



Harbor Lights

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From the Helm

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Harbor Lights is published bi-monthly by the Madison Sail and Power Squadron, a local unit of the United States Power Squadrons. Please send submissions to the editor at mpps@tds.net. The editor, P/C Richard Baker can also be reached at (608)850-5192.

We've had an interesting period since my last report. Hard economic times have hit the normally recession proof Madison area and we've not escaped the issues related to retirements, moves from the area and ageing parents! All in all, I believe we've had a pretty good year with a bit of boating thrown in, too!

So, our membership is down; students (Hooper's) have finished their degrees and moved on, some long term members have moved from the area, kids in college crimp disposable income and on and on. We've picked up several new members whose contact with us is our educational program. (Some are a bit intimidated by our instructors experience and experiences but are sticking with us!)

Our public classes have been well received, we've offered seminars and our regular

courses and are seeing new members continuing with the educational program. We have an Advanced Certifier and are looking forward to having several Inland Navigators certified when the water softens next spring.

Jim and Julie Pahl-Washa taught a Public course in conjunction with another boating club which was quite a success...great students and good students, an on the water segment and taught in three sessions over 6 days! Worked out very well! Jim and Julie also handled out poster contest entries resulting in greater success than previously.

Finally, our plans are coming along nicely for the March D-10 Meeting and our 50th year celebration...in the process we're evaluating where we've been and where we're going as a Squadron. We're looking forward to an outstanding 2010.

Take a Stake in the Lakes

by Jan Norman

“Take a Stake in the Lakes” was held on Saturday, June 13, 2009, at Mendota County Park. There were 14 volunteers on hand to clean up the shoreline and park areas. The weather and camaraderie were great. This year the park was cleaner at the start than anyone could remember it in a long time. We had to work really hard to find any debris at all in the water or on

shore. It would be nice to imagine that people are taking better care of “our park” now!

That day was also P/C Cindy Parisi’s birthday, and Kris Stone brought a cake, complete with candles.

The event is always a rewarding experience and a great way to serve the community.

After consuming all of the snacks in the immediate area, we convened to a different part of the park for a meeting of the “2010 Change of Watch/ Spring Conference Planning Committee”. If you would like to help plan our 50th anniversary, please call Jim Pahl-Washa at 608 846-8088. We can use the help.



After the beach was cleaned and raked, some members left their mark in the sand at Mendota County Park.

New MSPS Web Site Now on Line

Lt/C David Miran, SN

The MSPS web site has recently been renovated by an outside contractor. We are starting to add content to the new site. Please visit the site and let us know what you think. If you have any suggestions for improvement or correction or if you have anything that you would like added to the web site please notify the

webmaster David Miran (demiran@wisc.edu).

Also, we want to begin sending more frequent updates on Madison Sail and Power Squadron events to people. Sending them by E-mail is the most economical way for us to do this. Even if you have previously provided us with an E-mail ad-

dress please send your current E-mail address to Lt/C Claudia Berry Miran, P, at claudia.miran@uwalumni.com – We will use this to build a mailing list so that we can contact you and we will also update this information in the official roster so that the national USPS can also reach you with information.

Visit our new web site !

www.madisonsquadron.org

Educational Department

Lt/C David Miran, SN

Piloting will be offered beginning 14 January 2010 and will last about 10 weeks.

The emphasis of this class is on using charts and GPS for planning a cruise and safely navigating your boat. You will learn to use charts, aids to navigations such as buoys and lighthouses, and electronic assistance such as GPS

to plan and monitor your course. Classic piloting techniques such as taking and plotting bearings to determine your position are taught as backup methods. If you have not had piloting or you had the old course and you boat anywhere more challenging than a small local lake you should

consider taking Piloting. If you plan to take Piloting please contact Lt/C David Miran, SN, at 274-0765 (or demiran@wisc.edu) by the end of October.



Madison Sail and Power Squadron Holiday Party

Friday 4 December 2009

1800 social hour

Dinner 1900

Followed by live music by the Corvettes

At Rex's Innkeeper

301 N Century Ave

Waunakee, WI

Fish and chicken dinner served family style

Dinner will be provided by Madison Sail and Power Squadron
with a cash bar.

There is no charge for the meal

However

A check made out to Second Harvest is required to hold your reservation

Suggested donation of \$10 per person

Mail to:

Cindy Parisi

6097 Hellenbrand Rd

Waunakee, WI 53597

608-850-5192

Holiday attire



I love boating on the Mississippi. As you leave our marina, if you turn right, you could end up in New Orleans. If you turn left, you could end up in Minneapolis (if you're feeling nautical, turn starboard and port, respectively). No matter which way you turn, you are going to experience some of the 2300 plus miles of the second longest river in the United States. I can hear your intake of breath as you say, "Second longest? I don't believe it!" Sad, but true. The Missouri is longer, by a scant 220 miles.

Anyway, I love it because there is so much to experience. You could spend your whole life touring the marked channel of the river, and when your kids finally took the keys away because they were afraid you could hurt somebody, you could die a happy and fulfilled person. But, you would not have experienced the vast majority of the river. Imagine driving the U.S. interstate system, and telling everyone you had toured the whole country. You did, but not really.

If you spend any time looking at the chart for the Upper Mississippi, you realize the marked channel is maybe one tenth or less of the distance you could travel if you got off the highway that is the main channel. That estimate is probably way low, but you get the idea. Over the last few seasons, Cindy and I have begun to explore our pool, and we have really only barely started.

To be honest, our explorations started off slowly mostly out of fear. You only need to wipe out a pair of stainless props once to gain a healthy respect for what some people call "skinny water". So, our vessel of choice for these expeditions is our 10' Quicksilver dingy with a 9.9 hp motor. I laughed out loud when I got the bill for rebuilding that prop last year. It was like \$30. You couldn't shine the big props for \$30.

Don't forget the smiles per gallon either. The dingy travels a whole day on 1 ½ gallons of gas. The big boat goes two and a quarter miles on that amount, and that takes about four minutes. With gas prices what they were in 2008, we started exploring the areas around Dubuque. We started with the Catfish River. This river was very significant in the life of Julien Dubuque, and in fact he is buried on a hilltop overlooking the intersection of the Mississippi and the Catfish Rivers. It was early June when we visited first, and because of record rainfalls, the river was very high. Later in the year, one beautiful August day, I could not believe how different it looked without the high water. As we motored along, I looked behind the boat at the sunlight reflected off the turbulent water created by the prop. Normally the river is a dirt brown color, but today, here, it was a translucent sage color that if I could copy it, would be the color of everything I own. I saw the same thing again this year on the

Sinsinawa River. This river runs east off Deadman's Slough. This time we made it at least five miles further towards the end of the river than we did last time, because some one had removed a tree that had blocked the river last season. We passed the shack again that we saw last time. It was really hard to imagine how that house got there, because no road was evident at all. I think if you're that far out, you probably clean your sidearm pretty much every day.

On Memorial Day weekend 2009, we could be found on Menomonee Slough. Commander Bob was the guest of Jack and Kris Stone; we had David and Gloria Conrad aboard our boat. As we turned a corner, we were amazed to see a nun buoy that had escaped from the main channel snagged on a fallen tree. Being the conscientious type that I am, I decided to try and tow it back to the main channel. I have described these things before; suffice it to say that they are big, and heavy and there was really no way this was going to happen. As we were wasting time and gas on this, another dingy pulled up with a young lady at the helm. I had dingy envy; hers was 12' feet long, with a center console and a 25 horsepower motor. She could do it, and in fact, she said "what are you doing with my buoy?" I stuttered something really dumb, and she laughed.

Continued page 5



Dick, Cindy and Kris Stone returning from a backwater trip in the dingy

“I really have to wonder what that beaver is thinking; there is no way anything productive is coming out of that.”

Then she shared with us that she appreciated the fact that I had my dead-man’s lanyard around my wrist. She had not had hers on, when her boat hit something and she got tossed out of the boat. Thankfully, her husband, who normally didn’t get to drive, was able to recover control and retrieve his wife, no damage done.

A week later we were on another trip on the Menominee Slough and the Sinsinawa River with two of our grandkids, Nicholas and Hannah. I don’t know what it is with kids in a small boat, but they really like to act like figureheads with their little faces out in

front of the boat; spray does not faze them one little bit and they’re laughing continuously. This trip, we saw a two foot diameter tree gnawed almost in two by a beaver. I really have to wonder what that beaver is thinking; there is no way anything productive is coming out of that. We got to sit under a railroad bridge while a train passed over our heads, and I have to say, that is an experience that really shakes you to the core. In a good way, of course. Eagle sightings occur regularly, and this time was no exception. While just seeing one is a treat, last year our arrival on the

scene interrupted the plans of an eagle to have one of a family of ducklings for lunch.

The beauty of the river is always there for your enjoyment, but consider traveling the backwaters some time. The additional rewards are worth it.

See you on the river.

GETTING READY

By Kris Stone

I haven’t written an article for a long time, but here goes. In case you didn’t know, Madison is hosting the 2010 D10 Spring Conference. This conference is special because we are celebrating our squadron’s 50th anniversary, and because our own Jim Pahl-Washa will be sworn in as District commander. Getting ready for a large event such as this has many parts, but today I’m talking about just the decoration part. Such as tape balloons and center pieces.

What all goes into the center piece? For instance, the design will be about our 50th year as a squadron. So that is our theme for the first night of the conference. Gold, gold, gold and red, white and blue. Gold plate with Styrofoam covered with gold. First make sure there is a hole big enough for a candle

to fit, but not too big. We don’t want the candle falling over. Then you can cover the plate with gold and hot glue it to the plate. Now cover the foam with your red, white and blue garland. This is also hot glued down and let it cool. The next step is putting the gold sticks, gold glass balls and gold feathery things equally around the plate. The next is the 4 small flags that go around the candles for USPS. We had to make the flags. Then there are 7 more small flags that go around. We also made these flags. Now you have to remember there are 25 center pieces. Once they are done we need to pack them away for storage. That is just one small part of getting ready for our 50th anniversary shindig. Just think about it. Accommodations, food, tables, chairs, speakers,

invitations, activities, prizes etc... There is so much more it makes my head hurt. So if any of you have any time or ideas bring it on. We don’t care if you have three toes or your nose is on the side of your face, Oh, that’s Picasso. You know what I mean.

Editor’s note: Kris has recently started taking art instruction, and like everything else she does, she is really good at it.



Woman Sitting in an Armchair

Pablo Picasso, 1941

Apostle Islands Adventure

A story about the 2001 D10 Rendezvous In Bayfield, WI

By P/D/Lt/C Richard Baker, AP

As you read about the 2009 D10 Rendezvous elsewhere in this issue, please keep in mind that next summer's event will be in Bayfield. The following is a story about the last time a Rendezvous was held in Bayfield, in 2001. Part 1 is about the Rendezvous itself; next time I'll tell the tale of the week after the event, when several Madison members cruised around the islands.

The 2001 D10 Summer Rendezvous was held in Bayfield, and it was hosted by Duluth Sail and Power Squadron. Several Madison members attended, and many of us decided to bring our boats and stay in the area the following week to explore the area.

The Rendezvous itself was memorable for several things. Friday night there was a cruise around the nearest island; this would give some of us a preview of what we were going to experience in the coming week as we toured the islands.

Saturday there was to be a cardboard boat building competition and race, but this one was different from what we subsequently experienced in Winneconne, in that teams could build their boats ahead of time. This allowed more creativity, since you had more time. The Madison folks decided that simple was good, so we chose to go the folded route, which means that you take your cardboard and fold it in half, put a bulge in the center to put a person and voila, you have a boat. Being the thorough people that we were, we decided to do a mock up and water test it. As you might imagine, especially if you ever took Boat Smart or Seamanship, the boat rolled over on its side immediately, because there was no bottom, just sides. Not wanting to start over, we decided to add outriggers. We built two more hulls, and connected them with a folded cardboard beam that was triangular in section. It was brilliant! The *Emerald Star*, so named because Jim Pahl-Washa had some green house paint lying around, was impressive for its size. We delivered it to the site, covered with a tarp, on a boat trailer. The other competitors

were very obviously concerned; we were looking very professional.

The course was basically a circle with a marker; you had to paddle out and around the marker and back to the start, in the fastest time. Commander Mike Klenke and I found out very quickly that while our knife shaped hulls were extremely fast in a straight line, they were equally wretched at turning. We somehow made it back to the start, and the second team had a go. The boat began to break apart during the run, dumping Gloria Conrad in the water. She had on a manual inflatable life vest, which would be okay, except no one told her it was manual, and she doesn't swim at all well.

Everyone made it back safely, and Madison received the "Most Innovative Design Award". The winner? If memory serves me correctly, and it may not, it was a young boy who put his boat together that morning in the parking lot of the hotel, using cardboard he had pulled from their dumpster. By the time he was half way around the course, he was more swimming than paddling, but he never gave up.

Saturday afternoon, on a walking tour of Bayfield, and unknown to the husbands in the group, the wives had signed us all up for a kayak tour of the famous sea caves on the coast of Lake Superior north of Bayfield, to take place that evening. We wondered what they were thinking, as none of us was under forty, none of us were in any kind of physical shape for such an adventure, and only one couple, Al and Joan Coburn had any paddling experience. But we couldn't back out; the money was paid, it was a lot, and we couldn't get it back. The appointed hour arrived, and thankfully it was one of those rare (for Lake Superior), calm evenings. I say thankfully, for we found out that the tours almost never were cancelled due to high seas. Waves had to be over three feet before they would call off the trip. Three feet!

We got our cursory instruction, and set

out. Tandem kayaking is an art; you really need to be on the same page with your partner. From the back, I'm sure our back and forth paths were humorous to watch; I know Cindy and I traveled a lot farther than we had to before we figured it all out (basically, in the back, I just did the opposite of what Cindy did). The caves were quite a distance away; I think it was near to 4 miles. When we finally arrived, we all thought it was worth the effort, because there is no way to deny the beauty of what we were seeing. After paddling around for a while, our guide asked us if we were interested in seeing the next grouping of caves which was another mile or so up the coast. She said "it's almost dark, so we don't have too much time, but if we really hit it hard, we can make it". Cindy and Julie looked at each other; Jim and I looked at Cindy and Julie; and finally one of them said "I thought we were hitting it hard already! So, NO!"

Eventually, we made it back. Cindy summed it up for many of us when she said "well, I don't have to do that again!"

One of the things we always seem to remember about events like this is the good food, and this particular event was no exception. The Duluth team did an outstanding job feeding the group, and when we ate in town, we were amazed all over again. Put that with the excellent marina that was our home base for the week and you have a very fond memory of Bayfield, one that we are very eager to renew in 2010.

Next time, read about 300 feet of water under your hull, beaches like the Caribbean, rocks almost as big as a house under water in the harbor, six footers and a beam sea, more lighthouses than you can visit in a week, and other memorable events.

The District 10 2009 Summer Rendezvous was held June 19-21 in Winneconne WI. Festivities started off on Friday evening with an event called “Over the Transom Cook-off. The idea here was to have teams from the squadrons in attendance prepare food dishes for every one, sort of like what we in Madison would experience at “Taste of Madison”. The teams were judged on the quality of the food as well as the presentation, which included team outfits and accessories. The winning team from Minnetonka served their traditional boiled shrimp and corn. It was served on a table made to look like a cruising boat’s transom, complete with boarding ladder, cleats and a propeller. Team Commander Bob-B-Q from Madison served barbecue ribs, mini potatoes and veggies on a stick, and mystery bars for dessert. The fact that we didn’t win did not faze anyone on our team, due no doubt to two factors. One, we knew our food was the best; several people told us so. Second, our table was next to Minnetonka’s, and we helped ourselves often to the complementary Margaritas that

the Minnetonka team served from a large cooler placed on their table.

Saturday started off with a “hands on” fire extinguisher demonstration put on by the commander of Oshkosh, Carl Jansen. It was a great exercise for someone like me who had never had the opportunity to put out a fire with an extinguisher.

Later Saturday morning we re-convened in the park for the cardboard boat building completion. The idea here was to convert a very large, heavy pile of cardboard into a boat that not only floats, but has to carry a person around a course in the least amount of time. Oh, and you have one hour, your materials in addition to the cardboard consist of duct tape and plastic sheeting. While Madison’s boat *Bobber* did not win, we did not lose by much; and we were the only boat built well enough to make it around the course twice.

Saturday afternoon found us at the “Dingy Rodeo”, a new event that pitted teams of two people against each other in a timed slalom and a ball toss. Each team used the same dingy, so no one could complain that anyone had an unfair advantage.

High winds and bumpy water made the event a challenge, but everyone enjoyed themselves immensely.

Saturday evening’s dinner was chicken or beef fajitas prepared by our own grillmaster D/Lt/C Jim Pahl-Washa. Just so you know what you missed, the beef was cut from several large tenderloins. Delicious. This was followed by a movie shown on a nearly full sized movie screen. The movie, *Master and Commander*, was based on the story by Patrick O’Brian. While the movie worked in a proper theater, this was slightly less than ideal, but it was enjoyable anyway.

You have another chance next year to attend an excellent rendezvous, because next year we go back to Bayfield as guests of Duluth. The last time we were there was incredible, this time will be also. See the article about the last visit to Bayfield elsewhere in this issue.

“we helped ourselves often to the complementary Margaritas that the Minnetonka team served from a large cooler placed on their table.”



Commander Bob directing the boat builders of the Madison team.



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Madison Sail and Power Squadron Celebrates 50 years 19-21 March 2010

The story begins in the fall of 1958 when the sixteen boating enthusiasts convinced fellow members of the Milwaukee Power Squadron to teach Piloting in Madison. After the course was completed in the spring of 1959, most of the sixteen continued with Seamanship and Advance Piloting Courses. The group recognized the need to advance their skills in order to perpetuate the organization. Keeping that goal in mind, the Madison members commuted to

Milwaukee for Seamanship while the Milwaukee volunteers commuted to Madison to teach Advanced Piloting.

The Madison Power Squadron was awarded its charter from the Governing Board of the United States Power Squadrons at the annual meeting in Florida on 16 January 1960.

Fast forward to 2010, 50 years and 2 months down the line. Our Change of

Watch will take place at the 2010 D10 Spring Conference at the Sheraton in Madison, an event that our squadron is hosting. Besides the fact that Friday night will be our 50th Change of Watch, this weekend will be memorable because our own Jim Pahl-Washa will be sworn in as District Commander at the District Change of Watch on Saturday night.

There are lots of ways you can help make this

weekend a success. If you are one of our 44 past Commanders, we need pictures or other memorabilia from your year. We need bodies to help the weekend of the event. But mostly, we need you and any past members you may know to come help us celebrate.

Watch the web site, and your mailbox, for more information. Our efforts will kick into high gear after the new year.