Chief recently was promoted to Senior Chief Boatswain's Mate and will be departing his Erie post July 11 for Port Angeles, WA, where he will take command of the Coast Guard Cutter *Adelie*, an 87-foot Coastal Patrol Boat. Commanding his own Coast Guard cutter is an unusual accomplishment for an enlistee, and clearly reflects Kurt's dedication and achievement since joining the Coast Guard sixteen years ago.

Kurt spent his childhood in Hudson, Quebec but claims Maine as his adopted home. Growing up in rural areas, he has easily acclimated to life in the Coast Guard with its often isolated outposts. "It's normal to me being out of the way of everything," was Kurt's comment in an interview for an Erie Times article about the fact that there is no mail delivery to the Coast Guard Erie station. It has to be picked up at the post office.

When Kurt entered the Coast Guard in 1987, he had his basic training at Cape May, New Jersey, then went on to Coast Guard Station Boothbay Harbor, Maine, followed by an assignment to Coast Guard Search and Rescue Detachment, Eastport, Maine. His next three assignments were as Executive Petty Officer at Station Jonesport, Maine; Coast Guard Cutter CAPSTAN and Coast Guard Cutter POINT TURNER. Subsequent assignments were as Command Chief of Coast Guard Cutters SASSAFRAS and WALNUT.

Reflecting on his years in Erie, Kurt comments, "During my first summer we said good-bye to two of Coast Guard Erie's older small boats, a 41 foot utility boat and a 44 foot motor lifeboat. These were replaced by the newer 47 ft. motor lifeboat. Also, when I first came to Erie the major concern was recreational boating safety; like getting more people to wear life jackets. This is still a key concern, but with so many larger, global concerns now facing us, our emphasis is best summed up in the Coast Guard motto 'Saving Lives and Protecting America'."

In just four years at Coast Guard Station Erie we've seen the coming of a new millennium, Y2K, the attack of 9/11, Governor Tom Ridge leading the way to the Department of Homeland Security, the war in Afghanistan, the war in Iraq, and the US Coast Guard transfer from the Department of Transportation to Department of Homeland Security led by Secretary Tom Ridge.

Highlights of Erie Coast Guard activity under Chief Rugenius since 1999 follows: Establishment of the Search and Rescue Through Prevention Program, emphasizing the 3 E's of boating safety: Education, Equipment and Enforcement. This

evolved into an ongoing team effort of Coast Guard Station Erie, The PA Fish and Boat Commission, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, US Power Squadron and the Erie Safe Boating Task Force. Activities included boating education courses, dockside examination inspections, "on foot" Coast Guard dock patrols, personal appearances, TV media blitzes, and joint prevention and enforcement patrols.

Today the Search and Rescue Through Prevention Program boasts a continuing reduction in the number of search and rescue cases, dropping from a high of over 200 in the summer of 1999 to about 100 cases per year. Additionally, in 2000 and 2001 there were no boating fatalities in the North Coast of Pennsylvania and only 1 swimming accident fatality from a boat during the summer of 2002.

In May of 2002, to increase Homeland Security awareness, Coast Guard Station Erie introduced a waterside version of the Neighborhood Watch, called "Eyes on the Water." The program encourages local boaters to be the eyes and ears for Coast Guard Erie and report any unusual or suspicious activity on the water to the Coast Guard.

During his career, Chief Rugenius has received numerous awards including a Coast Guard Achievement Medal, Commandant's Letter of Commendation, Coast Guard Battle E Ribbon, Coast Guard Good Conduct with 4 bronze stars, Coast Guard Sharpshooter Pistol and Sharpshooter Rifle ribbons, several unit commendations and service medals.

In his new position as Commander of the Coast Guard Cutter *Adelie* (named after a species of penguins), the Chief reports he will be mainly patrolling in

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Chief Rugenius new ship the U.S.C.G. Cutter "Adelie".

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New Post (continued from page 11)

three areas: the Straights of Juanefuca, Puget Sound and the San Juan Islands. But before he reports for duty, he and his wife Theresa plan a long overdue vacation, first to Maine then slowly overland to their Western U.S. destination.

Replacing Chief Rugenius at Coast Guard Erie will be Chief Jon W. Gagnon, a native of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. He enlisted in the Coast Guard in 1986 and after training was assigned to the Coast Guard Cutter IRONWOOD out of Kodiak, Alaska. Further assignments included stations in California and Oregon. Most recently he served at Tillamook Bay, Oregon as the Executive Petty Officer. He and his wife Kimberly have two daughters, ages 3 and 6.

The Erie boating community is fortunate to have had a Coast Guard Station Erie Commander of the stature of Chief Rugenius. He has contributed immensely to boating education and safety. The fact that he has been given a significant promotion and command of a ship attests to his ability and dedication to the military service. The Erie Yacht Club wishes Chief Regenius a successful remaining career!



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Sue and Pat by the Beer Bottle Tree down the beach from Frosty's bar.

rub, which he naturally brought along. We always had breakfast on the boat as well as most lunches with some dinners enjoyed ashore.

At Cane Garden Bay we discovered how island life is different. Debbie, Sue and I got on board the dingy to head to shore to pay for the mooring and take showers. The cruising guide said that showers were available at the hotel. Since we were on a 33' boat with 4 people we tried to conserve our water supply. Once on shore we asked about the showers at the hotel. The desk clerk said for \$3 you could have at it. We paid our money then proceeded down a dark hallway to the showers. The water lasted about 2 minutes then nothing. We were told that they would have it up and running again in 5 minutes, then announced 30 minutes. later that there would be "no showers today". It reminded all of us of the Jimmy Buffet song.. "no plane on Sunday".

Day 3 proved to be a long day. Our plan was to sail to the tip of the island Virgin Gorda and stay at the Bitter End. The easterly blowing trade winds were gusting to 25 and we had to beat into them.

We managed to get 2 reefs in the main and a "hanky" size headsail and proceeded to find out why they call it the "Bitter End".

The rest of our sailing was just what you dream about, mostly easy reaches and short hops from island to island. The crew was a great fit of complementing personalities. By day 5 it looked like P/C Dick had turned into a cruising sailor. He liked using the engine! Better yet he announced "why sail over to Cooper Island, let's just motor over".

Our final night was on Cooper Island where we all stayed up late to watch the stars come out and view the lights shining across the water from Tortola for in just twenty-four hours we would be back into the long Erie winter. We had our mishaps along the way. I kept thinking forward was reverse, which made for some interesting docking, and seeing Dick trying to keep his balance on the foredeck was also quite entertaining. The girls and Dick went snorkeling at a place called the Baths on Virgin Gorda. You are not allowed to beach your dingy here so they had to moor out in deep water. When it came time to get back in the dingy Dick couldn't do it even with the girls' help because he had on so much suntan lotion that they couldn't get a good hold of him. After an extended struggle they managed to get the heavily greased up P/C back into the boat.

If you never have experienced the Virgin Islands do so. The sights and sailing are absolutely terrific. Many Erie Yacht Club members have sailed the BVI's and are more than willing to give you some tips. On our first trip a few years back, Carroll and Larry Hall were a big help, laying out a sail plan that helped make our charter very enjoyable. All in all, our time in the islands proved to be a great sailing (and motoring) adventure!



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Creativity in Clay

By Jan Stachelek

EYC member Joe Duska is extremely proud of his wife, Bobie, for a number of reasons, not the least of which is her latest endeavor. Bobie's clay sculptures have been featured in the Erie Times News, and have been displayed at a few personally selected venues throughout Erie. Naturally reticent, she nonetheless agreed to talk to us about what motivates her in her own words.

"I have always been creative. It started with my first sewing machine. At age fifteen, I designed many of the costumes for the Mercyhurst Prep plays. From there, I went into clothing design, interior design, and gourmet cooking." Lucky Joe!

"Four years ago, I began to take formal art classes, and even through many of the classes offered were on pottery, I chose to sculpt. It is always exciting for me to see the finished piece. I never plan what the subject will be; I just let the clay work its wonders.

There is an odd combination of apprehension and eager anticipation when waiting for your creation to emerge from the kiln. I have experienced my share of disappointment when that perfect piece did not make it through the firing, including the first and only bust I ever did of Joe, which exploded in the oven!"

"My first classes were at Villa, where I embarked on the ambitious task of creating busts of my two grandsons. Initially I was discouraged, but as their features began to come alive, I felt the most incredible sense of accomplishment."

Her husband Joe has been known to comment among many EYC members that Bobie's ability to capture the exact likeness of her human subjects is uncanny. Perhaps we could coerce her to try her hand at a few of our more esteemed (?) members.

Bobie goes on to say that she now attends classes at Clay Space. "There are so many talented people taking classes. Some are artists, but many are musicians, grandmothers, young moms, and even potters. We are like children playing with clay and having such a good time. Everyone shares their ideas and expertise; we have all become friends through a common bond. We are all driven by the same creative spirit."

Bobie says, "A day at clay is not only rewarding and fun, but also gets my adrenaline flowing. For me, missing a day at clay is like a boater missing a good day on the bay."



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The Inter-Club Cruise...“A Slightly Embellished Recollection”

By: Eric Ambro



The Inter-Club Fleet of “Woodies” at Port Maitland Sailing Club (1964).

The annual series of races around Eastern Lake Erie known as the Inter-Club Cruises began in 1958. The race incorporated the long-running Erie to Port Dover race. As a young boy, I eagerly anticipated my first Inter-Club aboard my Dad’s first “Vixen,” a 34-foot Alden design.

For many of the early years, the cruise stopped at Port Maitland, Ontario, about halfway between Port Dover and Buffalo. Port Maitland is a very small fishing village at the mouth of the river which boasts a small sailing club for dockage.

For the inaugural Inter-Club, we were told that a fleet dinner would be served in the second floor ballroom of the Maitland Arms Hotel. Well, this sounded impressive! But as we strolled into “town” we discovered that the hotel was an old wooden building which was definitely on its last legs. In fact, the entire structure was leaning at about a fifteen degree angle.

Since the race had been a quick one, Happy Hour began a bit earlier than normal. Arrival at this building presented a few challenges for some of the sailors, not the least of which was climbing the slanted stairs without sliding to one side and slamming against the wall. Still, we managed to get into the room and into our seats without sliding off (well, most of us)!

Then it started to get goofy. The waitresses brought out glasses of water, a delicate balancing act for them and for the sailors who tried to pick one up and drink from it. Next came the aptly named “rolls”. Whee! Manual dexterity was challenged in a constant process of retrieval and restraint.

With the arrival of the main course, our

was level - we were not. Careening from one curb to another, we finally made it back to the club.

The following year, the hotel was gone. It was either torn down or had fallen over by itself. And so began a new Inter-Club tradition - a perch dinner at the Fire Hall, a much sturdier structure and a safer, though less adventurous, repast.



Tom Schuyler walks on water in Port Maitland (1973).

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