

The Texas Mariner

We are All about having Fun on the Water

April 2015



At the Helm

Bob Nickelson, Commodore

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AT THE HELM

Well, finally Spring has sprung and it looks like our cold weather has moved out. With all of the wet weather, for the first time we are fighting a mildew problem on the outside of our boat – what a way to start “spring cleaning”.

Besides cleaning, Barbara & I have been working on our check lists to ready our boat for leaving on our trip next January. We have been doing some remodeling in the galley and just learned about “induction” cook tops – what a great thing for boat life. We bought two single burner units at Sam’s and built them in – very quick to heat up and you don’t feel the heat like a regular burner, which means less power

consumption and when you take the pot off the burner, it automatically turns off – a great safety feature. We bought an extra on to use on our back deck for extra party needs.

Our Board members and their committee chairs are doing a great job in coordinating and planning 2015 events – Memberships renewals are coming in strong and looks like another record year. I have completed putting the Committee Chair list together. Dan LaFon has agreed to chair the Newsletter Committee and Steve Bertram will again chair our Audit Committee – Thanks to them for their time commitments.

Again, this year TMCA has been given a booth at the South Shore Boat Show, which starts March 26th. Barbara Nickelson will be in charge of coordinating the event and will be looking for volunteers to help man the booth. Last year, we all had a great time and we added many new members from our booth exposure – Discount admissions will be given to all TMCA members displaying their badges and Exhibitor Badges will be available to members working our booth.

We are back to Daylight Savings time and hopefully better weather – check your calendar for all of the events – already a great Fish Fry in Double Bayou this month and Easter celebrations planned. As, in our life travels, we never know what tomorrow brings – look for someone to help today and keep your travels between the “Reds & Greens”

***Bob Nickelson,
Commodore***



The Corner of Vice

Charles Parette, Vice Commodore

Email: ViceCommodore@TexasMariners

Friday, April 17th Monthly Meeting,

The meeting will be held at the Elks Club, 623 Hanson Road, Kemah. Come early; socializing begins at 6:00 p.m. and a great way to start meeting members. Dinners orders begin at 6:30 p.m., business meeting starts at 7:30 pm, followed by our program. This month our speaker is Steph McDougal who has written a book about Historic Texas Lighthouses, where they were, and what they looked like back in the day. This will be a fun evening so mark your calendars and

attend! Come enjoy dinner and drinks at great prices. Be sure to bring your name badge. See you there!

Friday, May 15th Monthly Meeting,

The meeting will be held at the Elks Club, 623 Hanson Road, Kemah. Socializing begins at 6:00 p.m., dinners orders begin at 6:30 p.m., business meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. Followed by our program. This month our speaker will be Steve Nerheim, a retired Navy Captain who's with the Coast guard vessel traffic center. This will be a fun evening so mark your calendars and attend! Come enjoy dinner and drinks at great prices. Be sure to bring your name badge. See you there!

***Charles Parette,
Vice Commodore***



The Social Scuttlebutt

Charlene Lim, Rear Commodore

email: RearCommodore@TexasMariners.com

March is full of surprises, rainy on Monday, hot on Tuesday, cold on Wednesday, hot, cold and windy on Thursday. You just never really know what to anticipate. The Friday night Dock party turned out to be wet and cold. But no matter what the weather, Portofino is a great place to hang out with a fabulous view, so it was not a big revelation when a large number of folks showed up on that chilly evening. It turned out to be a wonderful Friday night Dock Party, winding down with folks gathered around a warm fire pit solving the problems of the world.

Thanks Charles for hosting the Women on the Water event. The course was insightful and the ladies want MORE!! I hear you are already working on an encore. Great Job!!

Doc Mulloy hunted high and low for the perfect 4 leaf clover. He took that perfect 4 leaf clover, made a wish for a beautiful day, and then offered it to the St. Paddy's Fish Fry Leprechauns. Speak about the luck of the Irish, Saturday turned out to be a beautiful day. The leprechauns drank beer, ate fish and danced the night away. Great job Doc!!! I hope you host this great event again next year.

Too many magnificent boats to buy and not enough money in the bank. The Southwest boat show just makes me crazy. What more can be said. I always have a good time dreaming about buying one of those cool new boats, working the booth and meeting new members.

Did you find any bargains at the Nautical Flea market? I did, and I cleared part out my garage (sold stuff), only to refill it with new junk (I mean good stuff).

April kicks off spring and lots of fun parties are on the schedule

April 3rd Friday night- Hop over to Moody Gardens for the Easter Bunny Dock Hop Party. I double dare you to wear your bunny ears and fluffy pink bunny tails!! Peter Cotton tail will be DJ'ing some hopping good bunny tunes for you to jam on. .As always, bring a dish to share, a chair, and your favorite BBW (Bunny Belly Washer (drinks)).

April 4th Saturday night-The Easter Chicky Sailing Chicks will be busting out of their shells and sailing over to Moody Gardens for a joyous Easter Eve dinner at Monarch's dining room (\$25.98 buffet all inclusive). Land yacht bunnies are welcome to hop on down and join the Easter Chicky Sailing Chicks and their rooster buddies for a fun evening of cackling and crowing the night away. The restaurant needs to know how many chicks, roosters and bunnies are coming so please register on the TMCA website today. Land Yacht Bunny's - book a room at Moody Gardens Hotel and join in the fun with the Chicky Sailing Chicks and Rooster buddies at Moody Gardens. Make it a special evening with your honey bunny. Bunny ears and tails are welcome.

April 10th Friday night- April is so nice we're doing it twice. Yes it's a second dock party. Join the April's Déjà vu Dock Party at the Harbour Island Townhomes docks. Bring a dish to share, a chair and a Sippy cup filled with a Friday night drink delight. Details can be found on the TMCA website.

April 11th Saturday night - Come commiserate or celebrate at the "Beers & Tears Dinner at Topwater Grill as the Tax Man Cometh" event. Vivian and Orlando have booked the 2nd floor private dining area for this exceptional dining event. Come by land yacht or floating yacht. Dinner is \$22.99 exclusive of taxes and gratuity. Speaker system will be available for tax confessions or celebrations, large screen TV's will capture escapee's. Arrive early for the pavilion pre-party (BYOB). Please sign up on the official TMCA website as soon as possible so Vivian and Orlando can guarantee that the restaurant will has enough liquor food for everyone.

New Events are popping up all the time, check the TMCA website regularly. Login to see all the good stuff.

Join Yahoo Groups and the TMCA Facebook groups for special updates.

Charlene Lim
Rear Commodore
TMCA Knows Fun!!



The Cruise Corner

Jerry Simoneaux, Cruise Captain

email: Captain@TexasMariners.com

March did not come roaring in like a lion. Instead, she lazily lumbered in like a benevolent elephant. Big, gray, and slow, she cast a drizzly shadow that draped over us for days. Undaunted, many TMCA seafarers ventured out into the damp Friday fog to Doc's Fish Fry, unaware that the luck of the Irish was waiting to greet them.

Once at Oak Island, the winds swept away the clouds releasing the warm sun from her exile exposing the lush, green clover that covered Cell Phone Hill. The new spring weather was intoxicating and inspired us to write ridiculously stilted prose, not unlike the crap you are reading now.

We stumbled, quite literally, into a winery/bistro where the resident oenologist regaled us with amazing and touching stories. We toured the small facility and tasted his many different and delicious wines. Later, back at Channel Marker 17, Ernestine and her staff treated us to delicious oysters and fried catfish. The music certainly led to dancing late into the evening. If we are lucky, we will return soon to Oak Island.

Unfortunately, a particularly loathsome sudden, but short, deluge caused us to cancel the kayak trip down Buffalo Bayou and the Sailing Angels half-day sail. Captain Dave has rescheduled the Sailing Angels half-day sail to April 11. To volunteer for Sailing Angels, please contact Captain Dave McCabe at DaveMcCabe@SailingAngels.org or call (281) 507-1867. The kayak trip has been rescheduled for Saturday, May 30.

April hops in with an Easter Cruise to Moody Gardens, April 3-5. Charlene Lim is planning a dock party on Friday and a dinner at the Monarch Restaurant on Saturday. Although the slips are full, you may still join in by land yacht, anchor just off the marina, or you can get one of a few slips still available at Pelican Rest, just across the bayou and a short dinghy ride from Moody Gardens. For information and to reserve a slip at Pelican Rest, please contact Ken Hutchinson at Ken.hutchinson@crewonward.com.

Martin and Marylou Clark invite you to the Past Commodore's Cruise to Beason Park (Oak Island), April 18-19, for a Cajun-themed event with entertainment by Ben "Boudreaux" Reyes. Bring a Cajun dish to share and your best Cajun jokes for a contest. Registration is online and slips will be assigned soon. For more information, contact Martin Clark at martin.clark1850@comcast.net.

World Penguin Day is April 25, and Philip Kropf is celebrating with a wonderful cruise to Cedar Bayou. Raft-up at the Cedar Bayou "Finger Lakes" anchorage for afternoon story-telling and the sharing of assorted snacks and libations. Dinner to share at 7:00pm. For the overnight, however, all boats will un-raft and go on individual anchors. There is a lot of protection in this anchorage, so no one should be afraid of perhaps using this cruise as an opportunity to bone up on their anchoring skills! To find out more, contact Philip Kropf at pkropf@flash.net. To get more information about Cedar Bayou on our website, click on the "Cruising" tab, then select the "Cruising Destinations" from the drop down menu, scroll down and select "Cedar Bayou"

Keeping with our Spring theme, registration for the 5th Annual Spring Fling is open. Spring Fling will be held Memorial Weekend, May 22-25 at Paradise Island in Port Arthur. Register and pay by April 1 and get your boat's name printed on the official Spring Fling t-shirts. Register at www.TMCASpringFling.com.

Jerry Simoneaux
Cruise Captain



Secretary's Report

Kathy Houser, Secretary

email: Secretary@TexasMariners.com

Ah, spring is finally here! It has been a long cold winter, and I am glad to see some sun shining. Spring weather means spring cleaning, which also means it's time to get our boats in shape for all the wonderful TMCA cruises.

April is a month full of TMCA events and I am hoping you will be taking advantage of some or all of them. The Easter cruise to Moody Gardens looks like it will be a great time. Neil and I are taking our RV to Galveston and planning on joining our cruisers even though I'm not sure what the "Bunny Hop" is. I'm pretty sure it is not the Bunny Hop dance that we used to do. But we will see.

Welcome to TMCA! We are proud to welcome the following new members:

Victoria Reich
Julie and Craig Gaines
Brad and Deena Ballard
Chris and Helen St. Clair
Guyve and Laura Vedadi
Lisa and Jay Johnson
Paula McCoy
Tim and June Sneider

Speaking of membership, the deadline for renewing your membership has passed and now a \$20 reactivation fee will apply. But, it is still worth the extra \$20. Where can you go and take advantage of all the great events that are coming up! Are you going to miss out – I hope not. You can renew online and pay by any credit card via PayPal. Log in, click Membership -> My Account. Click Edit to update your information, click the Membership tab to renew your membership. If you had logged into the previous web site, your user id is the same. If not, try your first initial/last name (all lower case). Temporary passwords for all: tmca2015. If you'd like to renew via mail, click this link for the [membership renewal form](#).

Did you know that April's birth flower is the daisy which conveys innocence, loyal love, and purity? It is also a flower given between friends to keep a secret; the daisy means "I'll never tell." Hmmm, have you given or received any daises lately?

Looking forward to seeing you all soon,

Kathy Houser
Secretary



Dollars And "Sense" from the Treasurer

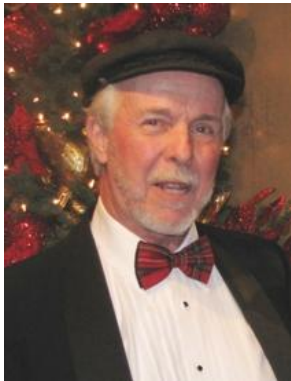
Debbie Sturgeon, Treasurer

Email: Treasurer@TexasMariners.com

"Well, with a few exceptions (and you know who you are!) the membership dues season is closed and the TMCA bank account is looking very healthy.

So now it is time to turn our attention to much more fun things - personally, I can't wait for Spring Fling! It looks like it will be better than ever with great entertainment, seminars and socializing. My goal is for Sol Purpose to win the offshore race (I know, but I can dream can't I?)"

*Debbie Sturgeon,
Treasurer*



Community Liaison Committee Chair

Philip Kropf

PKropf@flash.net

We are now officially into spring and, *finally*, warmer weather!! And so with now more of us out there on our bay and traveling to various TMCA destinations, here are updates on some information previously discussed, and also various new items of interest.

1. The **Bayport Channel Deepening and Widening Project** continues with the dredge Linda LaQuay continuing to work in the open bay portion of the channel, although she is moving ever-closer to the land-cut of Bayport and thus will soon be less of an obstacle herself. But all the dredge pipelines are still out there, and if you are planning a trip up to that portion of the bay and have not yet looked at the **POH Deepening & Widening** website (click [here](#)) you should definitely do so before setting out!

This website provides project information, including a link to a pdf file (click [here](#)) created by the POHA and Orion Marine Group providing detailed project information. Take note especially of slides 15 & 20 which provide information on the pipeline route, what to look for if you wish to cross it, and where to safely do so.

The Linda LaQuay is required to have AIS working at all times and can be seen on www.vesselfinder.com and on your vessel's AIS. She is also required to answer all VHF calls on channel 13. There is now a second dredge working also, the Waymon Boyd, but she is working inside the land-cut dredging the docks and so does not pose any hindrance to us recreational boaters.

2. I recently read an interesting article in **WorkBoat** magazine, a commercial mariners website, entitled “**Close Calls**”. In it the author presents both hard data and also anecdotal comments on the ever-increasing amount of recreational boater traffic inside and near commercial shipping channels, and thus *lots* of “close calls”! One comment in the article said that recreational boats “have a tendency to like the channels” and we of course see a *lot* of that here in the Houston Ship Channel between Clear Lake and Galveston. As many of you know, I personally continue promote viable options to traveling down the HSC, and if you are unaware as to what these are please contact me. Captain Bob Webbon, the Houston Pilot who spoke at our Sept. 2014 meeting (click [here](#) for more info on that event), gave us a unique perspective on the issue, he being both a pilot and also an avid sailor. For the moment however I have placed the “**Close Calls**” article on the website and it can be accessed by clicking [here](#). Give it a read!

3. Important changes are coming on April 2nd to the **USCG Vessel Traffic Service (VTS)** (<http://www.uscg.mil/vtshouston/>). Recreational boaters are not normally users of VTS, although the VTS can at times be a *great* help to us in certain situations. But that is perhaps discussion for a future article. There is not space here to go into the reasons for these changes, but basically VTS is adding a third “geographic sector” to the two that already existed. Up until now if you wanted to listen to a VTS broadcast to find out where ship and tow traffic was located (like if you were traversing the narrow and somewhat blind section of the HSC between Morgan’s Point and Bayland Marina) you would listen on VHF-12, that zone including the HSC from the Galveston Bay Entrance Channel LB 1B all the way up to LT-113 just past the Exxon Refinery in Baytown. (And the only time that we needed to access the other VTS channel (VHF-11) was when we were traversing the Security Zone on our way to Allen’s Landing.)

The addition of the new “geographic sector” now compresses the previous two sectors so that VHF-12 is now the channel to access from the Galveston Bay Entrance Channel LB 1B only up to LT-33/34, in the vicinity of Texas City. The second geographic sector, on VHF-11, now extends from LT-33/34 up to LT-122, a bit south of the Lynchburg Ferry. So now, if you don’t have AIS on your vessel and you want to check on that traffic just above Morgan’s Point, you must go to channel 11 rather than channel 12. The final geographic sector (on VHF-21A) goes from LT-122 all the way to the Turning Basin and again, we would only be interacting with that on our way to Allen’s Landing.

So make a note of this change, and if you had to call VTS in a difficult (like in dense fog!) or emergency situation, know where you are on the water and then which channel to call!

And by the way, even though we do not have a tour of the VTS facility scheduled for this year, I have arranged for the VTS Director, Captain Stephen Nerheim, to be the speaker at our May General Meeting. (click [here](#)) Steve is an awesome speaker and I think that it will be a very informative and fun meeting!

4. I mention regularly in this column the **Lone Star Harbor Safety Committee** and *especially* several important items for recreational boaters to be aware of which can be found under the “**Resources**” tab of their website. (<http://www.lonestarhsc.org/resources.php> and then scroll down the page.) The section seen there “**For the Recreational Boater**” I help to maintain and if you have not done so previously, become familiar with all the documents at that location of definite interest to recreational boaters.

5. Monthly maritime history lectures continue at the **Houston Maritime Museum**, usually on the second Tuesday of each month. Information on all upcoming HMM lectures can be found by clicking [here](#). The next lecture, on April 14th, by Marks Hinton is entitled: “**Houston’s Port and Ship Channel History as Told by Street Names**”. The museum even feeds you at these lectures so come on out and see the museum and learn some interesting history about our region.

And as usual, if any readers have comments, questions, ideas, or information on events that I may not know about, then I would definitely like to hear from you!

Philip Kropf
Community Liaison Committee Chair

[Click here for TMCA Calendar](#)

2015 TMCA Officers

Commodore:	Bob Nickelson, m/v Docktari	713-826-7551
Past Commodore:	Martin Clark, m/v Impulsive	281-435-1253
Vice Commodore:	Charles Parette, m/v Andiamo	713-817-8263
Rear Commodore:	Charlene Lim, s/v Sea Illusion	832-483-8086
Cruise Captain:	Jerry Simoneaux, s/v Tradewind	713-577-9587
Secretary:	Kathy Houser, m/v Attitude Adjustment	281-804-4122
Treasurer:	Debbie Sturgeon, s/v Sol Purpose	832-474-5627

2015 TMCA Trustees

Trustee 2011	Commodore Doug Chappell	Dock Trauma	281-330-1163
Trustee 2008	Commodore Marion Herndon		281-703-9322
Trustee 2012-13	Commodore Steve Lee	s/v Waltzing Matilda	281-802-9838
Trustee 2002	Commodore Gloria Rooney	s/v St. Somewhere	281-499-4413



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