

# The Semaphore

Fairfield Harbour Yacht Club



Vol. 37, No. 7 35° 04' N., 076° 58' W. August 2020



## From the Commodore

North Carolina remains in a safer-at-home, phase 2 state with the COVID-19 pandemic. Certain businesses are open with social distancing; others remain closed. It is concerning that the infection rates in North Carolina and Craven County are continuing to increase. We have now seen 8 deaths in Craven County and, as of 10 July, NC had a case rate of 18 per 100,000 residents. States in the northeast have got their case rates down to about 3.6 or lower. It would not surprise me if Governor Cooper extends the phase 2 order further into the future. We owe it to our fellow members and residents to follow the safer-at-home guidelines. We all bear responsibility for protecting ourselves and our neighbors. We have too many members and residents in the vulnerable categories to do otherwise.

Looking further ahead, it seems to me that phase 2 or something similar will be our new normal. We'll need to accept the current restrictions until we have an effective vaccine or other treatment.

FHYC will continue to hold virtual Board and General Meetings. For the last General Meeting we had 48 sign-ins, meaning that we had perhaps 80+ people who attended. We are getting

better at virtual meetings, with more people participating and remembering to keep our microphones muted. We shall all be experts at this before long.

At our July meeting we had a presentation from Katy Langley, the lower Neuse River Keeper from the Sound Rivers organization. It was excellent and gave some good examples of the challenges in maintaining acceptable water quality in the Neuse. You can visit the water quality results on their website at <https://soundrivers.org/swimguide/>. One location on the lower Neuse, at Core Creek near Ft Barnwell, did not meet water quality standards on July 9th. I would recommend you consider supporting this worthy organization.

Boating activities are continuing. The Three Dinner Cruise went well, as did the thin-water cruise to Latham-Whitehurst Park, with participants coming by water and land. The Fourth of July fun race, held on the third of July, had good participation although lack of wind was a problem.

The big question remains for this fall's planned social activities, especially the Awards Dinner and the Holiday Party / Commodores' Ball. It is not clear that we will be able to hold these events, but we will keep them on the schedule for now. However, there are other social activities that should go ahead - with the necessary social distancing. These include:

Weekly Quarantini Saturdays will continue with our friends at Blackbeard Sailing Club and Northwest Creek Marina also participating. These have become community events which we are sponsoring.

A new outdoor event, Wings over Fairfield Harbour, where kites are flown over the old golf course and the Inner Harbour. Our youngest participant was four years old and the oldest, over 80! Both will receive prizes. Our thanks to Vice Commodore Vergot for organizing this event.

The new event, sponsored by the Entertainment Committee, is a mask-design competition. For this you are

## What's Happening

August	Sa	1	Quarantini .....	1700
	Tu	4	Race: Neuse River Fun	
	Sa	8	Quarantini .....	1700
	Mo	10	Board Meeting - Video Session .....	1600
	Tu	11	Race: Neuse River Fun	
	Th	13	General Meeting - Video Session .....	1930
	Fr	14	Education: Seminar - Video Session .....	0900
	Sa	15	Quarantini .....	1700
	Tu	18	Race: Neuse River Fun	
	Sa	22	Quarantini .....	1700
	Tu	25	Race: Neuse River Fun	
	Sa	29	Quarantini .....	1700

(cc)=Community Center, (rs)=Red Sail Park, (ac)=Activities Center

**Deadline for next issue is noon, Monday, August 17, 2020**

A digital copy will be delivered via FHYC email blast on or before Saturday, August 29, 2020

limited only by your creativity. Send photographs of you wearing your mask to Janice Myler by 31 July. There is even a category for children and grandchildren.

Finally, stay safe and stay healthy

*Ritchie Thomson, Commodore*



*This photo, by PC John Y. Jackson, perfectly captures the spirit of Sails over Fairfield Harbour, and was chosen FHYC photo of the month.*

## The Semaphore

Fairfield Harbour Yacht Club



### Editorial Team

Bill Green	919-518-0752
Jan Green	919-523-2575
Larry Knapp	973-865-7073
Chuck Smith	635-1359
Lynn Stateham	571-0192
Julia Thomson	919-260-9924
Beth Warnock	571-455-9967

### Distribution Co-Chairs

Ed Klebaur	259-0457
Jerry Rezac	288-4124

Website: [www.fhyc.us](http://www.fhyc.us)

email: [fhyc-nc@googlegroups.com](mailto:fhyc-nc@googlegroups.com)

### Deadline

Deadline is 1200 the Monday following the meeting. Please e-mail articles to the address listed below:  
[fhycsemaphore@gmail.com](mailto:fhycsemaphore@gmail.com)

## Sails Over Fairfield Harbour

*The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails. - William Arthur Ward*

In many ways, our period of enforced isolation and social distancing has been one of choice in how to handle a challenging situation. On the afternoon of Sunday, June 28, around 75 observers and participants were treated to an afternoon of playful fun in the skies in the first "Sails over Fairfield Harbour." The event was organized by Fairfield Harbour Yacht Club Vice Commodore Adrian Vergot as a way to get club and community members together, but yet honor social distancing. A kite event was chosen because a kite is nothing more than a variation of the sail on a sailboat, and in fact there are now sailboats that actually use kites for propulsion instead of traditional masts. A wide variety of kites were dusted off and launched in the skies of Fairfield Harbour, both by land and by sea. A favorite activity of the club has always been impromptu socials, and true to the definition of the word "impromptu," very little advance notice of the date and hour could be given for this event, due to the fickle nature of the weather and wind itself!

Issues with the COVID-19 virus have caused thinking "outside of the box" for club social events. And yet, the Yacht Club has seemed more active than ever, with monthly sailing competitions, dingy races, cruises, Saturday Quarantinis and now kite flying.

Another kite event is planned in the fall, so get your kites ready now!

*Elaine Berberich*

## Membership Renewal for 2021

In September you can expect to receive your membership renewal notice by email, together with a customized form giving your information that will go into the Yearbook for 2021.

The process we will be using is as follows:

1. In mid-September, we will be sending out renewal notices to all members by email.
  - a. Copies of the notice will go to all email addresses we have on record.
  - b. With each email there will be a customized form to allow you to check and, if needed, correct your personal information for the Yearbook. The customized form is specific to you.
  - c. Please print out this form, make any necessary corrections, and return it with a check for \$65 to the person identified on the form.
2. On receipt, your information will be updated to create the 2021 version of the membership database. It will then be checked by a second person.
3. We will track receipt of the information received, and those who have not responded will be personally telephoned.
  - a. We are setting up a team to perform this follow-up activity.
  - b. We shall attempt to reach each non-responder and get their updated information (and money).
4. We will close the 2021 version of the membership database near the end of the year to allow the listing to be produced for the Yearbook. If we have not received your information and check by then, you will not be included in the 2021 Yearbook, although you can always rejoin later.
5. In addition, we plan to use the updated information for the on-line member database on the website, and for the email blast system so it is critical to have your information in as soon as possible.

Thanks for your support.

*Ritchie Thomson, Commodore*

## Masks: Wear 'Em!

First, a brief COVID-19 update. Experts differ whether we're in a second peak of the coronavirus, or if the current surge in cases is a continuation of the US outbreak that appeared January 19, 2020. We have a serious problem; US cases are increasing rapidly: from 50,000/day on July 4 to 67,000/day on July 11. With 4% of the world's population, we have 25% of the world's COVID-19 cases; this is more than 3.1 million cases and 134,000 deaths.

What can we do? Research from the University of Washington suggests that if 95% of the US population wears masks, we can prevent 33,000 of the 45,000 more COVID-19 deaths predicted to occur between now and October 1. British mathematical models also predict that facemasks worn by the public can mitigate the COVID-19 spread, as in Taiwan and other countries where mask wearing is common.

Masks prevent spread of disease by "asymptomatic carriers" (people who don't know that they are carrying the coronavirus) when they exhale virus particles in droplets; estimates are that 20-50% or more COVID infections don't produce symptoms. These infections are passed between people until someone becomes ill, which is increasingly likely for people with older age, obesity, or chronic illnesses such as diabetes, heart or lung problems, or hypertension. Healthy young people can become seriously ill - unpredictably; and preschool and elementary school children have died. Masks are less protective for the wearer because the fit around the edges of the mask is not tight enough to prevent inhaling virus-laden droplets in room air. Be sure that your mask covers your nose. This week a UNC study showed that coronavirus infects the nasal cavity more than other parts of the respiratory tract. You want all the protection for yourself and others that you can get!

Categories of masks include medical-grade filter-paper N-95; filter-paper surgical or dust (construction) masks; and home-made or commercial cloth masks. N-95 masks that filter 95% of airborne particles are needed for health care workers and require proper fit with yearly fit-check for size. These may be uncomfortable, feel hard to breathe through, and 81% of wearers have headaches. Surgical filter-paper masks are designed to protect patients from germs exhaled from medical personnel, and protect medical personnel from splashes and sprays, while construction filter-paper masks protect the wearer from dust and debris and protect others from the worker. Cloth masks have become a cottage industry during the coronavirus pandemic, and are available commercially as well. These masks vary in style - type, weave, and thicknesses of fabrics; pockets for disposable filters; method of securing - ties or rubber bands, around ears or head/neck; and should cover the nose and mouth fully, with the chin as an anchor.

How should you wear your mask? When putting on: clean your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water or hand sanitizer; apply mask so that it covers your nose and mouth; and make sure that you can breathe comfortably with mask snug fit; and that you can turn your head from side to side. Don't touch your face or the mask while you're wearing it, or scratch your nose; the mask protects your portals of virus entry. Masks are not recommended for people under 2 years of age, or those incapacitated with illness, breathing problems, or unconsciousness. Videos on the internet are helpful in illustrating these points and more.

When removing your mask, remove from behind your ears and don't touch the mask itself. Place the mask in a paper bag until you're ready to launder, and launder after every use, using a normal wash cycle and detergent. Wash your hands for 20 seconds as above after mask removal.

Masks are a health issue, not a political issue. Let's double-down on the coronavirus and see if we can break the cycle of viral transmission, maybe even have some fun with pretty masks, or masks with cheering, funny, or encouraging messages. An interesting video about masks by Bill Nye the Science Guy can be

found at this link:

<https://toofab.com/2020/07/09/bill-nye-explains-science-face-mask-psa-tik-tok-coronavirus/>

*Kathie King, MD  
Fleet Surgeon*

---

## New Members

Despite the unique situation of meeting online only, our wonderful club continues to grow! We are excited to announce our newest members, Buddy and Chris Jewell, sponsored by Reiner and Renate Zeppenfeld and Don and Louise Knight.

Buddy and Chris moved to Fairfield Harbour after the sale of their hearing business in Colorado. They purchased a home along Spring Creek on Bracken Fern Drive, home to multiple FHYC members.

With 28 years of power boating experience, the Jewells recently bought a 26' Four Winns, appropriately named Crown Jewell to replace the smaller Four Winns they sold when they moved. They are excited to explore local waters and are learning to dock their new boat under the watchful eye of Reiner. You may also see the Jewells out on the Harbour on their Yamaha Jet Skis. Out of the water they are dancers, and thespians!

For committees, Buddy has chosen Marine Assistance and Medical Support. Chris has selected the Yearbook committee.

Please give our newest members Buddy and Chris a warm welcome!

*Pam Miller & Paula Phipps  
Membership Committee Co-Chairs*



## Three Dinner Cruise

This time of year, pop-up thunderstorms are always a risk - and the participating boats had ample opportunity to practice dodging them. Conditions varied from perfect, to wet and blustery.

Each of the three restaurants we visited had their own take on the protocol required to meet current COVID-19 guidelines.

In New Bern the first night, Thursday 6/18, eight of us dined at Morgan's on the patio. The staff were all wearing masks and assured us menus were sanitized between each use. The food was good as usual, and the company was great. Only two boats went to New Bern, all other participants opting for a short hop by land yacht.



Three boats were in Oriental for dinner at the Toucan Grill, and two more couples opted for the land yacht. The first two boats arrived in a downpour; one having lost an engine on that leg. The foredeck crews were drenched. Soaked and cold, they remained cheerful even after a tough docking exercise. Kudos Karen and Lynn.

We had a splash on the deck near the Tiki Bar, but unlike normal club splashes we didn't share snacks; we each brought our own goodies. Disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer were available to all. We had ten for dinner: the Toucan Grill split us up, so we were at two tables instead of one long one. None of the staff wore masks.

On Saturday, the summer solstice, one boat remained in Oriental for repairs, but the crew joined us at River Dunes by car. The two remaining boats had great conditions for the short hop down river and were in well ahead of the afternoon thunderstorm. The splash was in the screened in ground floor porch with our same precautions. Eight of us dined at a long table on the screened porch upstairs and again, staff did not wear masks. The food was good if a little slow in coming. That gave us plenty of time to converse and swap stories.

On Fathers' Day, three boats returned (two from River Dunes and one from Oriental) to Fairfield Harbour with calm water and fair skies. Sunspot Baby spotted turtle and dolphin along the way.

Many pictures have been posted on the FHYC Facebook page.

Except for a few hours of rainy weather here and there, we had an excellent time. Good food, good boats, and great people. Docking, drinking, and dining, who wouldn't have fun?

*PC George Stateham  
Cruise Leader*



### July 4th Fireworks

On Saturday, July 4th, eight boats from Fairfield Harbour Yacht Club headed out to anchor between the mouth of Duck Creek and the Neuse River Bridge to enjoy the fireworks.

At 2115 hours (9:15pm) the fireworks display started and lasted about 35 minutes. It was a good spot to watch the celebration away from the crowd of boats on the other side of the bridge.

Six boats stayed for the night anchored in calm seas.

*Phil Katz  
Cruise Captain*



*Feeling socially distant? Why not enter the ...*

# FHYC MASKerade

# MASK CONTEST



There's no reason that your Covid-19 mask has to be boring! Be creative and show us your best home-decorated face masks.

Base must be a functional mask (must cover the nose and mouth, and be anchored by the chin), either commercial or homemade, but the decorations must be homemade. Please don't purchase N-95 masks just for this activity; they are best saved for healthcare workers.

Masks may be decorated with whatever materials are around (baubles, beads, cloth, paint, feathers etc.)

*Here are the mask categories we will be judging:*

- **Best Overall Mask:** Our top award
- **Boating/Sea Creature Themed Mask:** You know we want to see some marine stuff
- **Elegant Mask:** Puttin' on the Ritz now means putting on a formal mask
- **Humorous Mask:** Everyone can use a good laugh
- **Kids Mask:** A mask for a kid made by a kid - get your kid/grandkids involved (Cloth face coverings should NOT be worn by children under the age of 2)

Judges will be Kathie King, Janice Myler and a masked mystery judge from the Entertainment Committee.

**To enter, submit a photo of yourself wearing your homemade mask by July 31 to [themylers@suddenlink.net](mailto:themylers@suddenlink.net).** No limit on the number of different masks you can submit. Winners to be announced at the August general meeting. Winning entries will be featured in the Semaphore.

## Shallow Draft Day Cruise

It was Saturday June 27 and Yacht Club members awoke to blue skies bright with sunshine, a weather pattern North Carolinians have gotten used to. Eight small craft headed out of Fairfield Harbour and into Upper Broad Creek. It was six miles from marker 1N to our destination, with glorious views along the way. Many boaters noted white flowers tucked in the tall grass of the banks. It was smooth sailing. The destination was Latham-Whitehurst Park, which has been an absolute gem for land and water sports in these times of social distancing.

We approached the ramp at Latham-Whitehurst Park, and all were on board to help people tie up. Some came by land and joined the festivities. Everyone gathered on the observation deck and chatted and shared their lunches. There was a discussion about the large white flowers we had seen. Olwen Jarvis had her nature book along and shared the names of these beautiful flowers as being Swamp Mallows. She also pointed out a few birds and their songs and lullabies.

Lois and Bill Andrews joined us for the festivities, but returning home was not as easy. Winds had picked up and this caused Lois great trepidation. This resulted in an unscheduled stop at Blackbeard to disembark Admiral Lois. Everyone made it home and rested up for kite flying the next day.

But that's another story.

*Diane McKillop*



*Cruise Captain Phil Katz,  
organizer of the Shallow Draft Day Cruise to Latham-Whitehurst Park.*

---

## A Little Sea Story

Back in the early eighties, I was a crew member on the *SS Exxon Gettysburg*. On one particular voyage we were under orders to take our cargo of refined petroleum products from Houston, Texas to the northeastern US. It is interesting to note that our logbooks never listed a destination port. Instead, they always said towards some port or other. This was because, even though we had a general idea of

where we were going, it could – and did - change. On this particular trip, our cargo consisted of aviation gas, three grades of gasoline, jet fuel, and diesel - all destined for the northeast. As usual, our orders were “Dry Tortugas for orders” which meant that, once there, we would be told “SCH” or “NCH”. (South of Cape Hatteras or North of Cape Hatteras.)

Soon we were in the Gulf Stream, off the coast of Florida, and making good time with the Stream. Our ship

was built to be a Naval Auxiliary vessel and could do 20 knots - really fast for a tanker. Somewhere north of Cape Kennedy, we spotted a boat drifting north in the Gulf Stream. The Captain rang up “Standby” on the engine room telegraph, so the engineers could prepare to take the ship's engines off sea speed. This was soon followed by a number of engine orders to slow the ship down. We circled the boat, about 21 ft long with an inboard/outboard engine, to create a lee. Because the

*Gettysburg* was heavily loaded it had a freeboard amidships of approximately 12 ft.

We learned they were out of gas, so we asked them what grade they needed. We quickly rigged a small, air-powered pump and hose to transfer gas to their boat. After their tank was filled, we gave them the heading back to their port in Florida, and told them to shop at the sign of Happy Motoring. (Exxon, of course!)

This would never be possible today because of safety concerns, but back then, we were just helping out fellow sailors.

The *Exxon Gettysburg* was built at Newport News Shipbuilding, went into service in 1957, and was scrapped in 1989 after being in mothballs for several years. The ship had a loaded displacement of 50,000 tons and was powered by 25,000 HP of steam turbines.

And here's another bit of nautical trivia for you. There was an earlier tanker named *Gettysburg* - the *Esso Gettysburg*. She was a type T-2 tanker that made 16 transatlantic trips during WW II before being torpedoed and sunk on June 10, 1943 by the German submarine *U-66* with the loss of 57 lives. Fifteen crewmen survived.

*Norman Meissner*



*SS Exxon Gettysburg (1957-1973)*

---

## All About DSC-Equipped VHF Radios

My wife and I recently bought a new-to-us sailboat and I found myself needing to get a Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) number for the VHF radio. Getting the number was fairly easy using the Boat US site <http://www.boatus.com/mmsi/> (you will need your hull number). More challenging was searching online for the user's manual I needed to program the MMSI number into the 19-year-old DSC-equipped VHF. (Be aware most VHF radios can only be programmed twice with a MMSI number.) I had done this for a previous boat when DSC was a relatively new safety feature which I wanted to have for coastal cruising. In addition to the safety features, there are other functions which are of interest to me and may be to you too.

About Digital Selective Calling (DSC) technology.

DSC was developed to replace voice calls, particularly for emergency

transmissions. It started to become available for pleasure craft in the early 2000s. One benefit is that DSC transmissions have up to 25 percent longer range than analog signals. To work properly in an emergency, DSC radios must be programmed with a unique MMSI number that identifies your boat. They should also be connected to your GPS, allowing the radio to transmit information in an emergency including the boat's identity and its precise location. With DSC, a distress signal is sent very quickly – and repeated without you present on the mic.

MMSIs are the unique, 9-digit numbers that are assigned to your VHF radio or, if you have one, to your Automatic Identification System (AIS). MMSI numbers are also used by 406 Mhz Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs).

In the future we should see even more functionality in the same or

smaller radio packages. You can already buy VHF radios that incorporate AIS and GPS functionality in a single device. The Vesper Marine Cortex will debut shortly featuring VHF radio, DSC, AIS, remote boat monitoring, wifi, and wireless touchscreen display handsets you can use like a mobile phone anywhere on the boat.

What does it look like and how does it work?

Your DSC-equipped VHF radio looks like earlier generation fixed-mount VHF's, but will have one significant feature – a "Distress" or "Emergency" button as shown in the photo on the next page. When properly set up, pressing that button will cause your VHF to immediately send out a general emergency call that includes your MMSI number and, if you've connected it to your GPS, your precise position. And it will continue to broadcast the distress call while you

deal with the emergency.



DSC-equipped VHF radios on other boats are programmed to relay the signal to the Coast Guard, further extending the effective reach of your distress call. Because your MMSI number is unique, the Coast Guard has the details of your boat and where you are if your radio is GPS-connected. This helps to take the “search” out of the USCG’s “search and rescue” and reduce response time.

Are there non-emergency uses for DSC?

The short answer is, “Yes.” Imagine an organized cruise with, let us say five boats. Perhaps you want to call another boat that you know is an hour ahead of you, to see if they’ve arrived at the planned anchorage for the day. You hail them on VHF 16 but get no response. Then you try 68, because

that’s the channel you think was set up for this cruise. There’s no response there either. Then again, maybe you didn’t remember correctly. Was the cruise channel VHF 69 or 68?

If you’ve added your friends’ MMSI numbers to your radio, just like you add contacts to your cell phone, all you need to do is choose the working channel you want to use and select their name from a menu. DSC does the rest. Their radio will automatically switch to the working channel you have selected and will ring like a phone. They answer like normal.

Most DSC radios also have group calling capability. Using our cruise example, the first boat to reach the anchorage could use DSC to simultaneously hail all boats in the cruise group, to let them know there is plenty of room and good holding.

Currently there are about 14 FHYC members who have MMSI numbers listed in the Yearbook, in the Fleet Roster section towards the back. I’ve volunteered to consolidate additional boat MMSI numbers that might be available from members who would like to share these.

If you have a DSC-equipped radio and MMSI number (which is not in the Fleet Roster) just send my way ([ameriyacht@gmail.com](mailto:ameriyacht@gmail.com)) with your

name, boat name, and the 9-digit MMSI. I’ll consolidate and make sure these get to the editor for the next Yearbook. The membership renewal form is the normal approach for getting this information in the Yearbook Fleet Roster.

What steps should you take to make use of DSC now?

1) Confirm your VHF radio has DSC capability. (If it does not, prices on new ones have been going down!)

2) Connect the DSC radio to your GPS in order for it to broadcast your position when making a distress call. (Many new radios have an internal GPS. These cost a little more but make this step unnecessary.)

3) Get your MMSI number using this BoatUS link:

<http://www.boatus.com/mmsi/>

4) Program your unique MMSI number into your radio.

5) Add MMSI numbers of boats you may frequently call using the operating manual (optional).

The US Coast Guard has a series of three online videos on DSC radios. They’re about 10 minutes each. Please contact me if you’d like the links.

*Al Lang*

## Fourth of July Fun Race

The Fourth of July Fun Race, held on July 3rd, saw a great turnout with 14 boats participating. Beginning at 1300 and throughout the pursuit start, the wind was light but steady. All boats got off in good form.

Unfortunately, the wind did not last and died completely as the fleet made its way toward marker 22 on the up-river leg. Only a few boats made the turn and the race was called.

Iron gennys were started and everyone headed home.

Still, it was a great day on the water!

