

The Semaphore

Fairfield Harbour Yacht Club



Vol. 40, No. 7

35° 04' N., 076° 58' W.

August 2023



Commodore's Update From the Helm

The scorching dog days of August are waiting for us, but as boaters, we have the perfect escape at our disposal! Mere mortals may be landlocked and subject to stifling heat and humidity, but we have only to step aboard, cast off, and seek cooler temperatures offshore. Of course, if all else fails, you may have to start the genset, and turn on the air conditioning!

If you missed it, July offered a change in the general meeting program, as four brave member couples competed in our "Oldy Wed Game – Nautical Version", a parody of the old TV Newlywed Game! Our

may never know our spouses as well as we think! A lot of laughter and great fun for the contestants and audience alike! Looks like FHYC TV had a one hit wonder! Congratulations to our winning couples, who tied for first prize; Doug and Kathie King, and



Steve and Paula Mink.

Our July Educational Seminar was organized by committee chair Steve

Hart, and offered members the rare opportunity to experience an in water exercise with life vests and a six person offshore life raft. Participants were given the chance to wear their life vests in the water, as well as to board the raft from both the deck and from deep water. In addition, they had the opportunity to examine the raft, its features, and equipment, up close, and all agreed it was an invaluable learning experience! Look for additional information later in this edition of the Semaphore.

Our July activities end with a full moon raft up on Monday, 31 July. Plan to bring your favorite beverage and a snack dish to share! Please contact John Jackson at your earliest convenience.

Make sure to set aside Sunday, August 13 for our annual game night at the Community Center, this year featuring a dice game of Bunco! No experience is necessary....just roll the dice and have fun. Bring a potluck dish to share, desert will be provided. Contact Janice Myler to reserve a space!

You'll also want to put Saturday 19 August on your calendar, for our annual Poker Run! Watch your email



contestants had been married from 7 to nearly 40 years, but it appears that we

What's Happening in August

August 2023	Tu	1	Full Sturgeon Moon Raft Up	
	Mo	7	Board Meeting (AC2)	1600
	Th	10	General Meeting (CC) - River Keeper	1900
	Su	13	Game Night (CC) - Bunco	1600
	Mo	14-27	Albermarle Loop	
	Sa	19	Poker Run	
	We	30	Full Moon Raft UP	

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

Deadline for the next issue is noon, Monday, August 17, 2023.

A digital copy of this issue will be delivered online, on or before July 30, 2023.

for further details on this fun and exciting day cruise!

Lastly, one of the most popular cruises, the Albemarle Loop cruise, is scheduled to depart New Bern on Monday, August 14, and return on the 27. This cruise is primarily a marina cruise, where participating marinas offer free overnight dockage in select locations, most of which are quite interesting. Give Peter Clay a call for more information.

August is shaping up beautifully- join the adventure!

Dave Phipps, Commodore

Life Raft Education Seminar 2023

Some comments from the participants.

"A big Thank You goes out to Steve Hart and David Phipps for presenting and organizing this educational seminar. It was an Eye Opener / Heads Up experience. People can talk all they want to about survival

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Deadline

The deadline for receiving articles is 1200 noon on the Monday following the General meeting. Please email articles to fhycsemaphore@gmail.com

at sea. To actually get an opportunity to experience the task first hand in a controlled environment was very enlightening. The FHyc does an excellent job of presenting educational and hands on experiences. Be there for the next one, you won't be disappointed. Knowledge makes us all safer on the water." MC

"At 79, I am still learning. This was a great educational experience for



me. First time in a life raft. Thanks to Steve and Dave and the very old life raft that worked perfectly for the demonstration." VT

It also showed me that 6 people in a 6 person raft is really crowded. I think, if I was going off shore with one other person, I would want a 6 person raft." JJ

"Excellent seminar and great learning experience. A life raft is



uncomfortable, claustrophobic and very "friendly". Getting in, especially from the water is challenging, especially when wearing a lifejacket. Much better to stay with your boat unless it actually sinks." RT

What Should I Know About Life Rafts?

Many skippers of larger boats carry a life raft as a safety measure of last resort. The need to abandon ship may be precipitated by flooding, fire, or collision, thankfully all of which are relatively rare events. But like most pieces of emergency equipment, the suitability of the equipment depends in large measure on its design, features, and the user's familiarity with the device or apparatus.

Where life rafts are concerned, the first consideration is the type of waters your boating will involve. For most of us, rescue along the mid Atlantic coast should be a matter of hours, not days or weeks, but if you venture further offshore, your needs will be considerably different. A thorough and detailed analysis of these issues is beyond the scope of this brief article, but there are a few considerations worth pointing out to all users.

Not all life rafts are created equal; and less expensive models may not adequately address your needs even in near shore waters. While it's important to try to enter any raft by simply and directly stepping from the vessel into the raft without getting into the water, you can't plan on this as a purchase prerequisite. If you can't climb aboard from the water, your money is not well spent. Consider carefully how the raft is designed to help you get aboard. Different designs require different boarding strategies, and your ability to climb aboard from deep water will depend on many factors such as age, general health, body type, and upper body strength.

Look carefully at the raft's design. Some have very little straps to help you get aboard, with only a single lanyard around the outer tube. Others have webbed ladders for your feet, but depend on upper body strength to pull yourself up and in. What other lanyards are available inside the raft to help you pull yourself up and in? How are they placed? Some models feature a sort of shelf just below the water line, that enable you to swim horizontally onto the "porch" and then climb aboard. Many of these features are optional and come at considerable

additional cost, but turn out to be cheap in the long run!

Lastly, the best recommendation is to get wet...go to an exercise and see first hand the issues involved in launching and boarding a raft. There is no better way to actually be prepared to save your life, and the lives of others aboard your vessel.

Steve Hart assists Peter Clay in boarding a top of the line Winslow Offshore life raft with webbed boarding ladder (not visible under the lower tube). This raft inflated automatically after about 20 years in storage!



A few important reminders:

- 1) Stay on board your vessel as long as possible. Even a partially submerged vessel is easier to spot, and may ride better in the water than a life raft.
- 2) Prepare to launch the raft. Select a location in the lee of the wind and one that provides easy access for boarding from the boat. Ensure that the raft's painter line or lanyard is securely tied to the boat...a cleat or stanchion is ideal, to prevent the raft floating away before you're ready to board.
- 3) Launch the raft when the skipper issues the command, by rolling or tossing overboard in such a way as to prevent damage to the raft.
- 4) Inflate the raft by pulling (jerking) on the lanyard. Some rafts may begin to sink and inflate when the hydrostatic pressure reaches a certain value. Pull the raft into an advantageous position near the boat, as close as is prudent under the circumstances. It should also not be so close as to risk damage or puncture by the boat, and close enough to facilitate a quick entry when required.
- 5) Gather as many essentials as you have time for... an abandon ship bag, VHF radio, medications, passports, cash, first aid kit, cell phone, etc..
- 6) Make a May Day call on VHF
- 7) When it becomes necessary to leave the boat, pull



Don't forget the dog!

the raft up close enough that crew can step off the boat down into the raft. This is far easier than trying to enter from the water.

8) If necessary to enter from the water, you should be **wearing your life jacket**. Send the strongest person into the raft first, as he may be able to assist weaker or injured crew. Depending on the configuration of

your raft, there are different strategies used to enter from the water.



9) Some rafts have a small floating porch. If this is the case, swim up to the raft with some forward momentum, keeping your body in a horizontal

swimming position; swim onto the porch and then use it to support yourself as you pull yourself over the inflated tubes. Note that it will be difficult to board the porch from a vertical position in the water.



- 11) If the raft is equipped with a webbed boarding ladder, and you attempt to board with a vertical posture, your feet may push the ladder under the raft, making it difficult to put your weight on each step and climb. Try to keep your feet under your body weight. Your height, weight, body size, and physical condition will affect your success with these flexible ladders. Use your upper body strength to pull yourself into the raft using the horizontal lanyards on the inflation tubes and if present, on the inside of the raft. Persons inside the raft may help to those still in the water.
- 12) Quickly locate the knife provided with the raft, usually somewhere near the entrance. Be prepared to use this knife to cut the painter / lanyard to free the raft from the sinking vessel.
- 13) Account for all crew. Give everyone an anti sea sickness medication from the raft's first aid kit.
- 14) Provide first aid to injured crew members as required.



Don't Miss The August General Meeting! Here is a Bio of our speaker!



Samantha Krop is the Neuse Riverkeeper, Sound Rivers' advocate for the health of the Neuse and its many tributaries, from Durham to Havelock. Sam came to Sound Rivers from Oregon, where she served as the coalitions coordinator for the Forest Waters Coalition, a network of conservationists and community members working together to

create stronger protections for Oregon's forested watersheds. Prior to her full-time role as a coalitions builder, she taught undergraduate- and graduate-level courses in environmental justice and pedagogy at the University of Oregon. A native of Florida's Gulf Coast, Sam is no stranger to North Carolina rivers: she spent summers at Camp Celso on the shores of the South Toe River in the Black Mountains, a place where her love of nature and future career as an environmental advocate, guided by the central tenets of equity and inclusivity, was forged.

*Olwen Jarvis,
Past Commodore and Program Committee member*

Sailing 450 Miles in the Intra-coastal Waterway and Chesapeake Bay without power. The Dinghy came to the Rescue Part One

Sailing into and out of an anchorage without power can be fun and rewarding. Heads usually turn when someone drops the hook without using their engine or hoists their mainsail or jib and sails off the anchor. Acquiring this skill and expertise may come in handy someday when the engine does not come to life when you press the start button. Of course, you must be in an anchorage where there is ample room to execute this adventurous maneuver and there must be enough wind to get the old gal moving.

Without enough wind and ample space to maneuver your vessel, sailing off your anchor can be difficult if not impossible. Destination harbors like Annapolis, Charleston, and many others would be a real challenge for even the most experienced skippers. The fun of not using your engine is one of the most useful skills a sailing captain can master. For sure, the day will come when you only have your sails to get you moving. The

conditions may not always be right, though.

So, what other means is there to move your sailing vessel if you have no main engine, no wind, and a need to move on and do not want to rely on any outside help.

Your outboard motor and dinghy are perfect for replacing your main engine and or sails for propulsion if the need ever arises.

Suppose you are on a weekend trip or long voyage in an area with no help and you have engine problems. Let us say, you are on the ICW in some of the more remote areas of the Carolinas or Georgia and your engine is dead and cannot be started by you. You are in no immediate danger so what do you do? How does your dinghy with its little outboard motor come into play? If you have one, you are never without auxiliary power.

Once, I used my inflatable dinghy and outboard as auxiliary power to travel almost five hundred miles on the ICW. It was tied behind my 42,000-pound CSY 44 and I traveled from Southport, NC, on the Cape Fear River to St. Michaels MD. on the Chesapeake Bay. When I could sail, I did so on the sounds and rivers, but there was lots of motoring too.



On this trip, I was alone, without any assistance except for the cooperation of lock attendants and bridge tenders. I have used this method several times in the past in Florida and the Bahama Islands.

Pushing a large vessel with a smaller one works very well in almost all conditions. I would like to take credit for this push boat idea, but it has been done for ages. Tugs pushing barges and, in Chesapeake Bay, skipjacks using "pushboats" with inboard engines to get to and from the oyster bars. It is Maryland Law that skipjacks cannot use power to dredge oysters. Oystermen have been using this small boat tied to stern method of main propulsion for generations to get out to work and back home.

Unlike inboard engines, small outboard motors on large sailing yachts are very inefficient and need lots of fuel supply for an extended trip. It does make sense if you are in a pinch.

There are some drawbacks and things to be aware of if you ever intend or are forced to use this method. The small outboard pushing the heavy weight of the mother vessel takes its toll on fuel consumption and maneuverability, especially in canals and areas of strong and or adverse currents.

On the above-mentioned trip South to Florida, I was with a friend and the oil line ruptured and seized the Westerbeke diesel engine. We were offshore north of the Cape Fear River on Frying Pan Shoal. We turn to starboard after clearing the shoals and sailed for Southport. My friend had to get back to work so left me with a sailboat with no engine. I am a stubborn captain so decided to sail north to a working boatyard in New River NC to get a price on fixing my engine. The distance was sixty-five miles and included the Cape Fear River and the waterway past Wrightsville Beach to New River Inlet. After arriving, I decided the arrangement worked great and to continue sailing and pushing the boat north. I could fix or replace the engine locally in Oxford, Md. More stubbornness.

I had two choices, inside and lots of planning and hard work, or sail back outside and around Cape Hatteras and up the Chesapeake Bay, which was longer and much more dangerous. The second option was much less work if the weather cooperated, but it was December, 1983. Probably cold and most likely wet and going in the wrong direction. So, I sat at the chart table in the evening and planned my departure the next morning with a favorable current past the inlet and north to Morehead City, NC.



After trial and error, fitting the dinghy to the stern, (the dinghy kept swaying from side to side) I left Southport on an incoming tide and a great 3 plus knot current, and to boot, a 12-knot south wind pushing me north at 11 knots. The weather forecast was good for the next four days. I completed the entire trip with no main engine to St. Michaels in six days.

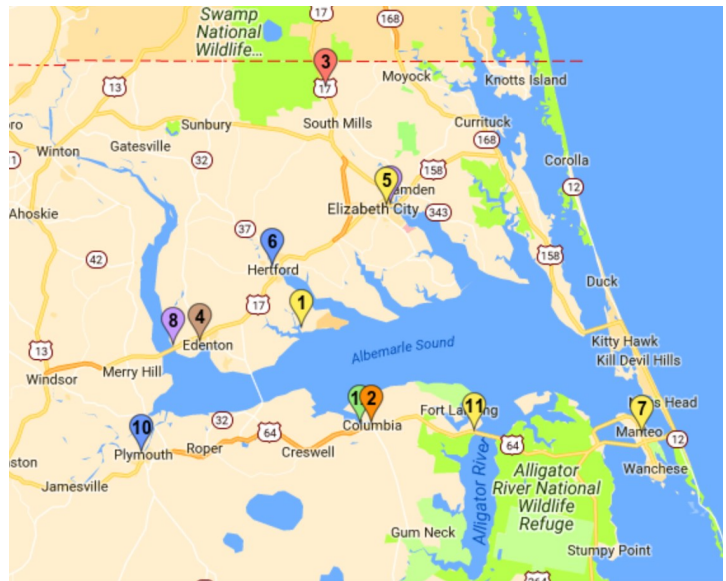
Vince Travato

Part Two will be in the September's Semaphore.

Albemarle Loop

We are hoping to leave Monday the 14th and take 3 days to get up to the Albemarle Bay. From there we plan on stopping at Columbia Municipal Marina, Mackey's Marina, Edenton Harbor, Albemarle Plantation, and Elizabeth City Marina. Each of these marinas offer 48 hours free dockage and have restaurants and some museums to visit.

I am hoping to finish the loop at Shallowbag Bay Marina, which is not free but is in the town of Manteo. There is also the possibility of going through the Dismal Swamp from Elizabeth City if you are so inclined. Please let me know if you are interested and thinking about it. Peter Clay (419) 260- 4781



Member Marinas

Free slips and other offers

[Albemarle Plantation](#) / free slips/fuel available

[Columbia](#) / free slips

[Edenton](#) / free slips

[Mackey's Marina](#) / free slips/fuel available

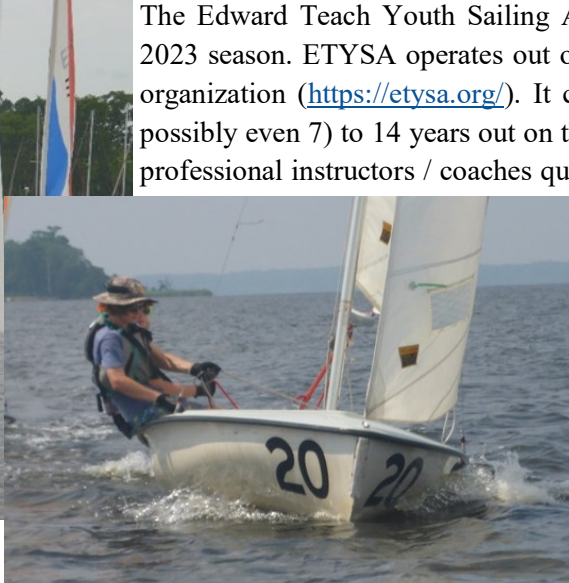
[Elizabeth City Mariner's Wharf](#) / free slips

Gateway Marinas

Please patronize our Gateway marinas. They don't offer free slips, but they do offer competitive rates and valuable services, and they sponsor and help make possible the Albemarle Loop.

[Dismal Swamp](#)
[Shallowbag Bay fuel available](#)
[Waterside](#)

The Edward Teach Youth Sailing Association (ETYSA) 2023



The Edward Teach Youth Sailing Association is in full swing for the 2023 season. ETYSA operates out of Blackbeard but is an independent organization (<https://etya.org/>). It caters for children aged from 8 (or possibly even 7) to 14 years out on the water learning to sail. They have professional instructors / coaches qualified through US Sailing / USCG.

In addition, there are counselors who assist and help the coaches. The counselors are somewhat older and experienced sailors. There are also a number of FHYC members who act as volunteers, both ashore or in safety boats. It is wonderful to see young people go from novices to sailors who are on the water. After a week or so,

confident with boat handling skills they are true “water babies” confident in the water, whether their boats are righted or capsized. When it gets hot as it does in July, the cry becomes can we capsize please?

The youngest sail on Optimist dinghies although they



are soon wanting to graduate to Topazes. The older (and heavier) kids sail on 420's which are serious racing boats. If you are looking for something for your children or grandchildren to do next summer, you should seriously consider ETYSA.



*Olwen Jarvis, Past Commodore
Ritchie Thomson, Past Commodore*

A Message to All FHYC Members

The upper reaches of North West Creek are the breeding ground for fish, birds and animals. The banks of the creek are vulnerable and are eroding. One of the causes of this erosion is watercraft travelling up the creek at speed and producing large wakes.



Baby birds along the bank

Please be aware of what is happening and take care of the Natural World around you.

Thank You.



Otters relaxing