

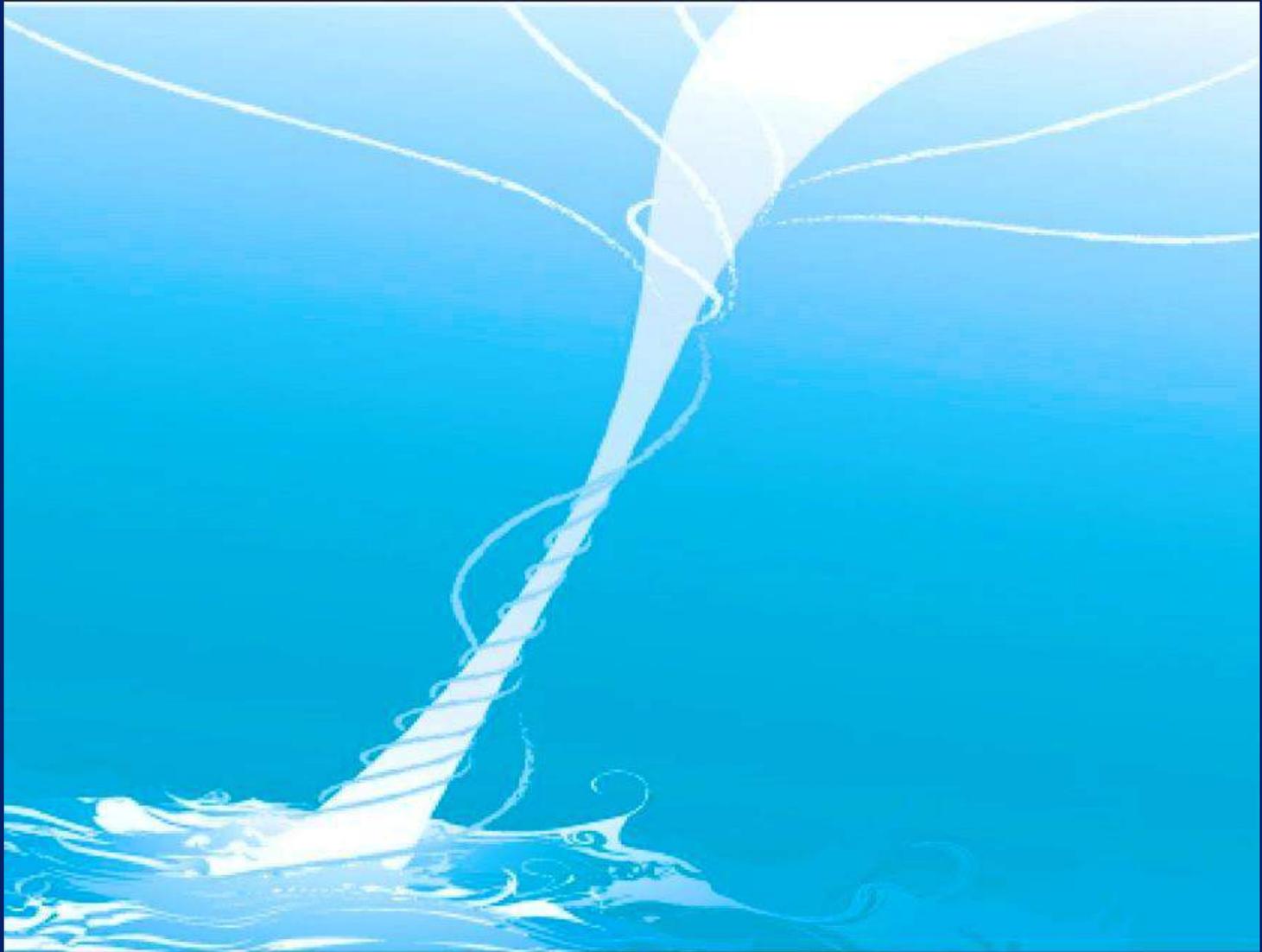


America's Boating Club of West Michigan

For Boaters, By BoatersSM



Grand Rapids Sail and Power Squadron



waterspout

Vol. 67, Issue 3, November 2020

The official newsletter of the

Grand Rapids Sail and Power Squadron

1620 Olson ST NE  Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503 USA

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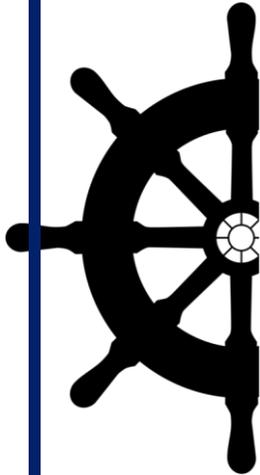


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The waterspout

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View From The Bridge

Jack L Draper, Sr.
Squadron Commander



Bridge News

Hello Everyone,

This will be my last article as your Commander, so I thought I would like to reflect on some of the highlights over the last 4 years. When I was asked to become the Commander, the discussion was can we keep this squadron open or is it time to close it down. I knew how important this squadron was to Dawn and I as we became boaters with very limited skills or knowledge. We took classes and learned how to be safe and we have lifelong friends we would not have today if it weren't for this organization. So, I felt we needed to keep our squadron alive while trying to build it up too, so I agreed to take on the position.

One of the first things I did as a new Commander was to reach out to Don Matthews who was the Commander of the Muskegon squadron. I thought it made sense to see if we could merge our two squadrons together as we were so close. After many meetings with Don and his bridge it was decided to move forward with this project and the fun began. The two Bridges had many meetings, and phone calls and we finally came up with an agreement. After that we once again had many meetings and phone calls with district and national and they both finally approved it. So, we became one squadron in January 2017 and in my opinion, I think this was a tremendous thing to happen for both squadrons and I am happy we made it happen.

Right after that we were given a new marketing plan from National letting us know our organization was going to be marketed as America's Boating Club. The Bridge approved the new name of America's Boating Club of West Michigan to align with the new marketing plan. This name truly reflected who we are as majority of our members live outside the Grand Rapids area. A DBA was completed with this new name and we updated our Facebook page and created a new website, which can be found at www.americasboatingclubofwestmi.org.

We have had some very nice dinner meetings and Change of Watch & Commanders Balls. During my time, we introduce the Spring Fling and held a boat rendezvous as well. This year was a challenge for all of us including our squadron. We were not able to have dinner meetings or anything else for that matter. I am hoping that we will be able to do these things next year. These last few years we have won many awards and have had members hit very impressive milestones as well. We have lost some members which is always a sad thing to have to report too.

I want to thank so many people who have been with me on this journey so I am going to do something dangerous and list them. My Bridge members for the last 2 years are Greg Heath, Marcia Thompson, Char Pearson, John Colley, Curt Campbell, Dave Ristow, and Don Matthews. Previous Bridge members include Dave Brinks, Mary Blinkhorn, Jim Molenaar, and Kim Wilson. It was an honor to work with these people and I appreciated the help and support each of them gave me. I would like to mention two individuals, Curt Campbell and Dave Ristow. These two people supported my efforts and gave me great advice during my tenure, and I appreciate them more than I can express.

Your next Commander Marcia Thompson will bring us new ideas and enthusiasm and will have an experience Bridge to help her. I wish her and the leadership team the best of luck. Please continue your membership with this great organization and please consider reaching out to Marcia and asking her how you can help. We are only as good as the members who are willing to volunteer so please consider doing that. Finally thank you for the experience it was quite a journey with a lot of changes and one I'll never forget.

Sincerely,

Jack

Your Next Commander

Hello Everyone and Happy November!

After the November 7th Change of Watch, I plan to hit the ground running, I have a full agenda of things I would like to tackle during my year as your commander. You may wonder why I am your next commander since I do not have a lot of boating experience. As your commander, I have a strong background in nonprofit management and bring two educational degrees, a Bachelor of Business Administration in Hospital Administration, and a Master of Arts in Organizational Management. The bridge, committee and members have years of boating experience to assist me in the boating arena.

I have a full agenda of items I am going to focus on during this next year. My plan is to focus on significantly increase membership and member engagement, develop a strong educational program, find additional funding for scholarships and additional program funding, update bylaws, develop an operational plan to support the organization's bylaws, develop a marketing plan, and increase collaboration with similar organizations, schools, and other organizations or groups.

However, the one thing I am sure of, I can not do all this without the support of members. I hope that in this next year, members will be willing to help in some way. Even if it is a small piece, your help is going to be imperative. Please contact me where you think you could offer your knowledge.

I am so excited to become your commander over the next year. I believe in this organization and its members. I believe our members can bring a valuable bank of knowledge in assisting to make this organization great. My goal is for us to receive the award for largest percentage increase in new members for 2021! I know we can do it!

I hope to see many of you at the Change of Watch. If for some reason, they change the limit on the number who can attend the Change of Watch, I would like to setup a Zoom meeting so our members can join the COW even if you can't attend in person. If we can do this, further information will be sent out about the Zoom connection.

Have a happy Thanksgiving and stay safe. This has been a difficult year; however, I believe next year will be significantly better!

Warmly,

Marcia



Lt/C Greg Heath
Squadron Administrative Officer



Administrative News

October Dinner Meeting Review

The Oct 8th dinner meeting was held at Vitales on Leonard and we had eight people in attendance.

The slate of officers presented to membership via email and to attendees of our Oct 8th dinner meeting was discussed.

Dave Brinks made a motion to accept the slate of offers as presented. Greg Heath seconded. All attendees along with eight email responses voted in favor, zero votes where against, - the motion PASSED.

Commander's Ball - Change of Watch

Saturday, November 7, 2020

Thousand Oaks Golf Club

4100 Thousand Oaks Dr

Grand Rapids, MI 49525



Reception with Cocktails and Hors D'Ouevres at 1800 hours

Change of Watch Ceremony following Dinner

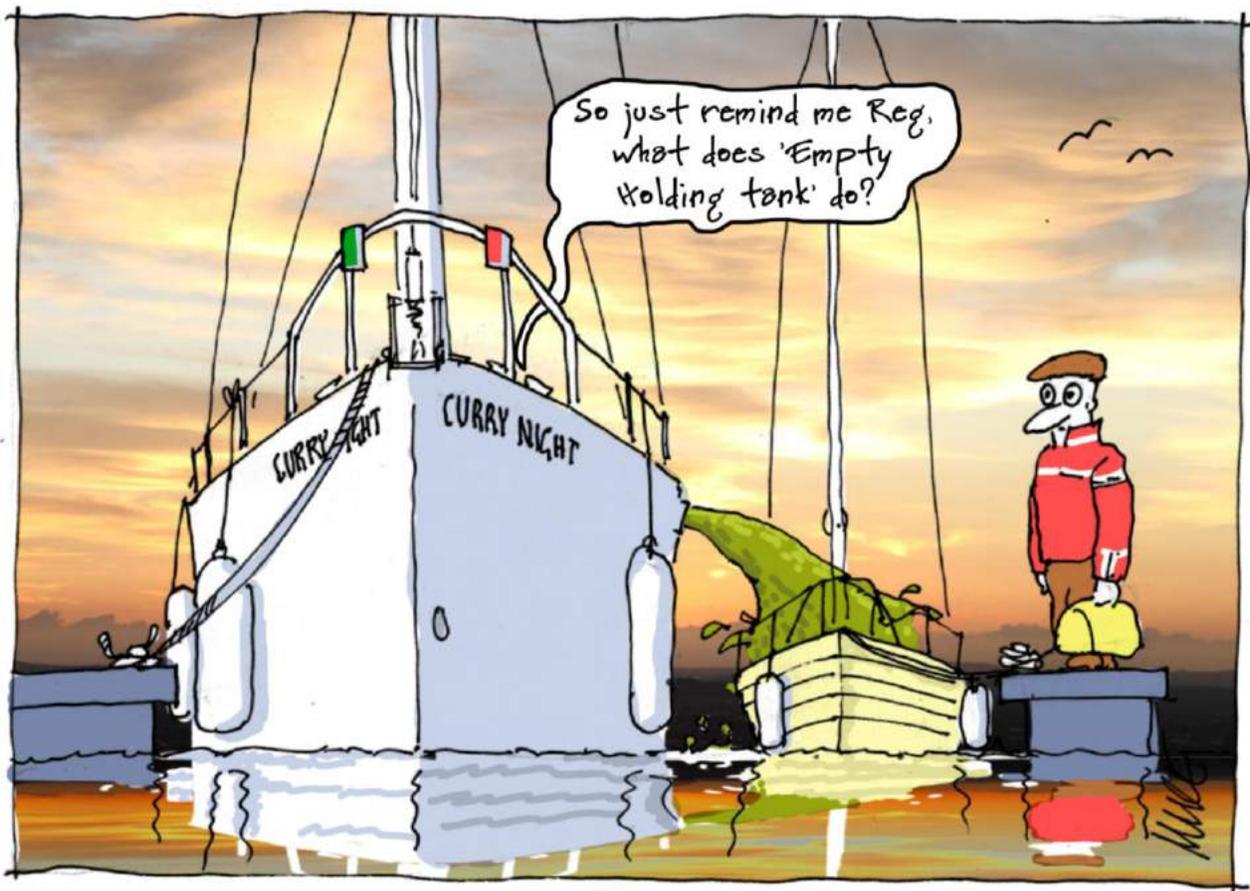
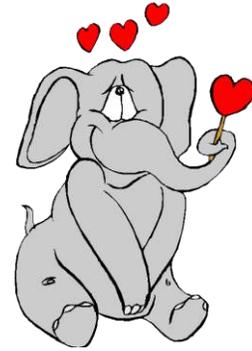
Please RSVP by November 1, 2020

Currently, Thousand Oaks is not putting a limit on the number of people; however, that could change. Once we have things ironed out, we will be sending an Email blast invitation with further details. Since everything has been so fluid, we will not have time to send a formal invitation in the mail like we have done in the past. The menu will be very similar to last year.

December X'mas Dinner Meeting

Place: TBD
Date: TBD
Time: Social time: 6:00 PM
Order Dinner: 6:30 PM
Event: White Elephant with same
rules/guidelines as prior years

Further information will be emailed once details are confirmed.





Savvy Boater



Making a Slicker Trailer

HDPE for less friction

Written by **CHRISTOPHER CUNNINGHAM**
From Issue **JANUARY 2020**

I have four boat trailers, and on all of them the boats drag over bare wood and come to rest on the bunks padded with carpet. Rollers seemed to be the only alternative and may work for all the motorboats that I see throttling up to power onto their trailers, but they weren't well suited to any of my boats. I have bearing buddies installed, but I prefer to keep them—and the taillights—out of the water whenever I can, so I like a trailer with a plywood platform that I can safely walk on for pushing a boat out to launch and pulling a bow up out of the water to retrieve a boat. The plywood trailer decks, and the carpet-covered bunks create a lot of drag; even when I'm launching the boat and have the slope in my favor, it takes a hard shove.



Photographs by the author - The HDPE strips and StarBoard-covered bunks made moving the boat off and back on the trailer much easier than the bare plywood deck and carpet-padded bunks did.

Carpet gets less boat-friendly with use and age. My boats come out of the water pretty clean, but when I vacuumed the carpet I was going to replace with HDPE, I extracted a lot of grit, which appeared, under magnification, quite fine compared with beach sand,. I suspect it was picked up from roads while driving. And the pile of the carpet padding I'd put on one trailer 10 years ago has become quite stiff and is now more of an abrasive than a cushion. I don't mind the painted hulls getting a bit scuffed—they're meant for the rigors of cruising—but I don't want my Whitehall's varnished Port Orford planks to prematurely lose their shine.



High-density polyethylene is as easy to work as softwood. This 1" Forstner bit cut right through the 1/2"-thick panel.

A few years ago, I had added some small pieces of high-density polyethylene

(HDPE) across the centerline of one of the trailers

plywood decks to reduce the friction of bare wood. I was pleased with how much easier it made launching and retrieving my 14' Whitehall, so when I modified that trailer with a longer tongue for my 19' Caledonia yawl, I decided to replace the carpet-padding on the bunks with StarBoard by King Plastics, a slippery marine-grade HDPE. I bought 3/8" StarBoard for the two bunks, stiff enough to keep its shape and thick enough to accommodate countersinks for screws. The material is easily worked with common shop tools. I quickly rounded the corners with a router and drilled holes with Fuller bits and Forstner bits. I used galvanized screws to secure the StarBoard to the 2x6 bunks. The HDPE was more than solid enough to keep the screw heads from pushing past the countersinks.

The difference the HDPE makes at the ramp is dramatic. When the yawl was resting on carpet and plywood, I had to put my shoulder into the bow to push the boat into the water, and that was with the slope of the ramp in my favor. Now even standing upright with just my hands on the boat I can push it back, even when the trailer is on level ground. The reduced friction means I have to be prepared for the boat to pick up its own momentum when it's being launched at the ramp. When it's steep, I can loop the painter around the winch post to check the boat's speed. Bringing the boat back aboard the trailer takes much less work than before. The winch no longer takes two hands on the crank to bring the boat up the last several feet.

With the reduced friction, having the boat well secured on the trailer is all the more important. An extra tie-down strap or two can keep the boat in place, and a preventer chain made to the bow eye is a worthwhile backup to the winch connection.

Where I've installed HDPE, and the especially slippery StarBoard in particular, I've greatly decreased the strain on the boat, the winch, and my back when I'm at the launch ramp. I have two boats that are too big and heavy to take off their trailers while they're at home, but installing HDPE is simple enough that I can cut, router, and drill the pieces at home and then install them at the ramp while my son motors to one of the waterside restaurants to pick up lunch for the two of us. 🍷

Christopher Cunningham is the editor of Small Boats Magazine.

Source: <https://smallboatsmonthly.com/article/a-slicker-trailer/>





Squadron Education Department



Current Educational Opportunities

There are no local course offered at this time; however, you can access classes any time online using the links below:

Online Course <https://www.americasboatingclub.org/learn/online-boating-education/americas-boating-course>

Webinars & Seminars <https://uspsonline.lmscheckout.com/Course/index>



November 2020



- Dawn Draper ~ November 8
- Gary Walkington ~ November 10
- Roger Martin ~ November 11
- Donald Exelby ~ November 12



Savvy Boater



A tiny boat was discovered on a remote beach 27 years after it was launched by teachers

By [Lauren M. Johnson](#), CNN
Updated 8:11 AM ET, Fri October 16, 2020

(CNN)A mystery from Lake Superior has been solved, after a tiny boat ended up on the remote shores of one of the Great Lakes.

The red, white and blue vessel was found at a remote area on Apostle Islands National Seashore in Wisconsin with a very intentional message on the bottom.



The boat was found near a remote island in Lake Superior 27 years after it was launched.

"I am traveling to the ocean. Please put me back in the water. Will you send information on your whereabouts to: Lakewood School Room 116 & 118 5207 N. Tischer Duluth, MN (scribbled out zip code) 53304," the message reads.

There was no date, and no one knew where it came from until the school did a little digging.



The inscription on the bottom of the tiny boat had no date, only instructions.

It turns out two teachers, Brenda Schell and Bonnie Fritch, did a lesson on the book "Paddle-to-the-Sea" in 1993 and 1994 and two wooden boats were part of the lesson.

"We mapped out the travels of the canoe through the Great Lakes," Fritch told the school, Duluth Public Schools ISD said [in a recent Facebook post](#).

"A friend of Brenda's made the boats for us and our classes painted them and added the message to the bottom. On our end of the year field trip for our Duluth unit we stopped at Brighton Beach to launch the boats."

After almost 27 years, the boat was still in good shape making its way around the lake though, obviously, it's not known where it was the entire time.

"I am not sure what happened to Brenda's boat but mine was spotted a year later up the North Shore. The people put a second coat of varnish on the boat and relaunched it. I thought we wouldn't hear any more about it. Amazing it is still out there," Fritch added.

Lynn BeBeau and her husband were the ones who discovered this little wooden boat while out hiking on the lakeshore across from Eagle Island.

"It was a very fun and unexpected -- extremely -- unexpected discovery," BeBeau told CNN. "We decided we wanted to go check out this area and my husband sees this red wood sticking out. He goes to pick it up and it's this crazy little boat!"



Brenda Schell and Bonnie Fritch launching the boats into the Great Lakes in 1993.

She said they didn't expect it to be as old as it was. They assume a storm put it on that beach years ago, based on how protected the area is from the elements.

"That little boat took on a journey of its own," BeBeau said.

After taking photos that are on the They released the boat back into the water like the inscription instructed, but the experience left BeBeau with a sense of wonder and greater appreciation for the unknown.

"You just never know what you are going to find, so get out there and explore because there is stuff to be found," she said.

Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/16/us/mystery-boat-found-on-lake-superior-is-27-years-old-trnd/index.html>



America's Boating Club of West Michigan



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The Grand Rapids Sail and Power Squadron (GRSPS) is the Grand Rapids area's Boating Club. GRSPS is focused on boating that is safe, smart and fun.

GRSPS members have access to some of the best resources available to recreational boaters.

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If you would like to join the Commander's Club,
contact Jack Draper at Commander@grsps.org



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**Deadline for next
issue is the 10th**

Submit photos from events, stories of travels, questions
or anything you would like to see in the newsletter next
time.

Submit photo as .jpg files at highest
resolution.

Send all information or questions to:
Editor at editor@grsps.org



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