

Texas Mariners Cruising Association

The Texas Mariner

We are All about having Fun on the Water

<http://www.tmca.nu>

April 2014



At the Helm

Martin Clark, Commodore

email: comm@tmca.nu

Someone once told me that the way to a happy life in boats is to buy the smallest boat that will comfortably get the job done, rather than the biggest boat you can afford. That could mean a 15-footer — or a 50-footer.

I also remember the systems expert who told me privately that the best way to ensure the most time on the water with the wind on your back and the sun on your face is to buy the simplest boat possible. And this veteran knew how to install and maintain the most complicated marine systems you could imagine.

We all would do well, I think, to strive for boats that are simple, reliable, sea kindly and handsome. That, to me, is the winning combination. And by simple I don't mean to suggest a stripped-down skiff with tiller steering, a bench seat and a wet dog, although I have spent many pleasant hours knocking around in such small craft.

Simple also means making overly complicated systems less so. It is finding elegant solutions to all manner of rigging and installation challenges. It is making the most confounding aspects of technology disappear until we are left with the most intuitive user experience possible.

What is richer than a clean, uncluttered helm where your hands fall naturally to wheel, throttle and switches; your eyes easily scan gauges and displays; and your view of the water is unimpeded?

Modest power, modest costs, modest speeds — as philosophers and thinkers from Aristotle to Ben Franklin have extolled: “moderation in all things.” Simplicity and functionality are their own form of luxury. And simple, in this context, is anything but easy. Intelligently designing and installing equipment and systems takes thought and experience to get it right.

Neat, clean wire runs. Easy access with enough space to work comfortably on machinery without becoming a contortionist. Handholds in the right places. Smooth edges on all of the corners. Deck hardware that is properly sized, positioned and bedded. Redundancy where it makes sense.

Boats need to be viewed “holistically,” rather than as a series of piecemeal systems cobbled together as time, space and money allow, hidden beneath decks and behind panels and bulkheads, out of sight and out of mind until a problem arises.

That’s when you find out the hard way that the only way to replace a bad sensor on the water tank stuffed beneath the cabin sole is to not only cut through the sole, but also to remove a piece of the stringer. That’s just bad design and it comes, in part, from trying to cram 20 pounds of gee-whiz into a 10-pound bag. Sometimes less is more.

The world of boats is fascinating in the way it bridges and melds traditional practices and thinking with modern technology, materials and methods. Done well, it’s a beautiful thing: an old classic design built of modern materials. But tradition can be as much a double-edged sword as blind faith in technology.

You can still find plenty of practices done a certain way simply because “we’ve always done them that way.” Beware of inertia masquerading as convention and established protocol.

The trick is to find the right balance between the best contemporary designs, materials and beliefs and those practices, operations and philosophies that have proved themselves on the water for generations. Innovation that brings value is a no-brainer, but gadgetry for gadgetry’s sake is a fool’s errand.

On that point, Ellis, who has designed boats for nearly 50 years with everyone from C. Raymond Hunt Associates to Ted Hood, quoted Uffa Fox, the late English sailboat designer and dinghy-sailing pioneer. “You know what Uffa used to say,” Ellis recalled. “The only good place for weight is in a steamroller.”

Simple, reliable, seaworthy — all good. But looks matter, too. As the former Hinckley Co. co-owner Shep McKenney once observed: “The first duty of a boat is to be beautiful.” McKenney was referring to the first Hinckley Picnic Boat in 1994, and he was right.

Your boat should make you stop when you walk away and turn around to gaze at her. At least once. Borrowed from Wm. Sisson.

Other notes:

Many thanks to Philip Kropf for his daily monitoring of the terrible oil spill at the crossroads. I understand that our speaker for the April General Meeting will be a representative from Kirby Inland Marine. Perhaps we should be prepared to pass around a collection plate? It is going to be expensive!

A big thanks to Kelly Hutchinson for her hard work to put together our booth at the Southwest International Boat Show. That was a really big show, as Ed Sullivan used to say.

Many people are working hard to create a great Spring Fling event. I hope everyone will boat or drive over. If not, you can help participate by purchasing a daily pass from the SF online store. Call it a "thank you" for our many members who are busting their tails to pull off this event.

Hopefully the north winds are giving up to the blessed south winds and we can get out on the water, soon.

See you next time,

*Martin Clark,
Commodore*



The Corner of Vice

Mary Lou Clark, Vice Commodore

Email: vcomm@tmca.nu

Ahoy TMCA! Are you ready for a wonderful Spring and Summer on the water? I certainly am! It is time to hang up the overcoats and put away the sox and break out the tank tops and flip flops!

Now that we are going to be out on the water more, (thank goodness!), let's remember to pump out our holding tanks; don't dump them into the bay or the marina. We had a wonderful speaker at the March meeting who told us about the importance of keeping our bay/lake waters clean. This is your opportunity to help with that endeavor, so **PLEASE..... PUMP DON'T DUMP!!!!**

Our next meeting is going to be on April 11, instead of April 18 due to April 18 being Good Friday. Please be sure and mark the date on your calendar. The **speaker** for our April meeting is **Julie Edsall from Kirby Marine**. I'm sure many of you will have questions for her and she will have information for us on how to safely navigate the waterways when encountering tows. I look forward to seeing you there. The doors at the Elks Lodge will open at 6:00 for cocktails, dinner from 6:30 to 7:30, business meeting from 7:30 to 8:15 and then our speaker.

If any of you have suggestions for programs/speakers, please contact me at maclark2267@comcast.net or call me at 281-435-7428. I'll be delighted to hear from you.

Remember to sign up for our wonderful upcoming Spring Fling!

I'll see you in the water or on the docks!

*Marylou Clark,
Vice Commodore*

[The Social Scuttlebutt](#)

Bronwyn Lee, Rear Commodore

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It seems like I just wrote my last newsletter article just two weeks ago, because I did just write it two weeks ago! Since I will be out of the country at the end of the month, and so that there isn't a blank Rear Commodore report for April, it's time to bring everyone up to date, again! As this newsletter comes out, I will be in the Antipodes, about as far as you can get, the next stop would be Antarctica! Growing up on a typical Aussie sheep farm (ranch), my siblings and I had an idyllic childhood. We lived in a century old farm house on the farm which had been settled by my convict ancestor in the 1830's. This farm was on miles of private oceanfront so we both swam and fished in the frigid Tasman Sea, or in the slightly warmer brackish river alongside the house. Who would have known that this shy Tassie girl would grow up, marry a Texan and be having the time of her life on a sailboat in waters in this part of the world? TMCA is the best cruising/social club around, and life is good!

Thank you to Bill and CJ Jenko for a great March dock party! The fire pit and chiminea, along with great food and adult beverages kept everyone warm and jolly! The sliders were exceptional! The Dinner with the Leprechauns, following the combined GBCA/TMCA St Paddy's Day Regatta on the Bay, was wonderfully attended, thanks to a lot of promotion by our own Lorna Glascock, and GBCA. I'm not sure if this is a typical turnout after the Icicle and Rum Races, or because of the promise of good old Irish Stew, Irish soda bread, Irish Cheddar Cheese Soup, Irish anything. In any case, there was a huge spread of comfort food which hit the spot after a rainy, blustery day of racing on the bay!

Our next dock party on April 4th will be hosted by the Glascocks, the Betrams, the Rooneys, and all the TMCA-ers who live on Harbor Island. Always a popular location, the terrace at Harbor Island overlooks Southshore Harbor marina. Be sure to bring something to grill, a dish to share, your beverage of choice and lawn chairs.

The next day on April 5th, Rick Stewart is leading a cruise on the Bay, which will end up anchoring off Bubbas Shrimp Palace in San Leon. It is an easy drive down from Kemah, so even if you are not going by boat, plan to drive over late afternoon and join the group for dinner. Often there are more land-yachters than boats, but always a lot of fun at a super casual restaurant overlooking the bay at sunset.

There are several socials coming up in conjunction with the Nickelson's Easter cruise to Moody Gardens. Typically there will be a shared dish one evening, on the Colonel dock at the marina. Watch for more details on the website and Yahoo, regarding this dinner and possibly a dinner at the hotel or at the Strand.

The Galveston Art Walk on April 26th-27th is a great way to combine boating with culture! Several boats are staying at Harborwalk, with the overflow at Galveston Yacht Basin. The plan is to have docktails on one of the host boats, art appreciation, dinner and an evening on the Strand. Again, another option for land-yachters to drive down to Galveston and meet the cruisers.

Doc Mulloy and Luke Sterling and friends are hosting the annual Fish Fry at Marker 17 on the weekend of April 26th-27th, also. If you have not already signed up for this fun event, please contact Doc to reserve your fish platters, and contact Luke for slip reservations at Beason Marina and Marker 17. There are local motels for the land yachters and a large parking area next to Marker 17, for the RV contingent.

Till next month, enjoy the best weather of the year!

Bronwyn Lee
Rear Commodore
TMCA Knows Fun!!



The Cruise Corner

Jim Lee, Cruise Captain

[email: captain@tmca.nu](mailto:captain@tmca.nu)

Summing up March 2014 as MORE north winds and cold front, like most of you I am ready for spring on the water. As most are aware the area had an oil spill on Saturday September 22nd around the Texas City 'Y' which closed down the ship channel from Redfish to offshore for both commercial, charter and recreational boaters. By the time of this writing commercial traffic was allowed however charter and recreational boat traffic was still restricted. This should be lifted by the April newsletter and so LET'S GET OUT ON THE WATER!

Yachty Gras Parade started the month of March of one 1st in Kemah with Jerry and Christopher Tradewind Takes First Place for Sail on m/v Tradewind. And congrats to Fern, Roz and the crew of Watt's Cutter for taking the Best Boat Award!

Speaking of parades our fearless Commodore, Martin Clark, on my asking about starting a Boat Parade Committee: "The bylaws state that the Commodore can appoint anyone to a committee and start any committees he/she wants (other than the several standing committees). It would be great for you to do that. You are appointed!". So it begins, anyone interested in being on the committee please give me a call and we can start planning.

The next March cruise was The Cruise de Lune to Pleasure Island on March 13, the site of Spring Fling 2014, was led by Jerry and Christopher. The group got a slightly delayed start due to; you guessed it, the north wind. [Click hear](#) for the cruise calendar with great information on this great Spring Fling destination. Boats who made the trip were S/V Tradewind, M/V Relapse, M/V LIL Marlene and S/V Black Pearl. For navigational information, go to click on "[Captain's Info](#)" at the top of the page at www.TMCASpringFling.com.

A great annual event in March is The Kayak Cruise on Buffalo Bayou which was on Saturday March 22nd. This was a perfect annual spring trip for TMCA and thanks to Linda and Charles for setting this up again this year. The weather was perfect, good temperature, overcast - not hot! The azaleas along the way looked great, beautiful scenery - I love the diversification of the route! Loved getting to meet and visit with everyone. The group of photos of a great morning on [Buffalo Bayou](#) [have now been posted](#). Cruise report can be [found here](#).

And last but not least the March 28 – 30 Synchronized Sail with Elissa: This cruise was cancelled due to the oil spill. Hopefully, it can be rescheduled at a future date.

Now let's talk about upcoming TMCA cruises, something for every week-end:

April 1: Last day to sign up for [Spring Fling](#) and have your boat name on the [Spring Fling T-Shirt](#). And this is not April Fools! Last day to register for Spring Fling is April 28.

April 5: TMCA Flea Market, Elks Lodge, 7:00 – 11:30: Empty those garages and storage lockers and turn your boat stuff into \$\$\$ - or bring those \$\$\$ and find bargains galore! There's no cost to participate. Just bring your valuable items to the Elks Club and get ready to sell. Pull up to a grassy area lay them out, and get ready to bargain. Shoppers: come find great deals. This is *always* a fun event.

Event Organizer: Mike Rooney 713-805-1418

April 5 – 6: Bubbas Shrimp Palace Cruise: This will be an easy and fun event for sailors, power boaters and land yachts at Bubbas Shrimp Palace on Eagle Point in San Leon. Bubbas is an all you can eat shrimp and catfish house right on the water. They have picnic tables outside and a large restaurant/bar inside. It's all very casual. Enjoy an afternoon on the Bay; there won't be any planned start time. Anchor off of Bubbas and dinghy in for dinner and a beautiful sunset at 6:00PM, but arrive early for social time. Head back to your marina, anchor out at Bubbas or head to Redfish Island for overnight. Shared breakfast will be at Redfish. Valerie and I will host a mimosas and egg taco breakfast for 10 folks on Moon Eye. Dinghy over for breakfast at 9 am. We will need other breakfast host boats as well if more than 10 are on the cruise.

Cruise Leader: Jim Lee 713-828-5133, or email jimlee61@yahoo.com

April 12 – 13 Cruise to the Cedar Bayou "Finger Lakes Anchorage - A pdf file "**Navigating Cedar Bayou**" can be accessed on the website by clicking [here](#). In addition to various chartlets and information about navigating this waterway, it contains a large number of photos that illustrate just how pretty Cedar Bayou actually is, and hopefully will provide some impetus for cruise sign-ups!

Departure from Marker 2 will be at 9:00 am for this 18.5nm trip to the anchorage. Unfortunately, due to a bridge with a height of 52ft above MHW, only powerboats and smaller sailboats can do this cruise. Upon arrival, we will raft-up for the afternoon and tell stories, imbibe on adult beverages, and then have an early-evening shared meal. We then typically break the raft and go on individual anchors for the overnight. And clear skies permitting, we will have the light of an almost-full moon! Contact Philip Kropf pkropf@flash.net or Scott Lacy sailsong@swbell.net.

April 18 – 20: Easter Cruise to Moody Gardens – Registration is open for the Moody Garden cruise, and a few slips are still available. Sign up! Moody Gardens is ALWAYS a great cruise! There will be a group reservation Friday night at Cafe' in the Park in Moody Hotel (old name Terrace). Sign up required, but everyone will be on their own ticket. Enjoy Moody Gardens on Saturday, and participate in a traditional Easter dinner dockside. The Davidson's will provide the ham and dessert; bring your favorite Easter dish. For those interested, you can take a taxi to an Easter Sunrise service at the 4900 block of the seawall sponsored by the Moody Memorial First Methodist Church. (7am-8:30am). Then enjoy Easter Brunch in the banquet room at Moody Hotel before departing home.

Cruise Leaders: Bob and Barbara Nicholson
Social Leaders: Butch and Janet Davidson

April 26 – 27 Art Walk Cruise to Galveston - Slips are currently full at Harbor House, but power boats may make reservations at Galveston Yacht Basin; sail boats will need to wait closer in to see if space is available. (409-762-1253, DLopez@galvestonyachtbasin.com) Land yachts come join us as well! Docktails at 5:00, enjoy the Art Walk, dinner at a restaurant TBD, and returning for an evening nightcap back at the boat.

Cruise Leaders: Dave and Lorna Glascock, LornaGlascock@yahoo.com

April 26 – 27: Fish Fry at Marker 17 – One of the fun events of the year is the Fish Fry at Marker 17. On Saturday we have fresh oysters served around noon (Island Time), followed by their famous fish platter around 3-4:00, all for \$15 a person. Send your checks made payable to Marker 17 for the fish dinner to Doc Mulloy, 311 Lakeview Circle, El Lago, TX 77586

Cruise Leader: Luke Sterling sterlile@comcast.net 409-771-8970

Social Leader: Doc Mulloy 713-906-3952

Sign Up for Future Events

May 16 – 18 SPRING FLING REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN Head to Pleasure Island in Port Arthur for another great event of cruising, seminars, parties, shopping, food, and dancing to the music of Kelly McGuire. Continue to check the TMCA Spring Fling web site as additional information gets confirmed. **Sign up before April 1** and have your boat name listed on the Spring Fling T-Shirt. See what one of our exhibitors, OnTheWaterLifeStyle.com is doing to promote TMCA.

May 24 - 26 MEMORIAL WEEKEND AT MOODY GARDENS - Registration is now open for Memorial Weekend at Moody Gardens. Complete the [registration form](#), space drawing will be at the April 11 General Meeting. Pot luck dinner as well as a dinner out in Galveston are being planned, as well as docktails and socializing. Check the calendar for future updates.
Cruise Leaders: Moray Sandison and Debbie Sturgeon, moraysan@gmail.com

*Jim Lee,
Cruise Captain*



Secretary's Report

Barbara Nickelson, Secretary

[email: secretary@tmca.nu](mailto:secretary@tmca.nu)

I don't know about all of you but I am tired of cold, wet, windy weather. I think it is time for some sunshine. This has been the most unusual winter that I can remember for a very long time. I am hoping for a long and sunny summer. I am ready to start boating. I am ready to be outside. We have had our boat out one time since November. Docketari is feeling neglected and we are going to be making it up to her very soon.

We are leading the cruise to Moody Gardens over Easter. Janet and Butch Davidson are leading the social part of the trip so you know it is going to be fun. We still have a couple of slips available so if you want to join us, give Bob a call at 713-826-7551.

Our membership drive is still going on. We have 434 paid members and I think we are on target to have one of our best years ever. We are calling everyone on our list who has not renewed their membership. Pass the word around to your boating friends. We want to continue to increase our membership. There is no better value for your "boating buck". Our new member this month is Ted Hilton.

The In the Water Boat Show will be this weekend and it looks like we are going to have great weather. I am excited to be a part of the boat show. It is always a lot of fun. It is one of the best boat shows in our area. I hope you all make it out and support the people who work so hard to make it available for us.

We also have Spring Fling coming up in a couple of months. Speaking of FUN!!!! It is going to be an adventure to check out a new marina. All new territory for most of us but I am so glad that we have a different marina and area to explore. It should be a real experience. We are so indebted to Chris Bown for all of his hard work. He has really put in a lot of hours to make this a very special trip for all of us. Please make every effort to join us. Bring your boat, bring your RV or just come stay at the hotel. Just don't miss out!!!!
See you on the water!!!!

***Barbara Nickelson,
Secretary***



Dollars And "Sense" from the Treasurer

Bob Nickelson, Treasurer

[email: treasurer@tmca.nu](mailto:treasurer@tmca.nu)

Thought it was "March Winds bring April Showers" – seems we have had both for the last four months – anybody for Sun Shine!!

The new board has settled in and all are transitioned (not much to do in my position) – We have approved the 2014 TMCA Budget and are looking forward to another great year. Membership 2014 Income was budgeted at \$ 13,000 and to date we have accomplished 87% of this with nine months to go – a Great Start. Our biggest Expense change from the 2013 Budget was \$4,500 directed to Web Site/Internet – we have allotted this amount to completely re-do our Web Site and bring us up to date in the Web World – a special thanks to Linda Schoene for all of her work.

Remember April 15th (boo) IRS Filings, Extensions and all that non fun stuff.

"Money is like manure. You have to spread it around or it smells" – J. Paul Getty

***Bob Nickelson,
Treasurer***

Community Liaison Committee Chair



Philip Kropf

PKropf@flash.net

As I write this on March 30 we have just gone through a rather traumatic week on Galveston Bay! Of course I am referring to the collision between the 585-foot bulk carrier Summer Wind and the Kirby Inland Marine towboat Miss Susan which was pushing Kirby Barge 27706 just off of the Texas City Dike shortly after noon on March 22nd. One wouldn't think that vessels with such pleasant-sounding names could cause such havoc, but they did, and even though the Coast Guard was able to get the port open again to limited traffic in just slightly more than three days, the clean-up continues, and the environmental impact may be felt for some time to come!

Participating all week in twice-daily conference calls as recreational boater representative to the USCG Port Coordination Team, I had access to very current information as to the status of the clean-up and also the timeline for getting the waterways back open. And all week I attempted to push such information out to recreational boaters, not only to TMCA, but also to other stakeholders in the Clear Lake area and beyond.

So how was it that this response effort worked so well??? In one of the many press releases issued last week it said:

The Oil Spill Prevention and Response Division of the Texas General Land Office is funded with a 1.3 cent per barrel fee assessed on oil passing through Texas ports. That fund pays for prepositioned equipment such as skimmers, air boats and oil boom at five offices along the Texas coast, staffed full-time by GLO oil spill response experts who have spent years working with local contractors, local governments and the U.S. Coast Guard preparing to respond to any oil spill in Texas waters. Texas Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson said this level of cooperation between industry, local, state and federal responders in Texas ensures a quick and effective response.

“In Texas, our oil spill folks already know their federal and industry counterparts when there’s an emergency because they’ve worked together before, in drills or responding to an actual spill,” Patterson said. He continued, “Responding to a crisis is not the time to be meeting your partners or determining who is in charge. In Texas, we’re ready. I think the rest of the nation could learn a few lessons from us when it comes to planning ahead and preparing for oil spills.”

Since I spend a lot of time in meetings and other activities of the USCG Area Maritime Security Committee (AMSC), the USCG Port Coordination Team (PCT), the Lone Star Harbor Safety Committee (www.lonestarhsc.org), and the Central Texas Coastal Area Committee (www.ctcac.us), I can attest that all of the above is true, not just for environmental calamities, but also for possible incidents related to port (and national) security, major weather events such as hurricanes, and generally all of the ongoing issues (dredging, waterways management, navigational operations, etc.) that go with keeping our ship channels open and commerce proceeding smoothly.

For the foreseeable future, please be careful out there around any areas where oil clean-up possibly may be continuing, and give vessels engaged in this work a wide berth and a slow bell!

Philip Kropf
Community Liaison Committee Chair

[Click here for TMCA Calendar](#)

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| | | |
|------------------------|---|---------------------|
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