

The Semaphore

Fairfield Harbour Yacht Club



Vol. 37 No. 11

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December 2020/January 2021



Commodore's Update

We are heading toward the end of the year and the winter solstice when the sun “stands still” before heading north again. The year has not been quite what I expected when I became Commodore last January. By March we had recognized the seriousness of the coronavirus pandemic. We cancelled the March General Meeting and the Commodores’ Ball. In April we went virtual holding Board and General Meetings and Education Seminars on-line. I naïvely expected that the pandemic would be over by the fall and life would resume as normal. How wrong I was! We have many members of the club who are in “at-risk” categories and we had to take serious precautions and we continue to do so.

The whole year changed. On the water we asked skippers to limit their crew to members of the same household. In this manner, “bubble” social distancing was achieved. We were lucky that in North Carolina, that the Governor did not prohibit social boating as happened in other adjacent states. We were able to keep sailing.

On land, all events which involved meeting fellow members indoors were cancelled. We were able to substitute many outdoor events like quarantinis and kite flying which allowed social distancing. For other events, we went virtual. I appreciated how many people stepped forward to make all the new events happen. People are social animals and many of us found the enforced distance requirements very difficult but necessary.

I can now see how optimistic and wrong I was on timing. I should have looked back at the 1918 flu epidemic which lasted for almost three years. Now with one or more vaccines on the horizon, I hope that we will be out of this pandemic in the first half of 2021 and that we should be able to resume something approaching normal lives again. At least, we have many ideas for activities which we can use or re-use in the early months of 2021. Thank you for all your support in this year of pandemic.

More recently we have had a busy month for the Club,

On land, the Appreciation Dinner became an on-line event (with no dinner). The reinvented format went very well, and the event was a resounding success.

The “Book of the Great Lockdown” is now at the printers. We expect to have books distributed to those who ordered them by December 15. It will be great to see the final version commemorating this somewhat-different year.

By special request of RCS, a clothing drive was organized by Georgie Jackson and was a great success.

RSC was overwhelmed by the generosity of our community donations. Well done everyone for donating, organizing and volunteering,

Finally, have a wonderful Thanksgiving and enjoy the upcoming Holiday Season and Winter Solstice. All the best for 2021. Stay safe and healthy.

Ritchie Thomson, Commodore

What's Happening

Dec	Tu	1	Fun Race (weather dependent)	
	Thu	3-5	Food Drive and Angel Tree(cc).....	1100
	Sun	6	Christmas Parade	
	Mo	7	Board Meeting (v).....	1600
	Sat	12	Parade of Lights	
Jan	Sat	1	Fun Race (weather dependent)	
	Mon	13	Board Meeting (v)	
	Thu	16	Installation of the new Board(v)	1930

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

Deadline for next issue is noon, Monday, January 20, 2021

A digital copy will be delivered via FHYC email blast on or before February 1, 2021

FHYC Board for 2021

PC Azersky re-presented his Nominating Committee's slate for 2021 at our General Meeting on November 12. There was a substitute for Treasurer after the initial nominee withdrew. The Meeting approved the slate by acclamation. No "nay" votes were cast. The Board for 2021 will be:

Commodore Adrian Vergot
 Vice Commodore Barb Robinson
 Rear Commodore David Phipps
 Treasurer Russ Robinson
 Secretary Yvonne Meissner
 Directors

Phil Katz
 Stephen Brockman
 Lois Andrews
 David Pfefferkorn
 Peter Budzynkiewicz
 Elaine Mielenhausen

Past Commodore Ritchie Thomson

Please welcome your new Board who will be installed at our General Meeting on Thursday, January 16, 2021.

We would like to thank the retiring Board Members for 2020. They are Treasurer, Sherry Pendleton and Director, Joye Moloney.

Also, our thanks to Directors Joy Thompson and Ellen McEleree who retired during the year.

Ritchie Thomson, Commodore

Sunfish Sails Into the Sunset

Sunday, November 8 was the Sunfish Fall Series' last race. Having the races this season in the Inner Harbour has brought so many more spectators out to learn about racing and to enjoy the good weather.



Folks always come with their own chair, their beverage of choice, and a mask. They visit with friends that they have not seen for months since COVID, and they meet new neighbors. The racers also benefit from such an appreciative audience.



Everyone watching has said they are thrilled to have the racing in the Inner Harbour.

A big thank you goes out to Joan Wilson, PRO (race official) for each race. Also thanks to Phil Katz and Ed Thompson for alternating each week being the mark boat (power boat) in

case someone has problems while racing.

Nine skippers qualified for awards. They were as follows: 1st George Sechrist, 2nd Eric Frank, 3rd Jerry Reزاب, 4th Ed Thompson, 5th Al Munster, 6 D.J. Moore, 7th Peter Budzynkiewicz, 8th Suzy Jastram, 9th John Jackson. Congratulations to all racers!



We hope to see all the racers back in the 2021 Spring Series and will welcome any new racers. If you know of someone who has a Sunfish but doesn't race it anymore, please contact me and I'll get you to the right person. If you want to purchase a used Sunfish, contact me.

Georgie Jackson and Jerry Reزاب

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 Reزاب 288-4124

Website: www.fhyc.us

email: 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

Stop Press

The recent news about vaccines has brought hope to us all.

Pfizer and Moderna have both reported that their vaccines are 90-95% effective. However, the problem of distribution still hangs over us.

Remember if you are fortunate enough to fall into one of the high-risk groups you must have two shots several weeks apart.



"Fingers crossed" for distribution soon.

QUARANTINI FINALE

On a Saturday in late March we celebrated with our first Quarantini Cocktail. Never in our lifetime had we been in a pandemic. The country was in lockdown and Covid-19 was a new word. We were scared and unsure of what was to come. We needed assurance that we were not in this alone.

The solution was simply for everyone to walk out in their yards or on their docks at 1700 and raise their glass and safely toast their neighbors. But this became so much more; it was a springboard for a Saturday ritual that everybody looked forward to. It was our designated “happy day,” our “happy hour.” The boats came and people lined the sea walls and the Quarantini Trail was born. We laughed and smiled and shouted cheers and for a few hours every week, WE FORGOT!

But, there is a beginning and an end to everything and so a grand finale was planned. If I had written a script for this event I could not have imagined it to be better, more fun, or more amusing than what happened on All Hallows’ Eve.

It was a ghostly affair! The scariest of nights when witches go riding and black cats are seen. I heard the moon laugh and whisper “ITS HALLOWEEN”.



With the sleep of the sun, the light had been broken, the spell had begun. Twenty boats appeared in the harbour, with ghosts, goblins, and witches

galore. There were skeletons, pirates, ghouls and much more.

For seven months we drank “Orange Whips”, “Dirty Bananas”, Rusty Nails and Blue Whales, but on Halloween a haunted train was formed, and we all cruised the trail for the very last time. We toasted with “Haunted Quarantinis” and threw candy ashore. We once again laughed and cheered, but for me, as the end grew near, I shed a tear!

Lois Andrews



FAIRFIELD HARBOUR DOES HAVE TALENT!!!

Sunday, November 8 Fairfield Harbour Yacht Club sponsored a "Fairfield Harbour Got Talent" gathering at Red Sail Park from 1400 to 1600. We sent out requests for anyone who wanted to entertain or show off their talents to come and participate. The gathering was open to everyone in the Harbour.

Because of the Pandemic and the mandate from the governor's office, anyone attending had to wear a mask and practice social distancing. We encouraged people to bring their lawn chairs, a beverage, and a snack. In addition, we couldn't have asked for better weather.



The entertainment far exceeded our expectations. The Down East Dulcimers got us started with several top-tapping sets.



They were followed by the Harbour Jazz Trio who led us through several sets of jazz to blues, from Paris to Saint Louis.

Bill Jarvis played a Scott Joplin tune on his flute. Did you know that



Scott Joplin was born in North Carolina?



Doug King got out his guitar and entertained us with some classic rock.

Olwen Jarvis gave us a new take on poetry with three readings, one in a Yorkshire accent. My favorite was called "GPS". It put a smile on everyone's face.



"GPS"

"I have a little GPS
I've had it all my life
It's better than the normal ones
My GPS - my wife

It gives me full instructions
Especially how to drive
"It's sixty k's an hour", it says
"You're doing sixty-five"

It tells me when to stop and start
And when to use the brake
And tells me that it's never ever
Safe to overtake

It tells me when a light is red
And when it goes to green
It seems to know instinctively
Just when to intervene

It lists the vehicles just in front
And all those to the rear
And taking this into account
It specifies my gear.

I'm sure no other driver
Has so helpful a device
For when we leave and lock the
car
It still gives its advice.

It fills me up with counselling
Each journey's pretty fraught
So why don't I exchange it
And get a quieter sort?

Ah well, you see, it cleans the
house,
Makes sure I'm properly fed,
It washes all my shirts and things
And - lets me have a shed.

Despite all these advantages
And my tendency to scoff,
I do wish that once in a while
I could turn the damned thing
off."

*Created by Jim Grenfell
Read by Olwen Jarvis*

Doug King and Elaine Berberich gave us a duet that spoke to us. It was based on the song “Carina Carina”.



Corona, Corona

“Corona, Corona, why did you stay so long
 Corona, Corona, wish you were gone
 My life is crazy, so I sing this song
 The shelves are empty, TP is gone
 Wal-Mart is open, but not as long
 Purell’s our favorite,
 Friends keep us strong
 Up in the morning, the day to start
 Can’t go shopping, I’ll do my part
 My mask is ready, six feet apart
 On Saturday evenings, we leave our docks
 For Quarantinis, at five o’clock
 Our friends are waiting,
 Our bars are stocked
 Bye, bye Corona, please leave us now
 Bye, bye Corona, it’s time to go
 We’ll be fine without you
 You ain’t good no more”

Margaret Rose played a solo piece on her keyboard and it was beautiful.



To finish, Bob Doman and Margaret Rose did “Il Silencio”, a European

version of taps. The last of the program was by our Commodore, Ritchie Thomson who read the poem “Jabberwocky” created by Lewis Carroll. The words are nonsensical.

I would like to thank all the entertainers and give a special thank you to Lois Andrews who helped drum up the entertainment.

*Barbara Robinson,
 Rear Commodore.*

FHYC Pamlico Cruise October 19-26, 2020

On Monday morning October 19 five boats left Fairfield Harbour heading down the Neuse River for Lower Broad Creek. Peter & Kathy Clay were on *SV Gentle Presence*, John & Georgie Jackson were on *SV Georgie Girl*, Jerry & Melissa Drake with their dog Brodie were on *MV Drakes Dream*, Al & Mary Lang were on *SV Osprey* and Phil & Linda and their parrot Monet were on *MV Arawak*. As we approached Beard Creek to port, Al’s brother Bill Lang and his wife Cindy joined us on their *MV Courage*.

We spent the night in Lower Broad Creek with two boats anchored and four boats at River Dunes Marina.

We planned to leave Tuesday morning around 0800 in anticipation of an early afternoon arrival at the River Forest Marina in Belhaven on the Pungo River. Well that didn’t happen. The fog Tuesday morning was as thick as pea soup! Finally, around 1030 the fog started to lift, and we set out for the second leg of our trip. We left Lower Broad Creek and started to round Maw Point towards the Bay River. At this point the fog was thicker. That did not stop us though, our captains and crew exhibited excellent seamanship with the aid of VHF, radar, chart plotters and AIS. The only challenge was the snowbirds sailing south towards us.



On Wednesday we headed down the Pungo River and turned to starboard on the Pamlico River heading up to our next anchorage in Bath where Bev and Arne on *MV Scandia* joined us.



Our anchorage on Bath Creek was at the apex of Back Creek which ended in Bath at the Quarterdeck.



We got permission to use the Quarterdeck as a venue for our group after some of us bought ice cream and left a big tip. When they closed at 1600 we all dinghied up for an impromptu outdoor splash.

On Thursday mid-morning we all weighed anchor and cruised up to the

end of the Pamlico River to Washington NC.



Greg and Lorrie in *MV Island Girl* joined us at the Washington Waterfront Docks bringing our group to a total of eight boats.

Around 1700 we all met at the town gazebo on the river for another social hour outside. The group then split up going to dinner at various restaurants near the waterfront.



On Friday *Georgie Girl*, *Osprey* and *Courage* left Washington to head home. We had five boats remaining. On Friday night some of us had dinner at a new restaurant called 'The Hackney'. It was also a gin distillery and the hand sanitizer smelled like gin.

Then on Saturday the remaining boats cruised down the Pamlico to Broad Creek where we docked at the Pamlico Plantation Yacht Club as their guests. On Saturday afternoon we met at the outside PPYC pavilion to enjoy beverages, snacks, and pizza. There were 10 PPYC members and 10 FHYP members.

Sunday weather was questionable with a prediction of 2 inches of rain all day. *Drakes Dream* and *Gentle Presence* left at the crack of dawn heading back to Oriental and Fairfield Harbour. *Island Girl*, *Scandia* and *Arawak* stayed until Monday morning and then headed out separately to various anchorages in the Oriental area. Then back to Fairfield Harbour on Tuesday.

It was a great cruise with a bunch of stops all around the Neuse, Pungo and Pamlico Rivers. Except for a couple of hours of fog and a day of rain, the weather was good and so was the company.

Many thanks to the cruisers for participating and to Peter Clay for being co-leader for the cruise.

Phil Katz, Cruising Captain

RCS Winter Clothing Drive

Religious Community Services



(RCS) in New Bern cares for anyone in need of food, housing, and shelter, especially those who need it most.

The Fairfield Harbour Yacht Club sponsored an annual winter clothing drive for RCS. They needed everything for **everyone** including the elderly and infants.

The clothing drive was held on **November 6 & 7** at **Red Sail Park** from **0900 to 1300**.

The generosity of everybody was amazing. Seven carloads were donated and transported to RCS on Friday 6. An equal amount was donated on Saturday 7 and packed into the RCS truck.



RCS was extremely excited about receiving the winter clothes, particularly the coats. Men's suits and dress shirts will be used in the "Dress for Success" program at Craven Community College.

Thank you to Georgie & John Jackson for organizing the event and to all the volunteers who helped.

It was agreed that it should be an annual event. Maybe, a Spring drive should be planned.

Georgie & John Jackson

Linda Lelli, Coordinator for FHYP's Gifts to the Salvation Army Angel Tree

Linda Lelli is a fixture at every November meeting held by the Fairfield Harbour Yacht Club. Each year, she earns our Club's admiration for the time she lovingly contributes to coordinate the Club's sponsorship of the local Salvation Army Angel Tree program. Linda became involved in 1993 as a member of the committee led by Gail Rabai, wife of Past Commodore (1991) John Rabai.

During the early years of the Club, the holiday party was a pot-luck affair held in the firehouse, with Angel Tree gifts surrounding the Community Center tree. In 1994, Linda took the reins and has been working with the Angel Tree program ever since.

The Salvation Army has many ways to serve families who need assistance. One way is the Angel Tree program which delivers Christmas presents in order that every child will have a gift to open on Christmas morning. The Salvation Army interacts with families to develop a wish-list for each child. Their names are encoded to letters and numbers for

family privacy and the wish-lists, which contain ages and clothing sizes and favorite colors, are transposed on to paper angels, either girls or boys.

Linda arranges to pick up a big stack of paper angels from the Salvation Army in New Bern, then brings them to the November Club meeting. This year she and Chris Skrotsky laid out the paper angels in the Cart Barn and members flocked to adopt little girl and little boy angels who could benefit from a brighter Christmas.



Any unclaimed angels are delivered to the Fairfield Harbour Property Owner's offices so that community members who are not in the Yacht Club also can share in the joy of bringing happiness to others at Christmas.



This year there will not be a Club holiday party so the gifts will be brought to the Community Center on the same day as the RCS Food Drive. Members will help move gifts to the Salvation Army truck which always drives away full, not just with toys, bicycles and clothes but with joyful good wishes and hope for a bright

future. The party might be off, but the Angels are definitely on!

In Linda's own words, "I wish I could express how much personal reward I get from doing this each year. To witness the generosity of our community and know how much joy there is for so many children and families on Christmas morning makes my life that much richer."

Chris Skrotsky

If you are planning to go to the BVIs, think again

The BVIs announced the official re-opening protocols on October 26. With a big fanfare about how they are going to be welcoming visitors back the government has specified the following protocol (Phase One re-opening):

1. A negative PCR test (up to 5 days before arrival)
2. Register with a website and get clearance to travel
3. Staggered arrival of planes at Beef Island airport, no more than 90 passengers
4. 2nd COVID test at airport
5. Install tracking app on phone or get GPS tracker
6. Must have travel insurance that covers COVID
7. Quarantine for 4 days at your own expense at an approved place
8. 3rd COVID test at the end of 4 days
9. If negative, movement is limited to designated areas
10. All restaurants and shops are required to take your temperature and document it with your name and date/time
11. 4th COVID test on the 8th day
12. If all 4 previous tests are negative, you are now free to move around the islands

So far, I have been told that each test is going to be about \$250. The government accommodation for quarantine is estimated to be \$2500

without food. Boat Charter guests cannot quarantine on the boat.

One can draw one's own conclusion about how busy it is going to be, considering the majority of visitors are from the USA and only have a week of vacation time available to them.

Small World

October 25, 2002. Not a significant date for most people, and at the time it did not seem like it was for us either. We were traveling southbound from Washburn WI, (western Lake Superior) to someplace south.

We tied up at Elizabeth City and noticed a boat called "Scandia" registered in Superior, WI. We knew Superior, WI well and wondered who was on it. At the 5:00 PM get-together held by the Elizabeth City "Rose Buddies" we asked, "Who had the boat named "Scandia?" A couple named Arne and Bev Myrseth said they did. They mentioned that they were from Kansas City, MO. They bought the boat in the late 90's in Cheboygan, MI and shipped it to Kansas City where they sailed for several years. In 2002, they shipped their boat to Barker's Island in Duluth, MN and left from there to begin their voyage to the Bahamas.

We told them that we had sailed out of Duluth/Superior for ten years before moving our 30' Islander, "Aquila" to Washburn. We learned they were recently retired and hoped to get to the Bahamas for the winter. We told them that Georgie had a one-year sabbatical so we were heading south but would be back on Lake Superior the following summer.

We talked some more about various points where we had both stopped. Weeks later we crossed paths in Florida. As cruisers do, we again caught up and then both sailed our separate ways.

In 2003 we bought a house in Fairfield and joined the Yacht Club. Imagine our surprise when in 2009 Bev

and Arne were introduced as guests at the FHYC general meeting. They had just bought a house in Fairfield Harbour. Immediately after the meeting, during the social hour, we went over to them. They immediately recognized us. Again, we caught up, but this time after five years, not a few months. Since then we have been good friends and have enjoyed various club cruises together. We both have a different boat now. They have kept the name “*Scandia*” but moved from sail to power. We have kept sailing but have changed boats and names. While on the recent Belhaven and Washington cruise we celebrated the eighteenth anniversary of our meeting.

What a small world this is!!!

John Jackson, Past Commodore

Light Pollution

When going from a lighted area to a dimmed area, it takes the human eye approximately 10 minutes to adjust so it can see properly. So, what does this have to do with pollution and why should anybody in Fairfield Harbour care about this tidbit of trivia? Easy answer, we are a nautical community, so we should care.

Turn off your porch light and sit on your back deck on a moonless night. At first, you will not be able to see very much but after about 10 minutes your eyes will adjust, and you will find you can see quite well! Great, isn't it? Look at all those stars, look across the yard, heck, it is bright enough to go for a walk. Your way to the yard is clearly visible so walk half-way across your back porch toward the stairs. When you are about five steps away from the stairs, stop walking and briefly shine a flashlight in your face for a few seconds. Turn it off, then tell me if you are going to want to keep walking toward your steps... no, I don't think you will. That brief exposure to bright light ruined your night vision and it

will not return for another 10 minutes, you will be blind for a while.

For those of us who have chosen to live in Fairfield Harbour, keeping bright porch, flag, or yard lights on are doing this exact same thing to boaters who are trying to navigate the inner harbor and canals at night. A captain coming in from the Neuse after dark can see very well normally, but when rounding a channel marker or canal if they encounter a home spotlight or bright porch light, their night vision is destroyed and navigation becomes handicapped. We are blinding the navigators who are trying to safely make their way back to their docks and are inadvertently instigating hazardous conditions. We need to be courteous to our community boaters and can take simple steps to reduce light pollution. Turn lights off when not needed or install motion detectors that only trigger when motion is sensed in the immediate areas of concern. Utilize very inexpensive light directing shields so that spotlights redirect horizontal or skyward travelling light back toward the ground where it belongs.

If this article doesn't make one sympathetic to the boating community, then please let me direct attention to the pocketbook. Light that escapes horizontally or skyward is basically money frivolously wasted since the only thing it is doing is creating **light pollution**. Light pollution makes our beautiful skies look dull and washed out, your lights should instead only be protecting your yard where it is useful. Please help protect our wonderful night skies, fellow boaters, and in return they and your wallet will greatly thank you

Adrian Vergot, Vice Commodore

A Stowaway



In the spring of 2002, Captain Norman decided that I was due for a trip to the Bahamas. One that he had made many times before but a first for me. I retired from work and started endless lists of what we would need to provision on board to see us through three months. At the same time Captain Norman went through numerous checks and double checks of needed spare parts and checked his perfectly running engine.

To leave land is a unique experience. It reminds me of putting your toes into cold water, pulling your feet back and then just taking the plunge. After an incredible number of trips back and forth with supplies and personal gear, we left the dock saying, “here goes, ready or not”.

Our last night we had slept on board at our dock. Whilst finally at ease, I could not believe that the nibbling noise I was listening to was in fact a little critter eating one of our onions. An uninvited guest. A stow away. Of course, it meant one more trip to the store to buy a few mouse traps. Quite sure that this was an easy fix, we rushed to the cabin when we heard a loud snap only to be disappointed to find the bait gone and no body. We gave up some more delectable morsels and reset the trap, but Mr. or Mrs. Rodent was obviously standing around the corner smirking at us refusing to get trapped.

In the meantime, the Coast Guard warned boaters of a severe storms in the area and we were soon battling high winds and a rain squall. Captain Norman was doing a fine job keeping “*Runaway*” on track while I struggled with my first bout of mal de mer. Soon the skies cleared, the stars came out and a half moon was coming up over the horizon.

Straightening up a few things after our rock and roll experience, I found another freshly eaten apple. Once again, the traps were set, bacon and peanut butter were removed without the desired results. But that night whilst at the helm and with Captain Norman changing out a sail, I spotted this little creature doing a high wire act on our lifelines. “Get him Norm” I shouted. “Give him a good kick.” Being buckled in, his torso would not reach, and Norman asked for the boat hook instead. It was very comical to watch a “Dual to Arms on the High Seas.” I thought I heard a splash in the water and prayed that this was the end to our unwanted stow away.

Of course, we know where there is one rat or mouse there is always another. It took the engineer in Captain Norm to come up with an extensive contraption of tunnels to finally do the job of trapping them. And of course, I, had a grand job of cleaning up after they had had a meal of their lives in my food locker. Ugh!

Yvonne Meissner, Secretary to the Board

Season's Greetings!



Thoughts.....

As we move into 2021, there is a lot of concern about the future. Is the pandemic easing? When will an effective and safe vaccine be available? Is the economy going to survive so that jobs come back?

Change is inevitable. We cannot go backwards but we can embrace change. When we long for normality, we must accept that it will be a different normality. “Think positive” should be our mantra.

This is the final Semaphore for 2020. It has been a quite different year with COVID-19 and lockdowns. Most of our usual social events have been cancelled but the Board has come up with many alternatives. The members have had to get used to virtual meetings on their computers. Outdoor activities have become the norm with mask wearing and social distancing.

We should thank the members of the Bridge and Board who have worked extremely hard to keep the Club going. Similarly, thank you to those members who have gone above and beyond to help people in the community.