

Tiller Tales

Gulfstream Sailing Club

June 2020

FROM THE HELM

Phil Decker, Commodore



Since the arrival of the Coronavirus Pandemic, meetings and happy hours have occurred online via Zoom. Watch your email for invitations and links.



The COVID-19 pandemic has been causing pain to our community for several months now. The Governor of Florida issued the first executive order declaring a public health emergency on March 1, and since then businesses have been closed and people have had to self-isolate, socially distance, and take other protective measures. That makes it nearly impossible to operate as a club, with races, raft-ups, and social gatherings. Small boat sailing at Sailors Point was

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2020 Officers

Commodore.....Phil Decker
Vice Commodore.....Eric Kobrin
Rear Commodore.....Linda Gossett
Treasurer.....Ben Bowen
Secretary.....Kay Harrison
Lake DirectorLuis Oliveira

2020 Governing Board

David Notman
Mary Brown
Paul Hinden
Ben Bowen, Past Commodore

2020 Committee Chairs

Crew Pool.....Eric Kobrin
Cruising.....Open
Small BoatLuis Oliveira
Legislative.....Sam Walker
Membership.....Ben Bowen
Nominating.....Kay Harrison
Ocean RaceOpen
Program.....Open
Regatta.....Linda Gossett
Ship's Store
.....Rosemary & Jim Mahon
SocialMary Brown
Tiller Tales Editor.....Kay Harrison
Trophies.....Mike Sawzak

REMINDER

Our calendar is published on the GSC web site, www.gulfstreamsailingclub.org

FROM THE HELM

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closed for a while and has recently partially reopened. However, safety must always come first and I am glad that our members are taking the pandemic very seriously since the consequences of infection can be devastating. Perhaps because of our actions as a community, no member of GSC has yet been infected with COVID-19 to my knowledge. I thank all the members who stay engaged with the club on Zoom, Facebook, phone, and e-mail.



I liken the pandemic to a storm. You do not know how bad the storm is going to get until the winds die down and the skies start getting brighter. And we Floridians know not to become complacent in the eye of a hurricane.

Your club is in good condition. Our financial situation is good, our membership levels are good, and we even have new members joining. We will weather this storm as long as it lasts and resume our normal activities when it is safe to do so, whenever that may be.

GSC had to cancel the July 4th picnic and fireworks because 1) City of Hollywood canceled the fireworks, and 2) Sailors Point is now limited to groups of ten or less. In the spirit of celebrating Independence Day and boating, while maintaining social distancing, I am announcing a photo contest with cash prizes. Please see the story at page 4 for further information. Stay safe!

NEW MEMBERS

By Ben Bowen, Membership Chair

In spite of the shutdown of club activities, we continue to attract new members. There is interest in the Learn to Sail activities for both adults and children, and with a few precautions, we can continue summer sailing for children in groups smaller than 9 plus an instructor.

We welcome the following new members to the club and hope they can join us at a virtual Zoom Happy Hour or monthly meeting.

Name	Phone	Boat
David Mikolashek	754-802-0881	
Jordan Read and Christine Fulford	719-227-1638	Encantado, 36-ft sailboat
Brian and Jeannette Nevins	781-588-1822	

A NEW BOATING SAFETY CONCERN THIS JULY 4TH

BoatUS Foundation: Don't Try to Have Your Own Fireworks Show!



ANNAPOLIS, Md., June 22, 2020 – Celebrating America's birthday, thousands of boaters are expected to hit the water this Fourth of July holiday weekend, recreational boating's traditional busiest time of the year. With COVID-19 it certainly won't be the same. The [BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water](#) has a few boating safety reminders just in time for the holiday.

While boaters will need to follow [social distancing guidelines](#), that's not the only COVID-19 concern, according to the Foundation. While many local community fireworks displays have been canceled this year, some boaters may wish to offer their own fireworks show and take to the water with pyrotechnics. "With gallons of fuel aboard and other flammable materials – your boat – you would be truly risking lives," said BoatUS Foundation Assistant Director of Boating Safety Ted Sensenbrenner. "It's not worth the risk. There is no safe place aboard a boat suitable for using fireworks."

As the captain, you can't head out without remembering that your passengers become your responsibility as soon as you pull away from the dock. Think twice about loading up the boat with a cooler full with beer, wine and other alcoholic drinks as [alcohol use is the leading known contributing factor in fatal boating accidents](#).

"Just because the captain is sober doesn't mean alcohol should be free-flowing aboard your boat," said Sensenbrenner. "The stressors of a hot sun, wind and waves all day when combined with alcohol can intensify the effects of inebriation, increasing the risk of a passenger slip or fall overboard or worse. Save the alcohol for celebrating after you have safely returned home for the night."

Lastly, remember that you won't be out on the water alone. [Operation Dry Water](#) will heighten BUI awareness and enforcement during the three-day weekend of July 3–5, and law enforcement officers will be on alert for those violating boating under the influence laws. Agencies from all 50 states are expected to increase enforcement.

UNDERWATER MAINTENANCE



- ❖ Hull Cleaning/ Zincs
- ❖ Decks and Dock building and repair
 - ❖ Seawalls
- ❖ Propeller inspection/ replacement
 - ❖ Pile wrapping
- ❖ Boatlifts and Davit repair/ install
 - ❖ Underwater photos/ video

20% OFF FOR GULFSTREAM SAILBOAT CLUB MEMBERS!

**Ask for Aaron!
(305) 497-8352**

tritonmanagementgrp@gmail.com
www.tritonmanagementgrp.com

INDEPENDENCE DAY WEEKEND PHOTO CONTEST

By Commodore Phil Decker

In lieu of our annual Fourth of July BBQ at Sailors Point that had to be canceled, we are holding an INDEPENDENCE DAY WEEKEND PHOTO CONTEST WITH CASH PRIZES! The idea is to celebrate our patriotism and love of boating while staying safely distant during the novel coronavirus pandemic. First prize is \$50, second prize is \$30, and third prize is \$20, to be selected by an anonymous survey of members in good standing. Winners are also entitled to unlimited fame, glory, and adulation. Tiller Tales Editor Kay Harrison and your humble Commodore are not eligible in this competition. Here are the rules:

Digital photos only, and must include A) the US flag or yacht ensign, and B) a boat. Photos including the GSC burgee and members would be great, but is not a requirement in this contest.

Only members in good standing, including their family members, may submit photos.

Only three photos per family membership may be submitted (hey, I got a day job).

Photo files submitted must be time stamped during the Independence Day weekend, beginning at 12:01 AM July 3 through 12:00 midnight of July 5, 2020. Go ahead and touch up the photos, but your fun and editing must be had during the weekend.

Deadline for submitting photos is Tuesday, July 7, at 8:00 PM EDT, the end of our Tuesday night virtual happy hour on Zoom.

Submit eligible photos via e-mail to **COMMODORE@gulfstreamsailingclub.org**. I will put them up in Member Planet or other suitable platform for members to cast their votes as soon as possible.



Winning photographers must agree to license the copyright to their photos, and release right of publicity, for publication on GSC websites and in Tiller Tales and our Facebook page. I would like to share the photos with other boating publications like Waterfront Times, Southwinds, Sun-Sentinel, and Latitudes & Attitudes, but that would be done separately.

Dates to Remember

Next Happy Hours, via Zoom.....July 7 and 14

Fourth of July Celebration.....Canceled

July General Meeting, via Zoom.....July 21

Join us for Virtual Happy Hours each Tuesday at 7. Watch your email for the link.

ANCHORING 101

By Bill Bowen

Here is part two of the continuing saga by Bill Bowen of getting his new boat home.

In my naïve optimism, I figured 40-50 miles a day. On April 29, I departed Whitehall Creek into Whitehall Bay and then out into the Chesapeake Bay, sailing in light air, then motor-sailing, hoping to reach Solomons the first day. I made it about halfway, covering 21 miles and picking out what looked like a protected elbow harbor called Cook's Point Cove to set the anchor. I was unaccustomed to the sound of wind singing in the rigging, and the first several nights I was made uneasy by what sounded to me like a storm howling outside.



The second day got me to Solomons, 17 miles away, and by that time I was convinced my new motor was not performing properly, or at least the visual digital display battery monitor that was supposed to keep me informed of how many volts were available.

I convinced Bob the display was defective, and he said he would have a new one shipped down from Minnesota, then drive down and install it. I had travelled two days, but was still a mere 40-minute drive from Annapolis. I would end up spending a week in Solomons, a picturesque little harbor town where supplies required a two-mile hike, a walk I made almost every day. The dock looked dilapidated and there was a guy working on it who said the rate was \$2.50 a foot. When I realized I would be there a while, I pulled out and anchored in the harbor. That afternoon, while it was still light, a big, nasty looking storm came bearing down out of the north. I was about to learn the plow anchor that came with the boat was insufficient. When the leading edge of the storm hit with a 40 mph burst, it immediately teased a sliver of my roller furled jib out and suddenly my boat was swinging back and forth on the anchor, completely beyond my control. The anchor was dragging, of course, and I was heading toward a line of fishing boats in slips. Six burly fishermen appeared out of nowhere and positioned themselves to catch my boat when it hit, then held it in place while we secured lines and bumpers to bowsprits and pilings to hold it in place until the storm passed. They basically saved me from certain bankruptcy, then went off to drink beer. When the weather calmed, I untied the lines and managed to maneuver the boat backwards into a vacant slip, where it suddenly stopped, aground. My anchor



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was still out there in the harbor, dug in pretty well, and when the incoming tide floated the boat free at about 2 in the morning, I pulled myself out to the anchor, took it in, then motored over to the dock and tied up. Whenever I

expressed dismay at the expense, Ray, the dockmaster, lowered the price, and by the end of the week I was paying \$1.50 a foot. Bob finally arrived and spent a few hours installing the new digital display, and the next day I motor-sailed 29 miles to Cockrell Creek. On this trip, my daily mileage totals varied greatly, depending on wind direction and currents, and the fifth day I arrived in Norfolk after a 32-mile day. On May 25, my

log says I travelled from Swansboro to Wrightsville Beach in 14 and a half hours, a distance of 56 miles. The next day, Masonboro Inlet to Carolina Beach, 12 miles. Traveling through back country, which describes probably 90 percent of the Intracoastal Waterway, is not without its moments of terror. Anchored in a bug-infested backwater, bouncing in a 30-knot blow, pitch dark, wailing wind in the shrouds. After my near-death experience in Solomons, I replaced the plow with a 25-pound Premium Scoop I had brought along from West Marine and after a few anxious nights wondering whether it would hold in a stiff wind, I became comfortable with trusting it, and that went a long way toward reducing anxiety. Galvanized fixed shank scoop with wings that turned up on the edges like the brim of a planter's hat. It's a great anchor, although I've since learned West Marine discontinued it. Probably my smartest move of the trip happened during the winter, when I went out on Black Friday and bought a



Garmin chartplotter for the boat I knew I would be picking up in the spring. There were countless times, following the Intracoastal, that I would have been uncertain about which way to go had it not been for that dotted line on my Garmin screen that denotes the ICW, and especially crossing the mouths of rivers where the currents make one pay dearly for a miscalculation.

To be continued in our next issue of Tiller Tales. Be sure to tell Bill Bowen if you are enjoying this series!

BUYING CLEMENTINE, PART 3

By Vice Commodore Eric Kobrin

Eric Kobrin's Journey on his new boat, Clementine, continues on the first day of his journey.

I'd like to phone a friend

I believe in backup plans.

Prior to our departure, I'd printed out the names, phone numbers, and monitored VHF stations of the marinas within my target zone for the evening, as well as those several miles short of that target. I never wanted to be out of daylight-sailing range of a safe harbor. It was time to cash in on that preparedness; I started calling the numbers of marinas east of Woods Hole.

In Miami, you can always find a sheltered place to anchor or grab a mooring at Dinner Key on a moment's notice. Boy, was I surprised by the response when I asked Vineyard Haven's dockmaster for a transient slip for the night. "You're kidding, right?" he said in a mocking tone. "Nobody has any slips or moorings." When I asked him for some local insight into alternative moorings or anchoring locations he was a real jerk about it and refused to help.

I had to rig up the backup running lights. I didn't have much time left to call marinas, so I called my father and asked him to call the marinas nearby until he found one which would be willing to accept us for the night. Jason set course in the general direction of Martha's Vineyard and I tackled the running light situation.

There's a light

My plan had been to sail only in daylight. To that end, I had planned this delivery as a three-day trip on back to back days when: A) it would be possible to leave Chatham in daylight to B) arrive at the Cape Cod Canal with a favorable current so that we could C) arrive at Sandwich before sunset. I added a whole extra day at the start of the trip so that unexpected delays wouldn't ruin our chances of arriving in Boston on Sunday evening.

I knew that the boat had two sets of running lights and that the stern light worked. The tricolor mast light was not connected to the switch panel and would have to be wired up before use. The old bow lights were made redundant by the mast light; this was providential because the anchor chain had severed the starboard bow light cable at some time in the past. I had brought my electrical toolkit to address these shortcomings if necessary. I tried hard to make sure they would not be necessary.

With those plans in place I'd assumed that we'd manage to restrict our sailing time to daylight hours. Barring that, I figured I could get the mast or bow lights working again. Should that plan fail, I had also brought along a clamp-on running light powered by "D" batteries.

As the day wore on, I hadn't addressed the wiring issues. With the heaving seas, there was no way I'd be able to stay below and make any repairs before dark. Since there was no way to reach a safe harbor before sunset, it had to be the clamp-on or nothing.

There was only one problem: where was I going to clamp it?

My thorough inventory of the boat from a few weeks ago revealed that there were some teak scraps on a shelf next to the galley. I grabbed one of these and reluctantly drilled holes in it for stabilizing lines.



Brenda and Eric Kobrin

BUYING CLEMENTINE, PART 3

By Vice Commodore Eric Kobrin, Continued from last issue of *TillerTales*

The drill I had planned to bring along was an over ambitious driver/drill/sander/saw. The day before departure, its charger cooked its own battery, so all I had with me was a tiny 3.7 volt electric screwdriver. It had three tiny drill bits. They would have to do.

I had four holes to drill. By the third hole, the driver was wearing down. It could not back the bits out of the wood, so I had to do so by hand. The only other option was to try to use a hammer, so I kept on trying to coax a little more from the driver. I managed to drill the fourth hole, but just barely.

I ran loops of stainless steel bailing wire through these holes to provide tie-downs for the lines. I braced the board against the baby-stay track and tied lines through the wire loops to the forward hand rails. With some bungees for support, the board would stay vertical and the light would remain visible.

On my way forward, I gripped the board under my arm to keep my hands free to hold myself onto the boat. The board didn't fall, but the stainless wire did make a nice puncture into my left arm. This was my second trip to the foredeck that had resulted in minor blood loss. I'd have to be more careful.

While I was clinging the deck working out this system, my phone kept vibrating in its dry-bag. I knew that it must be my father calling, but the bow light was my second priority behind staying on the boat.

With the light rigged, I could work my way aft, ever glad for the foresight of having installed jacklines and procured a harness.

Dad comes through

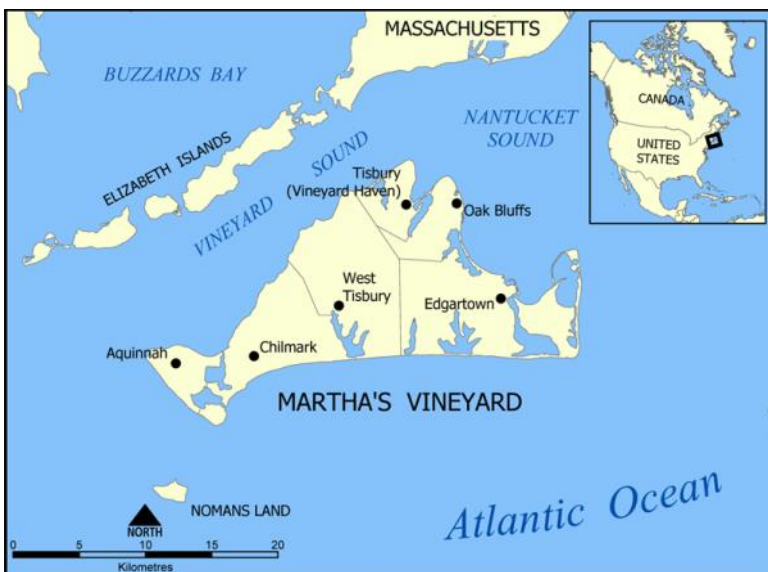
My father had left voice mail and text messages. A little harbor on Matha's Vineyard named [Oak Bluffs](#) *might* have space for us at one of their raft-up moorings. It was going to be a busy night in that harbor due to a fireworks show, but I should call them and see if they could accommodate us.

I called Oak Bluffs and explained our situation: unexpectedly night-sailing on our shake-down cruise, stuck far short of our intended destination, and in need of a place to stop and rest for the night.

In stark contrast to the fellow from Vineyard Haven, the Oak Bluffs Harbormaster was friendly and helpful. He ex-

plained their mooring situation, told me where I could anchor if no moorings were available, and explained that the frightening jumble of rocks that guard the entrance to the harbor on the chart are actually about 30 feet below the surface of the water and therefore irrelevant. The approach to the harbor was actually simple and direct.

The mooring situation was iffy. We were to navigate through the boats watching the fireworks display and find our way to the mooring field. Then we had to find a mooring with three or fewer boats attached to it and raft up to one of these moored boats. Failing that, we were to return to the fireworks-watching grounds and anchor there, very



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exposed to the storms blowing our way from New York.

I didn't like the prospect of anchoring out with the too-thin anchor line we had aboard. I fervently hoped we'd find a mooring available.

It always gets darkest before the fireworks?

We followed the GPS course towards Oak Bluffs, but tried to do some visual navigation along the way. I studied the night-visible navigation aids near our destination and found a particular light pattern to seek out. As we steered towards the wall of tiny lights that wreaths Martha's vineyard, we kept an eye out for one particular blinking light.

We saw the fireworks before we saw our designated beacon. The fireworks barge was throwing all kinds of pyrotechnics into the air above Oak Bluffs. We would find the harbor by light of flaming skies.

Besides confirming that we were headed in the right direction, the fireworks did one other thing: they revealed their own spectators. Several of the "city lights" we'd been steering towards turned out to be mounted on anchored boats. Boats very close to us. Even closer than those were the unlit boats. Unlit boats on the night of a new moon. Those fireworks helped us avoid a collision with an anchored motor boat.

I was on the bow when the dark form of the anchored boat was outlined by the first blast of fireworks. I gestured frantically to Jason to steer around this obstacle. He steered us away from the impending collision, while simultaneously furling the jib to improve his view from the helm. My attention was focused on our near miss, so I was surprised to see the jib gone when I turned around.

"Where'd the jib go?"

"I furlled it."

"While steering around that boat?"

Once again I was reassured that I'd picked the right partner for this trip.

The fireworks were helping, but I didn't expect to be lucky enough to have them reveal every obstacle in our path. I went below to grab the only spotlight we had on board, an old rechargeable million candlepower unit. The regular flashlights were too weak to help. The problem with the rechargeable spotlight was that it had come with the boat and had no charger. We'd have to make due with what charge it had left from who knows when.

With the aid of brief flashes from this light, each weaker than the last, we were able to distinguish between dark areas devoid of boats and dark areas composed of unlit boats. Passing through this haphazard anchorage took no more than 30 minutes, but it certainly felt longer than that. The fireworks ended just as we found the harbor channel.

The spotlight lasted long enough to illuminate the breakwater on the south side of the channel en-



BUYING CLEMENTINE

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Oak Bluffs, in daylight

trance, averting yet another collision just before impact. Shortly we were in the channel, headed for the mooring field in the inner harbor along with several small boats which had left the fireworks show early.

A maze of twisty passages, all alike

There may be a fundamental "conservation of stress" property in the universe. The charted submerged rocks at the harbor entrance had made the approach look more difficult than it was. Therefore, the inner harbor had to be more difficult than it appeared. The

inner harbor's jumble of boats provided plenty of deceptive simplicity. There were three main obstacles for us:

1. the boundaries of the harbor itself (docks, rocks, shoreline)
2. the moving, usually unlit boats returning from the fireworks show
3. the moored, usually unlit boats stopped for the night

Of these, the first appeared well marked on the GPS and was easy to see by the dim light of the nearly drained spotlight in any case. The fast moving boats made enough noise to locate by ear and the slow moving silent boats were so slow that they didn't pose a major hazard. The moored boats were another story.

They were everywhere, hidden in the darkness of the new moon. The bundles of rafted boats seemed to form a maze. I stood on the bow, light in hand, trying to guide Jason. He had the nerve-wracking job of following my directions without being able to see the hazards I was attempting to avoid. All the while he could catch glimpses of vessels in haphazard orientations turning in the wind and current as we passed.

The first raftup we approached appeared to have only three vessels. The fourth and fifth boats were obscured by our angle of approach. Rebuffed, we moved on. Raftup after raftup was full. The spaces between the raftups were getting narrower. I began to worry that we'd work our way through the entire mooring field and find ourselves unable to turn or to go forward, doomed to come to a rest against rocks or a seawall.

After several minutes of intense searching in the darkness, we found relief in the form of three large powerboats sharing a mooring. We joined at the starboard side of the largest boat. There were bumpers already in place, but a bit higher off the water than our deck. There was nobody aboard so we scrambled to tie up and drop our own bumpers unaided. We were safe. The ordeal was over.

Shortly after completing the tie-up process, the owner of our new neighbor to port approached with his wife, daughter, and dog. I expected him to tell us that we'd violated some unknown-to-me rule of raftup etiquette. Instead, he just helped us move our stern line to a better location on his boat and then bid us good night.

Watch for more of Eric's story in our next issue!