Texas Mariners Cruising Association

The Texas Mariner

We are All about having Fun on the Water

March 2018

At the Helm

Larry Friemel, Commodore
email: Commodore@TexasMariners.com

Happy New year!

March is here and we are off to a really great start this year. Attendance at all our events to date has been outstanding. Cold weather is just about behind us and we have another full month of cruise and social activities planned. As we all know, spring time weather can change quickly, so check the website often for the latest event details or changes. Our awesome event volunteers always seem to figure out a way to keep things running smoothly and we couldn't do it without them.

We still have some opportunities for you to be more involved in club activities. Again, this year TMCA will have a booth at the Southwest International Boat Show at South Shore Harbor Marina. The dates are April 12-15 and we will need help manning the booth. It's great fun and there are always a lot of smiling faces at our booth, both on our members and those who stop by to see what TMCA is all about. We even had a record number of new members sign up last year! Discount admissions will be given again this year to all members who present their TMCA badge at the gate and Exhibitor badges will be available to those who work the booth. Please visit the website calendar for additional details. If you're interested in helping, even for an hour or so, contact Bridget Upton to sign up to help at this fun event.

Another opportunity is to be part of one of the many club committees that provide valuable support to keep TMCA running smoothly. New ideas and subject matter expertise are always welcome! Just let any board member know you are interested and they will help you get started. This is your club and what better way to make new friends and be part of the most active boating club on the gulf coast.

On another subject, this is a great time of the year to get a Vessel Safety Check by the Power Squadron. Upon completion, you will receive documentation, a sticker to place on your boat and the confidence that all safety systems are ready for another busy cruising season. There is no cost for this service and you can contact our local Power Squadron for scheduling.

Special Reminder: Please check that you have renewed your membership and updated your boat and contact information. This will keep the budget on track and help our event coordinators when planning activities.

So, check your calendars and come join us, whether on the water or at a social event you will have a great time!

Be safe and hope to see you soon.

Larry Friemel,
Commodore

The Corner of Vice

Jeff Kaspic, Vice Commodore
Email: VC@TexasMariners

This season we have been enduring a rather harsh winter and the "devastating" news from the vermin named Phil that we are not done with winter yet, left us more anxious for summer. It's coming ... I can feel it!

Sarah Gossett from GBF was our incredible February speaker. She was full of details on how our bay faired after Harvey. Even with record runoff and the associated contaminates, our bay is surprisingly resilient. Plus Sarah reassured me that my toes won't melt away in Nassau Bay!!

March's speaker will be Walter Hansen, the person who was responsible for the boat restoration at the Holocaust Museum. He will provide an update on the restoration efforts on the Danish Fishing Boat, the Hanne Frankhsot. This will be a very interesting discussion of the importance of this vessel and the efforts to save her. Please plan to attend.

WALKING THE DOCK
I can hear clearly now the VHF is on..... I can hear all obstacles in my way.....
This may be the controversial lost verse to the Johnny Nash classic, but we may never know.
I'm sure we all remember an experience that had a profound impact on the way we view the world around us, react to situations and changed our thought process from that point on. While I was reading the 1986 "riveting suspense thriller and training manual" *Sailing in the Fog*, I was reminded of one such experience that was pivotal in shaping how I reacted to life's situations. I'm only telling this story because it was an example of how to properly deal with the adversity that we all face on the water. While I sometimes (some say often) fail to handle situations in the spirit of this example, I often recall this story in an attempt to recalibrate myself.

San Diego Harbor in 1986... it was just another "lousy" day with Jacque, her Mom, Stepdad (Jerry) and myself heading to the open Pacific for a day of sailing. Yes, you read correctly, **A SAIL BOAT!!** Believe it or not, I started out on a blow boat!! While at the helm of s/v ***Third Child,*** our Catalina 30, we made our way South in the channel that paralleled Point Loma. The Pt. Loma peninsula terminated at the gateway to the open Pacific Ocean. Jerry and I glanced to the West and noticed a fog bank actually heading South down the windward side of Pt. Loma. The fog bank gained speed and we watched it round the point and start coming into the bay! I immediately came about and started the diesel - thank you to Rudolf Diesel for his timely invention!

We made our way back to the slip with the fog nipping at our stern. No sooner than the last line was secured, the VHF exploded with a panicked cry for help. A couple were sailing along the windward side of Pt. Loma and were caught in the fog. The Coast Guard responded that they could not mobilize due to all the emergencies and to slow down and sound their horn - fog protocols. The person on the radio was now in hysterics saying they did not know what to do, where they were and they were in fear. Jerry calmly keyed the mic and offered to provide assistance if the CG agreed - they did. As Jerry asked the crew mate to turn to Channel 68, we waited the prescribed 20 seconds for everyone within VHF range to get on the channel, he then began to calmly talk to the person. I pulled out a paper chart - yes paper - and a parallel. Remember, this was 1986, no GPS (as we know it, LORAN was around but not many boaters had it), no chart plotter, no AIS, no radar (on rec boats).

After a quick cleansing breath calming technique, Jerry started asking questions with me writing and plotting on the chart. How deep are you? What's your compass course/speed? What land formations / descriptions do you remember seeing before the fog hit? Do you hear waves breaking? Do you see kelp and if so what side of the boat do you see it? Are you able to describe the kelp? There are two kelp beds off the coast, each containing different species of kelp, at different depths bisected with an open water "channel" between them. SCUBA diving in this area you always knew your depth by the which species was present at differing depths - or you could look at your depth gauge - but what challenge is there in that! At this time, I was a research diver for SDSU and currently doing a study in these waters. The study required a fix to be taken at every sample point so I was very familiar with the specific features of the coast line. The couple were still in hysterics but able to answer ***most*** of Jerry's questions. Note to self that day; stay clam... stay clam. After figuring an extremely rough plot, we knew at what depth contour they were following (confirmed by repeated depth reports) and based on their land description, a rough bearing determined how far down (to the South) they were along Pt. Loma. We based further "fixes" on speed and compass heading but we were unable to accurately determine their future bearing and drift. Jerry kept asking if they heard waves crashing because there is an extensive reef that you should avoid before entering the channel into the bay. They finally heard waves and the faint sound of the marker bell. We waited until the wave sound appeared to be well a stern and there was no kelp visible. A slight turn to the East/South East showed a decrease in depth with the bell sound growing stronger. By continually plotting their depth line we knew approximately how close to the reef they were, now if we could just get them to not hit the marker! With Jerry's commands based on speed, heading, depth and listening very intently the couple were able to get into the channel as visibility began to improve. They made their way to their slip with a heartfelt thank you to Jerry. We had to turn the VHF off due to all the comments and to enjoy an adult beverage(s)!! I was and I still am in awe of this event. How calmly he diffused the situation, how confident he was in his direction and how important thoroughly understanding the water you are boating in is. My boating mentality was changed forever. I applied this situational awareness concept the next day during my research dives and have never gone into a situation without having a plan which included potential solutions to worst case scenarios. My fellow divers will relate to this motto; plan your dive, dive your plan and be ready to adapt and overcome as soon as you hit the water!

I have been accused of over preparing and trying to anticipate every contingency that may occur. As mariners, I think you would agree that planning for the worst and hoping for the best is the sign of a skilled and conscientious vessel operator. This story may remind you of the importance of situational awareness especially on the water and if it did, than the time writing this was beneficial.

TIPS:
Electronics fail!! I remember crewing on a sailboat and while at the helm I removed the compass cover. The owner immediately slammed it shut and said follow the magenta line!! He obviously never experienced the need for mechanical navigation and most likely would be lost if he had to figure out where he was. Additionally, any course plotted in the comfort of your office cubicle is subject to the

vagaries of actual sea/weather conditions. I always make periodic notations of headings so I can follow a reciprocal course to get home.

Hopefully you all have paper charts onboard, but you should consider investing in a handheld or "puck" compass, parallel rule and dividers. The handheld compass device allows you to shoot bearings from your boat to land. By taking three different bearings and plotting them on the paper chart with your parallel, you will be able to plot a fix of your position. This is done by transferring the degrees (bearing) read on the handheld compass to your chart. Place your parallel rule on the nearest compass rose on the chart to your landmark, along the degree that you read. Walk the rule back to your landmark where you took the bearing keeping in mind to not move off the degree line from the rose. When you get to the landmark, draw a straight line along the rule. Repeat two more times from different landmarks and where the three lines intersect is your fix. If you are cruising for longer distances, manually plotting your position as read off the chart plotter (MFD) along with the time signature on your paper chart is also a good back up. At least you will know your previous heading and based on your forward speed, you should be able to roughly determine where you are currently. This does not take into consideration cross track error or drift and speed variation. It is recommended to practice this technique so when your $3K chart plotter goes blank, hopefully you can see land and figure out where you are and where you need to go. If you are in the open ocean, and do not see any visible marks to coordinate with your chart, hopefully you did well in your navigation classes and have a sextant on board.

If you have a topic you would like to have discussed during our education segments, know of an interesting speaker who will educate us in the marine environment or any thoughts about the articles please drop me line.

Please remember to wear your name badges and if you are a new member let one of us know so we may welcome you to the family.

m/v Bare Footin' will see you on the water!

Jeff Kaspic,
Vice Commodore

The Social Scuttlebutt

Dee Latiolais, Rear Commodore
email: RC@TexasMariners.com

Hello everyone! Happy March to each of you – we are getting to closer to warm weather every day.

Our first event for dock party for 2018 was a fun, cold and very well attended event. Punxsutawney Phil, now known as Portofino Philly was the star of the party! The attendance was outstanding and a great time was had by all.

Our MUCH anticipated Mardis Gras event at Fish Tales did not disappoint! We had more fun than should be legal and swam in the shrimp on the buffet! Great food, great friends and good music!

And, most recently, the gathering at Parrots Nest (Noah's Ark) – WOW – over 80 reservations to sit on the dock of the bay! We saw some TMCA friends that we haven't seen for a while and that was most certainly a treat! It was a very relaxing time, the temperature was great and those Mermaid kiss shrimp things were delicious!

Moving on to March, we have another fabulous Dock Party coming up at the Kemah Boardwalk Marina on March 2nd and another new theme – Old Boat Stuff Day – be prepared to barter, it will be great fun! Bring a dish to share, a chair and your beverage of choice.

Ladies – get ready – WOMEN ON THE WATER is coming on Saturday, March 10th ! WOW is a class for women, taught by women. Learn the basics of talking on the radio, navigation, tying knots, docking, and so much more! The class will cover the basics, but the women teaching the course are experienced and you'll have the ability to polish your skills or learn something new. It's a fun, laid back class with lots of hands on instruction. The event starts at the Elk Lodge. Come at 8:30 for coffee and donuts and meet other women; class begins at 9:00 and ends at noon. *Please register on the website* so we know how many handouts to print.

"The Wacky Tacky Easter Hat Dance". If you can't make the "Fight the Moody Moonlight Cruise to Moody Gardens" don't worry you can still drive down and join the fun for the Wacky Tacky Easter Hat Dance. Pack your best April fools dinner dish, a couple of chairs, your favorite drink and drive down to Moody Gardens for a fun filled evening. There will be a wine tasting and cheese and crackers to kick off the evening. You can join the parade and see if can win one of the cool prizes (the funniest, most creative, and most beautiful Wacky Tacky Easter Hat. *Please register on the website.*
Bella is ready for the Easter Hat Dance, are YOU?

Bryan will fill us in on cruise details and, as always, complete details for all of our events are available via the calendar on the TMCA website, www.texasmariners.com as well as Yahoo Groups and our TMCA Facebook page as well.

Dee Latiolais
Rear Commodore
TMCA Knows Fun!!

The Cruise Corner

Brian Austin, Cruise Captain
email: Cruise@TexasMariners.com

Our first cruise to Galveston to gather and celebrate Mardi Gras at Fishtales was a big success; in spite of the less then friendly weather. Several boats stayed in Galveston an extra day and returned to Kemah on Monday to avoid the Sunday winds and waves. Cruiser Skill Points were awarded to the participants. The "Buy the Cruise Captain a Beer" item is working out nicely.

We have several cruises scheduled for March. We kick off the month with the Buffalo Bayou Kayak Adventure. St Patrick's Day weekend has cruises planned for Cedar Bayou and Pelican Rest in Offats Bayou.

Registration is open for both of these uniquely different cruises. The final cruise of March is our annual Easter “Fight the Moody Moonlight” cruise to Moody Gardens. Charlene and Steve Lim have an event filled weekend planned. At this point the cruise is full. If you are still interested in joining, go ahead and register to get on the waiting list. You could also anchor in Offats Bayou and dinghy in to join the crowd.

We also have a great event for the women of TMCA. Women on the Water is an event for women and led by women to inform and teach other women on key facets of boating operations. You'll learn the basics of talking on the radio, navigation, tying knots, docking, and so much more! The women teaching the course are experienced and you'll have the ability to polish your skills or learn something new. The event this year will start at the Elks Club and then head to Watergate Yachting Center on M/V Marie Ellis and S/V Austintatious.

Finally, I recently sent an email to each of the members who signed up to be a Cruise Leader for one or more of our 41 planned cruises this year. All of our cruises are on the TMCA calendar. As we get closer to each upcoming cruise, you should see the event registration show up on the website. I’ve asked each Cruise Leader to prepare to open registration no later than 30 days prior to the cruise.

See you on the water. Remember to check the tides and go with the flow.
#MCGA

Bryan Austin
Cruise Captain
TMCA – Cruising The World

Secretary's Report

Dawn Gibler, Secretary
email: Secretary@TexasMariners.com

This Yankee is so very ready to pack the winter coats away and get into boating again! Ed and I were able to shake off the boat cobwebs for the Mardi Gras cruise to Galveston and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. Many thanks go to Dee and her crew for planning the terrific event for us. Unfortunately the cold front blew in several hours earlier than expected and we chose to let the boat stay "on vacation" at the GYB for a few days. Ed and Charles made a "salted dog run" as Charles put it, to retrieve the boat during the small window of higher water before the fog blew in. Hopefully Mother Nature will cooperate and winter will go away soon and we'll get out on the water!

We have several new members join this month so please help me welcome them to TMCA:

Frank Agovino
John & Julie Autenreith
Lauri & Alan Creekmore
Jack & Claire Ford
Kelley and Leah Powell

Jack Springer
Shawn Zernik

Last call for membership! The grace period for membership renewal for 2018 has not ended, and we'll be removing those members who have not renewed. If you're unsure, take a moment and log in to the TMCA website. Go to Membership → My Account → and look on the Membership tab. It will tell you your expiration date.

Dawn Gibler
Secretary

From Your Bean Counter's Calculator

Cookie Johnson, Treasurer
Email: Treasurer@TexasMariners.com

It has been a great year so far! If you have not renewed your membership, please do that now! The year is shaping up to be LEGENDARY!!

We started February off with dock party that will be hard to beat!! Vicki and her crew were creative and fun with their Ground Hound Day reenactment!! The Mardi Gras party was great fun, and the food was fabulous! What a fantastic trip! Thanks Jerry and Bryan for a great trip! However, you all could have ordered some warmer weather for the sail home. Ladye Jane put together an awesome time at the Parrot's Nest above Noah's Ark!! I don't think I ever get tired of listening to Greg Stephens play and I am so excited for him to play at my dock party in May!!

TREASURER's TIPS: Need some extra cash to pay down debt? Dig through your closets or attic and look for items you no longer use that may have value then sell them on eBay or Craigslist. OR if they are boating related (or could be) bring them to the dock party this Friday!! You can then use the money you bring in to pay down debt and put it behind you once and for all!! Now begin using the 30 day rule and wait 30 days to decide on a purchase! Quite often, after a month has passed, you'll find that the urge to buy has passed as well, and you'll have saved yourself some money simply by waiting!

Tax season is here for me and that means I work all the time…..but I still hope to have time for a dock party or meeting now and then! Tax season ends on April 17th and I leave on April 18th for a mission trip to St. Martin and St Thomas to help out after the hurricane, therefore, I may not see many of you till May, so till then, happy cruising!!!

Cookie Johnson,
Treasurer

[Click here for TMCA Calendar]

2018 TMCA Officers

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Texas Mariners Cruising Association

Please send any articles you would like included in the TMCA Mariner to TMCA Mariner Editor at Newsletter@TexasMariners.com