

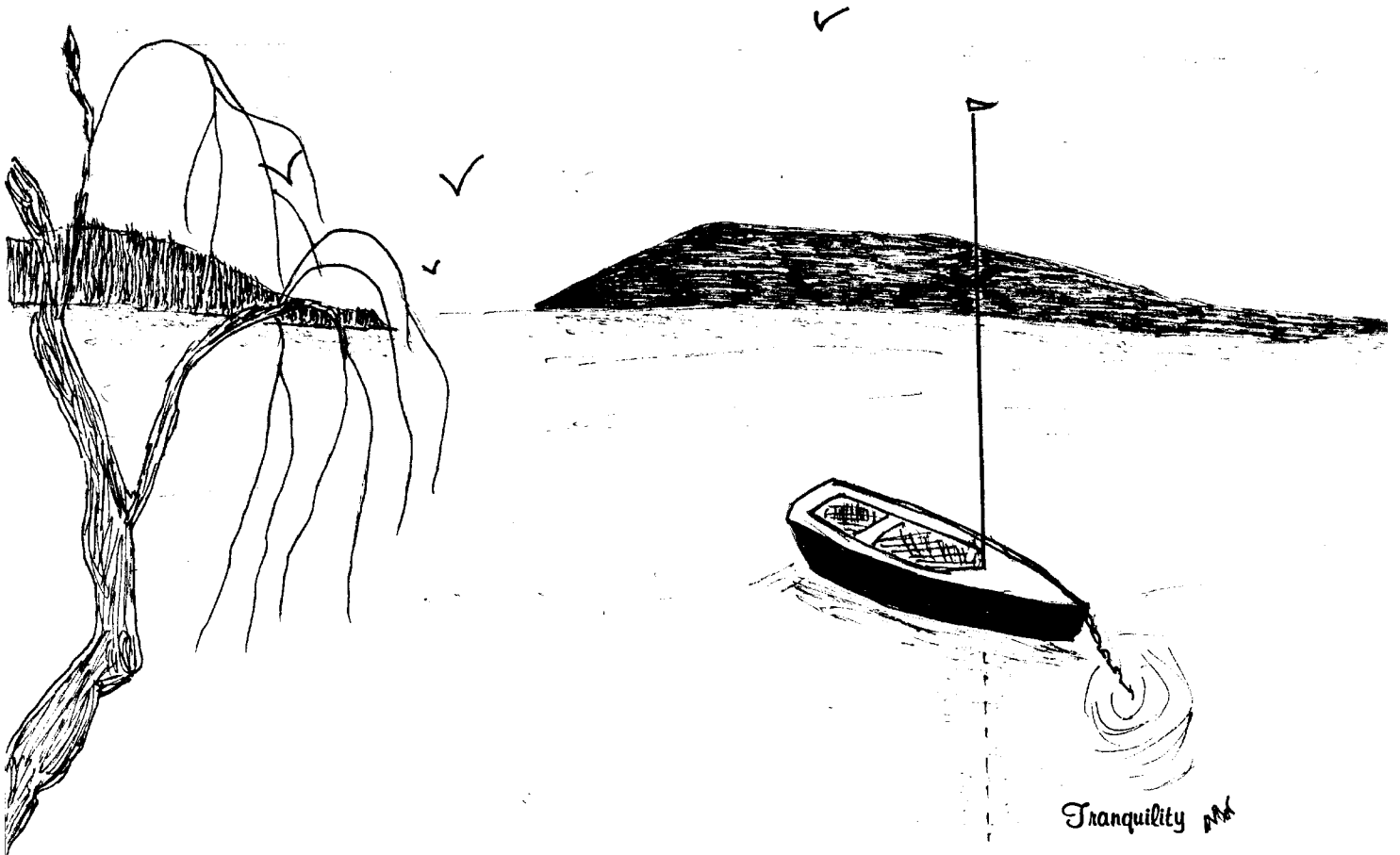
Toronto Hydroplane and Sailing Club  
20 Ashbridge's Bay Park Road  
Toronto, Ontario  
M4L 3W6  
Phone: 694-6918

Editor: Richard Taylor  
51 Brigadoon Cres.  
Agincourt, Ontario  
M1T 3C2  
Phone: 293-4340

# SPAR AND PROP

FEBRUARY, 2006

NUMBER 173



*Tranquility M.M.*

Drawing by  
*Marie Middleton*





## Toronto Hydroplane and Sailing Club Executive Board

COMMODORE

**Lee Rixon**

(416) 724-5281

e-mail: lrixon@rogers.com

PAST COMMODORE

**Keith Willson**

(416) 759-1846

e-mail: kwillson@sympatico.ca

VICE COMMODORE

**Marilyn Goodman**

(416) 429-2598

e-mail: shandy@colosseum.com

REAR COMMODORE

**Mona Anderson**

(416) 686-0734

e-mail: jim.mona@sympatico.ca

HARBOUR MASTER

**Ross Campbell**

(416) 249-4095

e-mail: rcam@rogers.blackberry.net

PROPERTY MANAGER

**Dennis MacCallum**

(905) 770-3125

e-mail: MACCALDE@mpac.ca

TREASURER

**Mike Baker**

(416) 481-5461

e-mail: thebakers@sympatico.ca

SECRETARY

**Eva Baker**

(416) 481-5461

e-mail: thebakers@sympatico.ca

RACING FLEET CAPTAIN

**John Morris**

(416) 963-3222

e-mail: john@markovichpr.ca

RACE COMMITTEE CHAIR

**Lorne Vineberg**

(416) 928-3455

e-mail: thewordworks@tcn.net

CRUISING FLEET CAPTAIN

**Chris Hanson**

(416) 423-0845

e-mail: lothlorien.cs27@sympatico.ca

WAYS AND MEANS

**Patrick Lyons**

(416) 438-1716

e-mail: waysandmeans@thsc.ca

SOCIAL CHAIRPERSON

**Melinda Ramsay**

(416) 992-0999

RECIPROCALLS OFFICER

**Peter Martyn**

(416) 822-4345

e-mail: pmartyn@world.oberlin.edu

TH&SC Website—[www.thsc.ca](http://www.thsc.ca)

# Calendar

**Games Night—February**—Date to be confirmed.

**Friends of the Balcony Meeting—Wednesday, March 1**—Come and see what our new balcony will look like. See Jamie's story on page 3.

**Racer's Meeting—Sunday, March 12**—All you racers will be there for sure. But everyone is welcome to see what is planned for this season on the race course. There's no obligation, so all you non-racers come out and see what it's all about.

**Weather Workshop—Sunday, March 19**—Weather maven Ron Bianchi is coming to show us what all those weather symbols mean. Lots of info about our fickle winds.

**Easter Parade—Sunday, April 16**—Participate in the largest Easter Parade. See it from the inside. The kids love marching. We always have a great time. Contact Vice-Commodore Marilyn Goodman for details.

**LAUNCH DAY—Saturday, May 6**—Before you know it we'll be rushing to complete our preparations for putting the boat in the water. Plan your list now.

**Measuring Day—Saturday, May 20**—All racers must have their sails measured. This will confirm your handicap so let's get it done. There is no cost to the racers. Even if you're not racing until later in the season, get measured now.

**Ice Breaker—Sunday, May 21**—This is our first long-distance race of the season. New Race Captain, new Rear Commodore. Come out and see what kind of course they will give us.

**First Rookie Race Night—Friday, June 2**—First in a series of every other Friday night races for beginners. Lots of help, lots of information on how to race, how to have fun and how racing improves your sailing skills.

**First Club Cruise—Sat. and Sun. June 3 & 4**—Lakeshore YC (subject to confirmation. Destinations are being confirmed now. Cruisers have a great time. A destination, good company, delightful location. Details will follow.

**SAIL PAST—Saturday, June 10**—Our biggest event of the year. Get your tickets at Launch Day. Plan for a great day with all your friends.

**Bluffers Park Cruise—Sat. and Sun. June 24 & 25**—Subject to confirmation.

**Port Credit YC Cruise—Sat. to Mon. July 1 to 3**—This cruise has been confirmed.

**Frenchman's Bay YC—July 15 & 16**—Subject to confirmation.

**Mimico CC—August 19 & 20**—Subject to confirmation.

**Etobicoke YC—September 8 & 9**—Subject to confirmation.

## INTERPRETING WEATHER INFO

Ever wonder  
what all those  
symbols on a  
weather map  
mean?

Meteorologist and sailor,  
**Ron Bianchi** will be on hand to help us  
interpret weather sites source information.

**Sunday, March 19th 2:00pm**

# COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

Lee Rixon

I'D LIKE TO OPEN BY WISHING you all a belated Happy New Year and great sailing for 2006.

I've heard from a number of people that the New Year's Levee went extremely well, and I was sorry to miss it, but would like to extend a hearty thanks to everyone that worked so hard to make it a success. Sometimes we all forget that all of our events are being planned and executed by a very dedicated group of volunteers, and without them TH&SC would be a lot less than it is today.

This year promises to be exciting. We have a number of facilities projects on the go, including window replacement in the clubhouse, and the construction of the balcony to mention just two. Hopefully, the docks will make it through the winter without any ice damage, and we can focus on improvements to our club, rather than cold and wet dock repairs. Everyone keep your fingers crossed!

As well as the facilities projects, the social and sailing front is a hive of activity. Mona will be updating you on the progress there as we go along, but I have every confidence that as long as the weather gods smile on us, it will be a fun-filled year.

Just to keep you abreast of the lease situation, the information at the last Council of Commodores meeting just before Christmas was that progress was slow. Island Yacht Club has their lease signed, as they regarded it as a pre-requisite to them beginning their re-building program, but there were no hard confirmations of any other signings. My understanding is that the terms and conditions are pretty much completed, that Council has approved these and all that is remaining is a final run through by the City's lawyers. I can tell you that the lease document itself is very complex, so that might explain some of the delays. I'm sure that we will all feel better once the paperwork is completed.

I also attended a kick-off meeting regarding improvement of water quality in the Coatsworth Cut. There isn't too much to report on that at this point, as it is very early days in the study. I'll keep you informed of any developments as they happen. Right now, all that has been done is initiate a study to look at potential ways to improve quality, so it may be quite a while before there is anything concrete to talk about, never mind a water quality improvement.

In closing, I'm looking forward to a great 2006. ▲

## VICE COMMODORE

Marilyn Goodman

THE 2006 INVOICES have been mailed, so please let me know if you have not received yours, or if there is an error. Once again—a request to please send in your 2006 Fees to reach Bill Appleton no later than February 28, 2006—and avoid late fees. It really is a good idea to post-date your cheque for February 28th and send it in early.

We are pleased to welcome two Junior Members to our Club, Amelia and Will Morris who have been sailing with their Dad, John, on his Thunderbird *Rockit*.

Also—we welcome new Member John Stevenson and his wife Diane who join us from the Aquatic Park Sailing Club and will bring in their C&C 29 after launch day.

It's good to know Spring is not too far away, and we are already looking forward to the Easter Parade being held this year on Sunday, April 16th. As always, TH&SC will have one of our sailboats being trailered as our Float and we are looking for children and walkers to come along too to help promote our wonderful Club—and more important—to hand out candy. This year we will also have a pink bunny walking along with us too.

This is a fun day regardless of the weather so please consider joining us for the Parade.

Please send me an email at [shandy@colosseum.com](mailto:shandy@colosseum.com) if you would like to participate. ▲

**Showing the TH&SC burgee at Sophor's Hole, Tortola—January 2006**



## BALCONY UPDATE

by Jamie Smallwood

THE FOOTINGS ARE IN, the plans are complete, and the building permit has been applied for, and Spring is just around the corner. We are ready to build! Build it and they will come.

A new balcony addition to the clubhouse has been in the "figment of the imagination" stage for several years. Thanks to Dennis MacCallum for getting the process going. I have been working with Tony Resendes on the drawings and the details. It is going to be a very exciting project for the club, and true to our nature, we are going to be doing it ourselves.

A project of this nature will need some preplanning. We only have a limited number of weekends, and a only a certain amount of manpower to accomplish it. The actual hammering and sawing is only a part of it. We need a lot of people involved in other areas such as purchasing, acquiring materials, and delegation. Please get involved.

A "Friends of the Balcony" meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 1 at 7:00 p.m. This preliminary meeting is for anyone interested in the project. A set of drawings will be on the bulletin board if you would like to examine them before coming to the meeting. ▲

### E-mail from the Bitter End YC

Hello,

Thanks for being our guest this morning! Hopefully you found some calmer winds for a portion of your visit.

It was a pleasure to speak to you and your friends! If I can ever be of service email me directly. We would be please to assist in planning a group or flotilla from your sailing club should they ever gather in our area.

Your frequent annual patronage is appreciated by your friends and family here at Bitter End.

Regards,  
Stephen Kappeler, CHA  
General Manager-Director of  
Marketing & Sales  
Bitter End Yacht Club  
Virgin Gorda, British Virgin Islands  
[Skappeler@beyc.com](mailto:Skappeler@beyc.com)  
[www.beyc.com](http://www.beyc.com)

## THE LAST PIECE

by Ken Deas

ORIGINALLY I WROTE this piece sometime in October, to be my last contribution to Spar and Prop as Rear Commodore. But things went terribly wrong. Our move out west included our computers that held my ramblings and while the computers went with Jesse and me in the van, we never got it plugged in until too late for print.

I referred to our racing program and how disappointed I was that I was not able to increase participation in it significantly, although I do take some credit for the absence of one racer. Now you have new life and I have read Mona's very sensible blueprint for the racing program and urge anyone who wants to hone their sailing skills to investigate, participate, and elevate your abilities—join the group, you won't be sorry.

To build within the club is a great idea. At our Challenge last year even the Vikings didn't show in spite of the fact that we changed the date for them.

I want to thank the guys that made the mid-week races possible: Lorne Vineberg and Tom Monson, and of course, the hamburger guy, George Black.

The most notable event during my RC term was *Head Office* winning the 3000. Congrats to Tony Cahill, Kerry Cahill, Tom Kara and the driver, Jim Holton.

I have to mention Liz and Chris Hanson for the terrific job they did for the cruisers—like the battery character, they just keep on going and going—makes for a tough act to follow.

Lindy and I joined the club in 1978, our first boat was a modified Lightning, a Georgian 19. A Lightning with a cuddly cabin, which we dry-sailed along with some 30 to 40 other drysail boats. Lindy was walking then and we sailed together regularly. Our next boat, the *Bijou*, we bought from John Morris, and then later sold it to Dan and Donna Demers, and today the *Bijou* is still in the club. Our first *Keldy* we bought from Stan and Teddy Ross. They had it stored in a field north of Markham when I took Lindy to look at it, sitting alone way out in the middle of the field. Lindy was not wildly impressed, all I could muster at the time was that we know it doesn't leak. When Lindy asked how I was so sure, I had to tell her, because it's full of water!

We have been members for 27 years, more than a third of our lives. I have been on the executive and appreciate how much time it takes and how much work can sometimes be

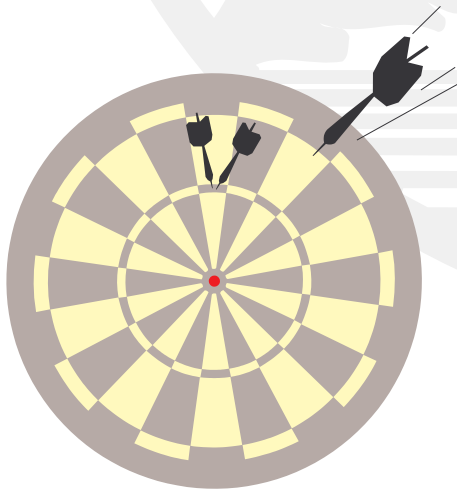
involved. As a member I asked questions of the executive and was called a s—t disturber. If you are too passionate about something, that's often what you get called. Anyway, the club has afforded me many good times and good memories. In spite of the odd s—t disturber.

Lou & (chili) Marg Lalonde, Greg Smith, Paavo Lindström, Jamie & Sheila, Robert McCoombs, June and Jeff Ante, Earl McCoy, Jim Samuels, Chris Comerford, Jack Hexham, Marilyn Goodman, Keith & Joan, Don Preece, Stan and Teddy Ross, Jack Kennedy, Doug Wright, Bill & Marie Middleton, George Black & Barb, Dorothy, Ted & Dawn, Rich Taylor, Tony Salmond, Colin Harvey, Colin McCracken, Gabe & Alex, James Holton and his Mom and Dad, Mona and Jim, Rubber Boat Bill, "Rosita", Bobby Wilson, Jim Eagan, JoAnne and Larry, Mikey & Patti, Ross Campbell, Dell Schinkopf, Luis Raposa, Johnnie O'Shea, the Demers family, Dave Coley, Bill Lyons, Geoff Craigen, Lee Rixon, Don Bland, Heidi & James, Jim Conners, Phil Delahaye, Jurek Ladziak, (M&M) Max and Mel, George Martin, Chris "fastest mast in the west" Sorely, Clara McDaniel, John and Sue Soltys, two more Dee people, Richard and Tony and Agnes with the big big boat are some of the people I will remember well, and smile. ▲

**Where is everyone? The turnout for darts on Friday evenings is pretty sparse. You don't have to play darts. There is the pool table on the 2nd floor, along with the shuffleboard table. Then**

**there are also lots of tables available to play cards, do crafts (lots of room to spread out) or anything else that meets your fancy. Come down at any time, but the darts players usually get there around 7. You don't have to own darts to play darts. We can lend you some to have some fun. There is no inter-club**

**league this year so we will be there every Friday evening. Come down and see what it's all about.**



*To the Executive Board and Members of  
Toronto Hydroplane and Sailing Club*

*Thank you so much for your concern for me and for the card and handsome basket of flowers. The basket reminded me of a boat and the nesting ribbon looked a bit like a spinnaker.*

*I am now in Rehab at the Cabrle Trafalgar hospital. I get intensive therapy twice a day and they are very capable here. I am working on standing up, pushing steps and keeping his balance, and my left arm is responding well to therapy.*

*How fast and how far I get my right hand back remains to be seen, but so far the results seem promising.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*John Goba*

John Goba is recovering nicely from a stroke. Get well soon, John.

## REAR COMMODORE

Mona Anderson

HI EVERYONE, and Happy New Year. Well ... I'm no longer "Acting". I'm the real Rear Curmudgeon now. And I have to tell you how pleased I am that so many good folks came forward, immediately, to help out—Chris Hanson & Elizabeth Marin, John Morris, Rick Lalonde, Lorne Vineberg and the Buoy Boys, Jim Anderson, Melinda Ramsay, Ted Martin, Peter Martyn, Don Bland, Donald Preese ... gee, I could just stick the membership list in here. Anyway, we've got a good jump on planning for the season with lots of great ideas already in the mix.

In February, the Race Planning Team is meeting to put the final program together for the year. The Social Committee is also meeting shortly to fill out plans for the spring events. We have some traditional events in the schedule along with a few new things that we hope will catch everyone's interest. The annual Events Calendar will be ready by launch but in the meantime, here are some dates to watch for.

**February Games Night**—date to be confirmed

March 12—**Full On Racers Meeting**

March 19—**Weather Workshop**—with Ron Bianchi from The Weather Network—to be confirmed

April 16—**Easter Parade**—Starring Richard Coutts as the Easter Bunny

May 6—**Launch Day**—HOORAY

May 17—**Warm Up Race**—beginning of Wednesday Night Races

May 20—**Measuring In Day**—All Racers

May 21—**Ice Breaker**—First long distance race

June 2—**First Rookie Race night**—beginning of every other Friday Night Races

June 3—**First Club Cruise**

June 10—**Sail Past**

We have planned the cruises and weekend races carefully so there are no overlaps, as we know that some of our racers are avid cruisers (and AC/DC). And, in honour of this, we are working on a new two-day event to bring the fleets together (date yet to be confirmed) with both fleets travelling together to Frenchman's Bay. Racers racing and cruisers cruising and everyone staying over for a party at the destination with a race/cruise back to homeport the next day. This combined event will count in both fleets' overall season score for trophies and flags.

Speaking of trophies, there will be Series Trophies this year for the Wednesday night racers, a Rookie of the Year trophy for the Friday night novice sailors, and the splendid new Cruiser of the Year trophy will be back up for grabs.

NOTE: Notice of Race and Registration Form was included in your membership package. Please be sure to submit your Registration Form—even if you're not sure of all the details—either send it back with your membership fees, or leave it in the drop box at the bulletin board.

NOTE NOTE: If you can't make measuring-in day (May 20) for some pressing reason, we will measure you another day. Please be reminded this is most important, as everyone is required to carry a 2006 PHRF Certificate to race this year.

I wish everyone a splendid 2006 Sailing Season. ▲

## TREASURER

Mike Baker

THE NEW YEAR came in as usual with a loud bang and now we are already in the countdown of only three more months to sailing season. Am I glad we don't live in Greenland!

By now you will have received your invoices for your 2006 fees, which, you may note, have not increased this year. Also, you will be glad to hear that this year, for the first time, your payments will be due later (by February 28th). Please mark this date on your calendar—come March 1st, the receipt of any late cheques will result in the burden of having to cough up an extra 10% of your total bill. No exceptions!

Your cheque can be sent either to Bill Appleton, our Accounts Receivable Officer—but it must be received by him no later than February 28th (franked and dated envelopes do not qualify). Alternatively, your cheque can be dropped off at the Clubhouse mail box where the deadline collection will take place on that day in the evening. Anything thereafter .... sorry folks!!!

Also, let's put our efforts together again this year in helping to construct our balcony, putting up our newly purchased canopies, etc.—all to help improve our premises and to provide enjoyment for you during the sailing season.

But let's not forget the everyday wear and tear and constant maintenance of the yard, BBQ area, docks, club house, etc. etc.—call Patrick Lyons, our Ways & Means Chair—don't wait until he calls you—and arrange with him your work days and listing your special skills! That way you can get to do what you prefer to do. No, I do not mean parties and beer!!!

Let's all enjoy a great summer and sailing season and try to make it the best one ever. ▲

### A swell overtaking *Veleda*



### OOPS!!! Can you spot the difference?



## AROUND THE CANS

by Mona Anderson

### Who is Dennis Conner?

WITH THE POSSIBLE exception of Christopher Columbus, Dennis Conner may very well be the most famous sailor who ever lived. He brought sailboat racing to the world stage in a spectacle unmatched in any other sporting arena.

In 1851, a boat named *America* won the 100 Guinea Cup, given to the winner of a race around the Isle of Wight. The winners, members of the New York Yacht Club, donated the trophy to their Club to be held as a 'challenge' trophy. Thus was born the *America's Cup*, named after the boat, not the country. In Dennis Conner's era, the *America's Cup* leapt from the stronghold of NYYC to the field of maxi boats and maxi million dollar campaigns that changed the face of sailboat racing forever. How did one man do that? He lost the Cup ... and then he won it back. I met Dennis Conner at the 2006 Toronto International Boat Show. He was nothing and everything that I expected.

First, consider some of Dennis' accomplishments:

- Won 4 *America's Cups*
- Won a Bronze medal in the 1976 Olympics
- Held Trans-Atlantic and Newport-to-Ensenada elapsed time records
- 2 Star World's
- 4 Southern Ocean Racing Conferences
- 2 Congressional Cups
- 2 Etchell World's (still ranked No. 1 Internationally)
- 2 Whitbread Round the World races
- Twice a member of the U.S. Admiral's Cup team

He came to Toronto to speak on racing, his topic titled "The Art of Winning: Dennis Conner's World of Sailing". He didn't talk much about the art part but we did get a glimpse of how Dennis sees the world of sailing, and we got a glimpse of the man behind the legendary name.

Jim and I went early to make sure we could get a seat. Dennis was early

too, sitting at a picnic table at Henry's, pretty much by himself except for the man across from him who he introduced as Tony, his agent, and a New Zealand couple at the opposite end of the table trying to engage him in conversation about wool.

Now I'm not one to collect autographs, or gush over famous people just to say I met them. But I am a friend and great fan of Derek Hatfield. Derek was also at the Boat Show raising money for his 2006 Around Alone campaign. Derek and Dennis have never met. The idea of Dennis dropping by Derek's booth appealed to all of us so I said, "Anything's possible—you don't have to be a big person to accomplish big things." (a Derekism). So with purpose in mind (and before my resolve failed me) didn't I get up from my seat and walk straight over to where Dennis was seated.

He turned as I approached, stuck out a hand the size of a catcher's mitt and said "I'm Dennis." I took his hand and said, "I know. I'm Mona." (Gees – what an opener). I slid onto the bench beside him. Dennis Conner is a mountain of a man. Dressed in worn navy pants and blazer, knitted navy vest over white shirt and perfectly knotted tie, his equally worn navy sailor's cap had a small hole in the side where the red lining peeked through. It looked oddly like a bullet wound. He presented a formidable sight, a battle weary warrior, seated on a park bench. And there was I, like a mouse in the lion's den, staring into his foggy, blood shot eyes, and his face of weathered leather, trying to remember why I had come. He grumbled about the sorry fish and chips he just ate, and the outrageous price he had to pay for a Coke. I said something about what a great thing it was he had come to the Toronto Boat Show. "Why wouldn't I come?" he answered. "Do you know how much they're paying me?" Then he waved it off, "Ahh, nobody came to listen to me anyway."

I struggled along trying to make conversation while he grunted and gnarled in response. I got in a few words on Derek's behalf but Dennis wasn't interested. "A person would have to be crazy to sail around the world alone," he said. I asked him if

he'd come back to Toronto to race Etchells this summer (his favourite boat) but he said he was going to the Med for the *America's Cup*. Now that threw me off because I know it isn't this year. But I was getting rattled by all of this barking and growling, meant no doubt to scare me off and leave him in peace. Then he added, "You Canadians are pretty slow aren't you." I looked to Tony the agent for assistance—no help there. He just looked on with a sort of bemused disinterest—the watchdog—making sure no harm came to Dennis.

Jim came to my rescue taking a seat next to Tony the agent. The folks at the end of the table said their goodbyes. We exchanged a few more words but Dennis was clearly restless and needed space. Then he said, "Well, do you want a picture? Where's your camera?" I pointed to Jim. "Alright," says DC, "Sit here on my knee." Now, I'm hardly a girl anymore, and I've not sat on a man's knee for a very long time to have my picture taken. But I started this so I was hardly in a position to object. "Put your arm around me now" he said. "Smile for the camera."

Dennis and Mona—  
2006 Boat Show



6:00 PM at the Boat House—excellent seats centre stage. Dennis was already there. Hans Fogh was also there. The seats filled in to the top row—perhaps as many as 250 people. What on earth was going to happen next? Dennis took the stage without introduction or fanfare, and as if someone flipped a switch, he came to life. For an hour we sat in silence, captivated by this unusual story of DC, his *America's Cup* career, the "Come Back Kid", how he viewed what happened; the winning, the losing, the campaigns, the politics, and what you can buy if you have enough money. What touched me most about this session was how honest Dennis was about the events of his career. He

## Around the Cans...

Continued from page 6

opened with a warm introduction for Hans Fogh, with an impressive listing of his Olympic and World titles, and he included Hans generously in his dissertation, checking dates, and conferring on points for accuracy. He spoke with a poignant sense of humour, a story that haunted him, how he was banished from the New York Yacht Club and returned to his home in San Diego in shame and defeat. He won the America's Cup 4 times, but what people remembered was that he lost it twice. He stood with his hands in his pockets on a simple wooden platform with no notes, and no props, and just talked to us.

As we discussed with Hans Fogh later, what is so remarkable about the Dennis Conner saga is that he mustered the entire *Stars & Stripes* campaign himself. He raised the money, built the boats, hired the crew, and skippered the boats to victory. He had no billionaire's bankroll. There is no prize money. Among today's contenders, the Aussies, the Kiwis, the Swiss, the Italians, and (of course) the Americans, all after this most famous of all sailing trophies, no one has the pressure, or immense responsibility that he bore. The billionaires (Dennis refers to them as the "Bs") have taken over the challenge, a new game to play with multi-million dollar toys, and like most things, if you throw enough money at it you'll win. Gone are the days of country against country as when Dennis (and Canada) competed. He mentioned Canada's campaign too and how we did not embarrass ourselves. Nowadays the "Bs" buy whatever they need to win, the best crew, the best equipment, and off they go. Larry Ellison (Oracle Software) bought a yacht club from which to run his campaign. Russell Coutts and Brad Butterworth, heroes of New Zealand, sold out to the Swiss, but now due to irreconcilable differences Russell is not even in the game. He is off the Swiss Alinghi team.

Dennis spoke about sailing today, a sport still thriving in Europe but fading in North America. He believes it's due to too many distractions, so many other things for people to be interested in. In his youth, there were only a few sports to become involved in. He said too that sailing requires tremendous discipline and focus. Sailing requires a huge time commitment, far more time

than money. It's the time commitment that people seem unwilling to make.

He touched on other venues, the Volvo Cup for instance currently underway, where he has a huge interest. His concerns are shared by many; the fragile hi-tech boats, the incredible speeds of which they are capable and the fearless young crews who sail them. Dennis sailed ocean races more than a few times, not something he enjoyed, the disagreeable living conditions, wet bunks, icebergs, pounding across the vicious southern oceans—not a venue he would campaign again. He said he wouldn't want the responsibility of such a venture, or the possibility of having to phone some poor mother to tell her little Hansie wouldn't be coming home anymore. These days he is content to race Etchells against sailors like Hans Fogh and Dirk Kneulman (Ontario Yachts).

Here were words and opinions from a man of the world who took the harder road, a man who earned his own way, and fought for things like glory and honour. This is the Dennis I hoped to meet, the man who understands boats, racing, and sailors on a global level; how campaigns are won and lost and why, and what's important in this splendid sport that is filled with so much romance, fiction, politics, and hype.

He said in his opening remarks he was surprised so many people came to hear him speak. Now on the downside of his famous career, visibly worn by competition, no longer with the resources, or desire to mount another campaign, perhaps embittered by the blows that have fallen on his head, still he said that he would rather be a "has been" than a "never was".

Dennis is going to "The Med" this summer, to watch the pre-America's Cup races in preparation for the main event in 2007, and to race his own boat, *Cotton Blossom II*, in a vintage racer series. Dennis' interest in classic wooden boats was piqued by Prince Albert of Monaco. DC acquired *Cotton Blossom* in 2003, passed down from a long line of illustrious owners. Dennis and his team of dedicated artisans restored her with such painstaking care and attention to detail that their effort was recently lauded on the floor of the U.S. Congress. Dennis, three-time U.S. and seven-time San Diego Yachtsman

of the Year, personally oversaw the 17-month restoration, using the original plans obtained from the maritime museum in Oslo, Norway.

And what of the meeting with Derek Hatfield? Well, we left that in the more capable hands of Hans Fogh. Hans would later take Dennis on a tour of the boat show and drop by

Dennis Conner on *Stars & Stripes*

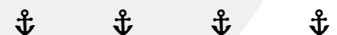


## FLOTSAM & JETSAM Shadow

### THE END

A lot of people have been waiting for this page. See <http://www.shibumi.org/eoti.htm>

Editor's e-mail address is  
**rwt@total.net**



The Deadline for the  
APRIL issue of  
Spar & Prop is  
**March 31st**



Spar and Prop is available in  
PDF format, readable on a  
computer in colour with  
Adobe Acrobat Reader.  
Available from our website.

Website address is  
**www.thsc.ca**

# BUT, HEY!!! ...THAT'S THE ADVENTURE

by Eric Muff

WELL, DAMN MY TIRED, old eyes if I haven't done it again. Just as we were on the last leg of our South American Odyssey something seems to have snapped and I put the wheel hard over and headed for my beloved islands.

In retrospect, it's probably my insatiable desire to escape the hypocrisy of what you alleged Christians call "The Season To Be Jolly". Bah! Humbug!

Whatever.

This little escape sailed out of the Port of New York on the 18th of December '05 and returned on the 29th.

Due to the fact that the ravages of senility have turned muscle tone into last night's Jello, I asked my grandson if he would like to come along to share the pleasure of my company and I to share the pleasure of his youth. (I assure you Garry will read something into that last statement.)

However, it was not to be.

We had decided, after we had paid for the cruise, that we would take the train to the Big A.

Lo, and behold, at the last minute he decides he is going to fly to New York.

Now, it is common knowledge that I am President and Founder of the Acrophobiacs Association. (Shit, being four foot eight makes me nauseous.)

So there we are. He's flying, I'm on my way to the station with a bag full of anvils and bowling balls.

But, hey!!!...that's the adventure.

In the "good old days" you could check you baggage through to your destination and alleviate all the bull-gutting. Not now. Double the price and half the service. As the cigarette ads used to say, "We've come a long way, baby".

They've even taken the lockers out of Union Station. Here we go again, following the lead of the panic-stricken semis. Who would want to blow this shit-pit up?

But I digress.

This cruise sails from the Port of New York. The first stop being St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Regardé the attached itinerary.

The line, Norwegian. The ship,

## COMBINED ITINERARY

Date	Day	Facilities/Day	Arrival	Depart	Notes
12/18	Tue	NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK	06:00	18:00	
12/19	Wed	AT SEA	06:00	18:00	
12/20	Thu	ST. THOMAS	06:00	18:00	
12/21	Fri	ST. THOMAS, UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS	06:00	18:00	11:00 AM
12/22	Sat	ST. JOHN, VIRGINIA	06:00	18:00	07:00 AM
12/23	Sun	ST. JOHN, VIRGINIA	06:00	18:00	07:00 AM
12/24	Mon	ST. JOHN, VIRGINIA	06:00	18:00	07:00 AM
12/25	Tue	ST. JOHN, VIRGINIA	06:00	18:00	07:00 AM
12/26	Wed	ST. JOHN, VIRGINIA	06:00	18:00	07:00 AM
12/27	Thu	ST. JOHN, VIRGINIA	06:00	18:00	07:00 AM
12/28	Fri	ST. JOHN, VIRGINIA	06:00	18:00	07:00 AM
12/29	Sat	ST. JOHN, VIRGINIA	06:00	18:00	07:00 AM
12/30	Sun	ST. JOHN, VIRGINIA	06:00	18:00	07:00 AM
12/31	Mon	ST. JOHN, VIRGINIA	06:00	18:00	07:00 AM
12/31	Tue	ST. JOHN, VIRGINIA	06:00	18:00	07:00 AM

Norwegian Spirit. I have traveled with Norwegian before, but not since they adopted "freestyle cruising".

This, no doubt, is to entice the rabble into the cruising life, the ill-bred who do not dress for dinner. And they have succeeded. Gone is the elegance of yesteryear.

But I am slipping again into digression. Forgive.

While I am in a state of digression and before I regale you with the romance of the Islands, let me tell you of our accommodations in the "City That Never Sleeps".

The chap who sold my grandson his flight ticket told him he should book a room in advance, due to the holidays, etc. So he recommended a spot on West 46th (which is a good location, Times Square, Madison Square, Penn Station, *et al*) so he books it. He flew, so naturally he is there before me.

I arrive at 9:30 p.m. Is he there to help poor, old, tired grampa with his bags? Not bloody likely!

I *finally* get a cab (Madison Square Garden is letting out and cabs are at a premium). Is he there to greet poor, old, tired grampa? Not bloody likely!

I try to check in. The lout on the desk tells me my grandson is out and he has the key. "So give me another one." There is only *one*. "What kind of shit is this?", I shriek. It's been a long day and I am teetering on the brink of homicidal mania.

"I will get the housekeeping key and let you in."

"I'm going out to eat, then what?"

"I'll let you in with the housekeeping key."

"Why can't I have the housekeeping key?"

"We don't do that."

Take a deep breath, and count up to six million.

I shant describe the room to you or I will lapse into a state of manic depression. Suffice it to say I didn't stay there on the way home.

But, hey!!!...that's the adventure.

And now for something completely different.

Gerry, for your book of useless information.

*Norwegian Spirit*, nee *Superstar Leo* was built under the new building #S646 in the shipyard of Jos. L. Meyer and Company in Papenburg, Germany on the Ems River in Northern Germany. Keel

laying 5 October 1996, delivery 25 September 1998.

Length overall—880 feet

Beam—106 feet

Draught—26 feet

Engines—main diesel

Max. speed—24 knots

Passengers—1,966 (double occupancy)

Crew—975

Tonnage (gross)—77,000

Sunday 18 December 2005, partly cloudy, 39°F (no snow in N.Y.) We slip about 4:30 p.m. for two fun-filled days at sea before reaching our first port-of-call, beautiful downtown Charlotte Amalie, Capitol of St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands.

I have been here on other occasions. One of the better duty-free ports of the Caribbean. My favourite pastime is to go to the top of the mountain overlooking Magen's Bay, sit in "Drake's Seat" and guzzle Banana Daiquiris.



Drake's Seat is a stone bench where Sir Francis used to sit and keep an eye out for enemy shipping. I doubt if Frank drank daiquiris but I'm bloody sure he drank summat.

History tells us that the U.S. Virgin Islands where inhabited nearly 3000 years before Columbus. The original settlers being Ciboney Indians who came from the Amazon in South America. They were followed by the peaceful Arawaks from Venezuela.

Columbus first anchored off the coast of St. Croix in 1493 and named the islands in honour of St. Ursula and the 11,000 virgins who in legend were martyred in battle with a pagan ruler in the fourth century. After changing hands with Spain, Malta, France, Britain, Holland and Denmark, the Danes administered stability for nearly 250 years. The Danes sold the islands

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## But, Hey!!!...

Continued from page 8

to the U.S. in 1917 for 25 million in gold bullion. In 1960, when the U.S. issued sanctions against Cuba the U.S. Virgins became a popular destination for tourism and has really boomed.

MUFF, ERIC

Stateroom 3555

*Captain Gunnar Hamnerin and I would like to invite you to attend the Latitudes Cocktail Party. Please accept and wear your Latitudes pin as a symbol of your loyalty to Norwegian Cruise Line. At the party you will have the opportunity to meet some of our Senior Officers, Department Heads, and fellow Latitudes members. We look forward to seeing you!*

There is still an old Danish fort in Charlotte Amalie, but it is in a sad state of affairs. They were renovating it while we were there.

St. Thomas covers only 32 square miles and is quite hilly. Crown Mountain at 1,550 feet and Signal Hill are the two highest points.

2.6 million visitors come to St. Thomas annually. The people of St. Thomas are from every island in the Caribbean: Dominicans, Haitians, Puerto Ricans, Trinidadians, Jamaicans and Bajuns.

Last time I was here we tied up at Havensight Mall, this time we were at Crown Bay. Opposite ends of town.

Bought some 100 proof Southern Comfort for nickels and dimes.

Temperature in St. Thomas 86°F. A little better than 39°, eh?

We sailed in the night sometime and in the morning we awoke in beautiful downtown St. John's, Antigua. I used to call this place An-teeg-wa, but years ago I was informed that it is called An-tee-ga.

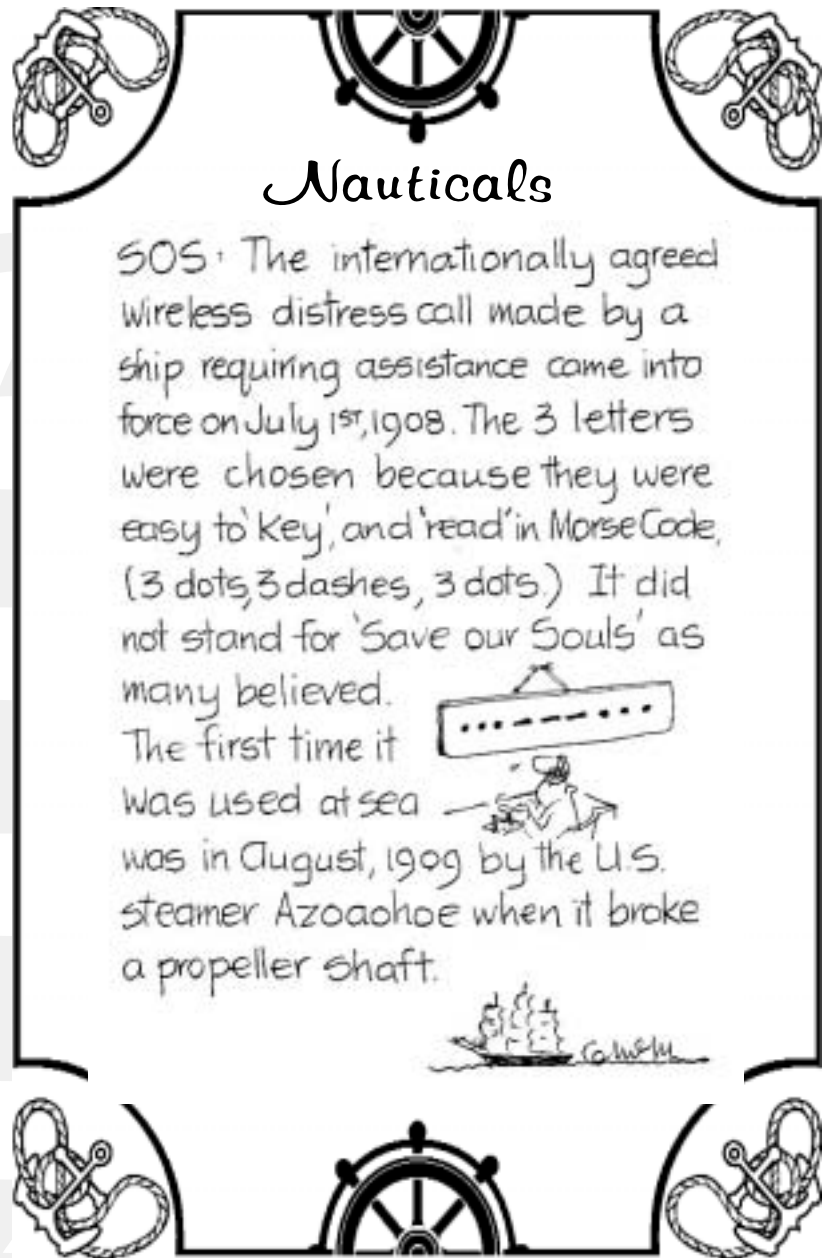
Columbus was the first European to visit Antigua in 1493 and he named it after the miracle worker "Santa Maria de la Antigua" of Seville cathedral in Spain. Antigua became a British possession in 1632 after Sir Christopher Codrington from the nearby island of St. Kitts successfully settled the area despite conflict with the Caribe Indians.

Due to its strategic position in the middle of the Antilles chain and its natural harbour it became the chief naval base for our beloved hero, Admiral Horatio Nelson. I have frequented this base upon occasion during my naval career, though little of the old base remains today. In September 1995 hurricane Luis tore through the eastern Caribbean islands inflicting great destruction upon Antigua. The storm destroyed or damaged 75 percent of the island nation's building, causing an estimated \$300 million in property damage.

Antigua and Barbuda are Constitutional Monarchies within the British Commonwealth.

Be sure to join us next time as we depart Antigua and sail to beautiful downtown Bridgetown on the Island of Barbados.

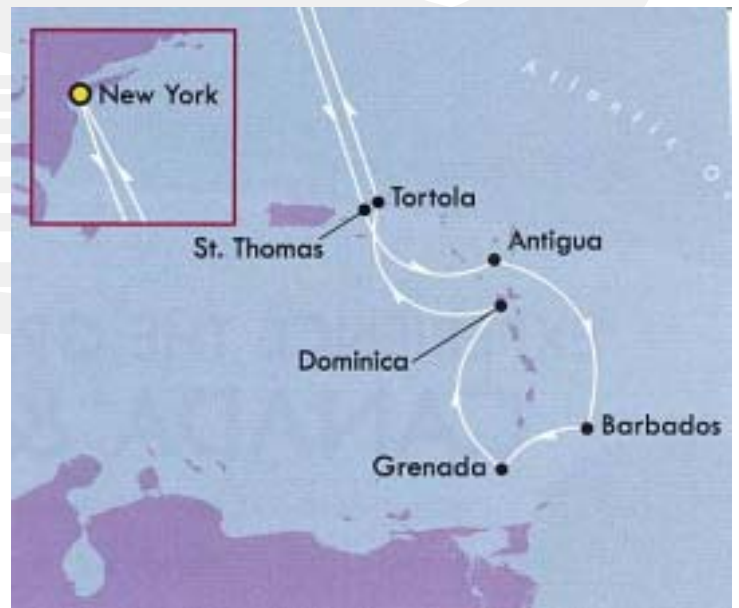
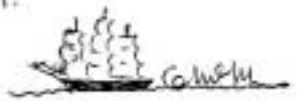
And always remember, my children..."Good enough, isn't!" ▲



## Nauticals

SOS: The internationally agreed wireless distress call made by a ship requiring assistance came into force on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1908. The 3 letters were chosen because they were easy to 'key', and 'read' in Morse Code, (3 dots, 3 dashes, 3 dots.) It did not stand for 'Save our Souls' as many believed.

The first time it was used at sea was in August, 1909 by the U.S. steamer Azocahoe when it broke a propeller shaft.





### February 2006



Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
<b>CHECK YOUR BOAT</b>						
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	CLUB FEES DUE	28	<b>HAVE YOU SENT IN YOUR FEES?</b>		
<b>TIME TO MAKE THOSE LISTS OF BOAT PROJECTS</b>						



### March 2006



Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
<b>CHECK YOUR BOAT</b>						
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
<b>IF WE GET ANY GOOD DAYS, GET A JUMP ON CHORES</b>						



### April 2006



Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
<b>SPIT, POLISH, PAINT AND WASH TIME</b>						
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	<b>ONLY A FEW DAYS LEFT TO FINISH THE JOBS</b>					



### May 2006



Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			
<b>LAUNCH, RIG, SHAKEDOWN AND START THE SEASON</b>						

Racer's Meeting  
Weather Workshop

Balcony Meeting

Ice Breaker Race

Measuring Day for Racing Sails

LAUNCH DAY

While the off season may have been quiet for most of you, a few of your fellow members could not stay away from the chance to get in some sailing. Keith & Joan Willson, Paul & Marie Evans, Chris Hanson and Elizabeth Marin got away in early January for some sun, swimming and sailing in the warm tropical waters of the British Virgin Islands.

It was windier than usual with winds ranging from 15-25 knots gusting to 30-35 at times. Even at night the winds would not relent, but increase. Mixed with an average of 2-3 showers or downpours during the day and then also through the night, the weather kept us on our toes closing all the ports then reopening them as if mother nature was teasing us.

Still it was far better to be in bathing suits and T-shirts and be surrounded by colours of green and blues than be at home in the dark and grey.

We were part of the Harvey Cracknell (National Yacht Club) Flotilla of 20 boats and 80 sailors. Harvey always does a great job in organising. If you ever contemplate trying a BVI trip, I highly recommend checking out his package. He will be having an evening at National YC later this winter with a slide show presentation on the adventures of this year's flotilla.

You can contact anyone of us, if you would like to know more details.

I hear Russ, Wendy, Dave and Rosemary are off soon to sail from St. Maarten. Our editor and his wife will also be off to an exotic destination, New Zealand. I am already envious.—Chris

## FLEET CAPTAIN CRUISING

Chris Hanson

**W**E HAD GREAT participation in our cruising program last season and as I write this I am busy locking in dates and places for this year. The schedule and destinations seemed to fit well into the majority of regular participants and attracted a few newcomers. Since everything went well last year, I figured we would repeat the destinations.

### Cruising destinations and dates

Lakeshore Yacht Club	June 3-4.
Bluffers Park YC	June 24-25
*Port Credit YC	July 1-3
Frenchman's Bay YC	July 15-16
Mimico CC	August 19-20
Etobicoke YC	September 8-9

\*All dates still need to be confirmed except the July 1st long weekend.

The cruise to Frenchman's Bay will also hopefully involve some of our club racers. Our Rear Commodore, Mona Anderson, is trying something new this upcoming season, combining a long distance race with a cruisers dinner and stay over, then racing back to TH&SC the next day.

While the cruising program has been gaining popularity, thanks to all the 'regulars' we picked up new entries to our happy flotilla. This brings me to welcome all you new members to TH&SC and we encourage you to try cruising this summer. You can't go wrong—family friendly fleet, people to meet, wonderful appetizers brought by our cruising members and of course the main meal provided by your club for FREE. Tell me any other club on the lake that has this benefit. All you have to do is sign up on the Cruising bulletin board. Each cruise has a food theme; last year we had steak and shrimp, Ribs, Greek shish kabobs and more, mmmmm.

It is going to be a transition cruising season. I am stepping down from managing the cruises next year but am slotting people into running a cruise each. So far I have four volunteers and I am looking to find others for two other dates. Elizabeth and I will still be around as advisors to help ease nerves. Running a cruise is not as overwhelming as it may seem. The dinner can be as simple or creative as you wish. Everyone pitches into lending hands whether it be food prep, cooking or cleanup. The small challenge is choosing the menu and guesstimating the amount of provisions needed. Check out the club website, [www.thsc.ca](http://www.thsc.ca) and click on the link Cruising for more information and photos of a great season last year.

Take advantage of what your club has to offer and I hope you can make the time to come cruising with us in 2006.

Chris & Elizabeth

TH&SC Crew



Fisherman Paul



Hungry Paul



Fish cleaning keel



Chris and Liz

