

# AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB

For Boaters, By Boaters®



## THE DRUM

A Publication of the Finger Lakes Chapter

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Report any errors or omissions to:

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### From The Commander

By Kris West, S

SV Zephyr

#### The Case of the Drippy Diesel

After a cold, wet spring it looks like most of us have our boats in the water at Village Marina. I want to recognize how much work we put into our boats and how much ABC-FLX has helped me in my journey to understanding and maintaining *Zephyr*. Taking the Engine Maintenance Class a while back has paid dividends and so has the ongoing patience shown to me by a lot of friends around the marina. All of that has helped me to tackle a mystery that has plagued *Zephyr*. Since day one she's emanated a distinctly distasteful diesel odor below decks. You know the smell – the one that permeates all soft surfaces and is hard to get rid of even with all hatches open and fans on full tilt. And I, your fearless commander, was determined to get rid of it!

When I began my investigation, it didn't take long to identify the key culprit - a persistent slow leak from my primary fuel filter. My



first clues were the diesel coating the fuel lines and a small pool of the stuff in the drip pan under the engine. First, with help and advice from Jim McGinnis and Mike Sidell, I tried tightening hose clamps and changing the fuel filter but those proved to be temporary fixes at best. So, while I puzzled over the problem and got on with sailing, for the last few seasons *Zephyr* suffered the indignity of having a 'diaper' installed in the engine compartment to prevent her from leaking fuel into the lake by way of the bilge.

This spring, I bit the bullet and decided to replace that problematic primary filter. Once I started shopping, I saw the value

in upgrading to a new filter because there are some nice features available like an integrated pump (to make it easier to pressurize the system) and a clear collector bowl (to keep an eye on any water accumulation in the system). With help from my loving husband and through some creative ‘boat yoga’ we were able to remove the old pump and install the new one relatively easily. So, problem solved, right? Nope.

I’m going to take a little detour here – I promise we’ll get back to that diesel leak. Have you ever read that children’s book, *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*? Well, that story is a lot like my journey into boat maintenance. Before doing “x”, you have to do “y”. But before doing “y”, you have to do a whole sequence of other things. Before launching, in addition to changing out the fuel filter, we needed to do some maintenance on our water heater compartment. Before doing that, we needed to remove the hot water heater from the compartment and, before doing that, we had to disconnect and drain the coolant from the lines connecting the hot water heater to the heat exchanger on the engine.

Fast forward, the water heater compartment is dealt with, everything is reconnected and we’re ready to replace the coolant. But, why not just flush the system first to make sure we’re not adding good coolant to bad, right? According to Google, this is a really easy thing to do. Referring to my Yanmar 2GM20F manual, I found that there are three valves on the starboard side of my engine I have to open to

drain the coolant from the heat exchanger. Easy peasy, right?

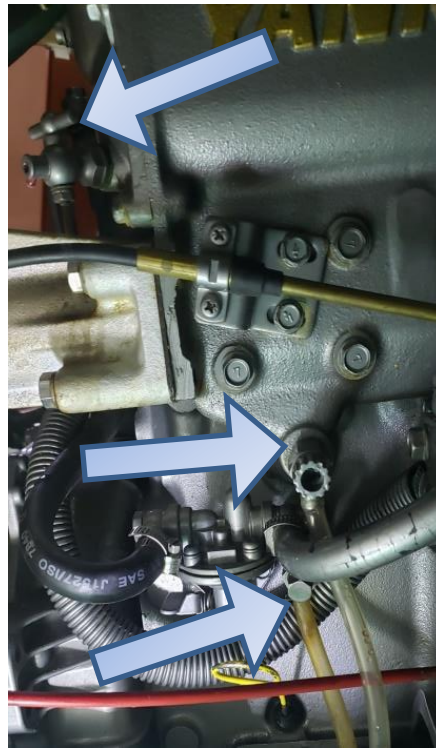


Figure 1: Coolant drain locations.

So, I get myself set with replacement fluid, some drain lines and an empty milk jug to collect the coolant, open the valves and....nothing. Not a drop. Am I missing something? I go back to Google and my owner’s manual to make sure I’m not missing a drain somewhere. That’s when I discovered through a helpful YouTube video that the coolant drains on Yanmar engines are known to get clogged with rust and debris. A few pokes with a small brush brought out a pasty orange sludge and we were off! The system drained quickly, I flushed it a few times with distilled water to clear out the rust and wrapped up by refilling with the new coolant. Done.

Except... there’s something dripping! What’s that? It smells like diesel! And now its coming down the starboard side of the

## The Drum

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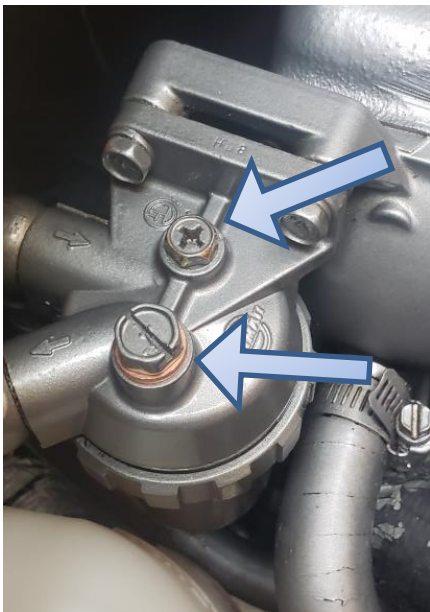


Figure 2: Another source!

engine. The primary fuel filter looks great, but there's that darn drip in a new spot. Following the laws of gravity, I traced the flow back to its source, this time on the top of the secondary fuel filter. There it was – oozing right out from under the screws on top of my secondary filter! I removed the bleed screw and the other screw holding the filter in place and found the culprits! A couple gaskets, each smaller than my thumbnail, had worn out. Replacing those really was easy peasy and since then, no more leaks. Yet.

Now, all I have to do is fix that darned spinnaker pole that came



Figure 3: The culprits!

apart on me last weekend.

Now get outside and have fun!

- Kris

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o o o o o

**The meteorologist who  
devised the wind chill  
factor has died.**

**He was 86, but he felt like  
75.**

# From the Executive Officer

By Jim McGinnis, SN-CN

## Early Summer Activities



Ahoy FLX Members, Friends, and Family!

Lynne and I are back in NY, *S/V Brewster* is in the water, and we've just started

to get some nice weather. In fact, the last three days have been over 90°F and we have seen the wind raging from over 30 knots and raising three-foot seas on the lake down to less than a whisper.

I got a new mainsail over the winter, made by Tony Peelle of Bay Sails in Sodus, NY (the old one was ripped last summer and was really baggy). The new sail is loose footed and has five full length battens versus the old sail that had four. So, the shape should be good, more adjustable, and stay that way longer.

This past weekend we had a race to Geneva, NY with Seneca Yacht Club. Three boats made the trip to Watkins Glen from SYC in Geneva on Friday for the race. Eleven boats joined from our Finger Lakes Yacht Club and we all headed North in light air that died by noon. Our efforts to fill the asymmetric spinnaker were foiled by changing wind direction and unexpected jibes. But we finished the distance shortened race and made it to the party

before the keg was tapped – so no harm, no foul.

Sunday morning, we arose to head back south to 30 knots out of the west. But that breeze also was short lived. We furled the sails, set the autopilot and watched for floating debris on the way back to Watkins.

We are teaching the USPS Boat Handling Class this summer and have engaged five of our membership with small and large boats, sail and power, to teach different sections. Six students are in the class being held at the Watkins Glen Yacht Club Facility and on-the-water sessions are located at our Marina.

We had 36 Students in our NY Basic Boating Safety Class in May!

Two weeks ago, on a chilly Father's Day weekend, the Town of Watkins Glen hosted the Annual Cardboard Boat Regatta. Two of the competitors are shown here. These are made of cardboard, duct tape and paint but some are pretty robust as you can see. A fun time was had by all.

We had a lot of damage from Hurricanes Helene and Milton last year. This year is predicted to be worse. Hopefully not for our west coast region in FL... We'll be watching.

Fair winds,

- Jim

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*SV Brewster*

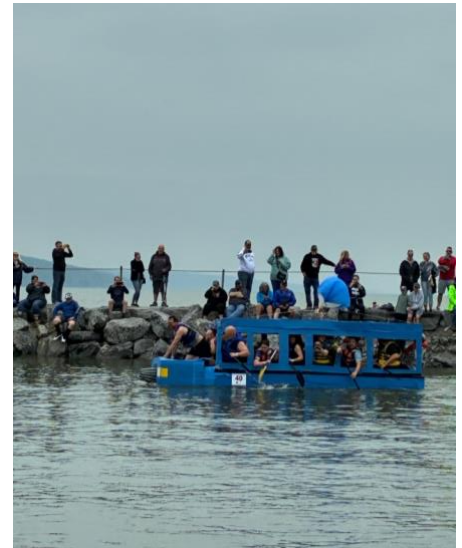


Figure 4: Cardboard school bus making time.



Figure 5: Rear engine race car (boat) from the Glen.

## From the Administrative Officer

By Maggie Martin

### June 24<sup>th</sup> Meeting Recap



Our ABC FLX group meeting on Tuesday, June 25<sup>th</sup> at 29 Neat was well attended. In spite of the 95°F

temperatures, the AC provided sufficient relief. Members and guests were an interested audience as Shane Allsworth and Capt. Tom Alley described the trip that they had taken to bring Shane and Jacqueline's newly purchased 39-foot cabin cruiser from Montreal to its home port at the Village Marina, Watkins Glen on Seneca Lake. Shane describes: "Four seasoned USPS educators

*supported the cruise as they navigated three major water systems... and the Boat Operator Certification Program (BOC) as two crew members demonstrated their advanced skills in the open waters of Lake Ontario and earned certifications."*

Those of us who travelled along in our seats sipping beverages on Tuesday were impressed by the range of circumstances (locks, customs, language barriers) that were challenges, as well as the extensive planning (and expense!) that the trip involved. My mind wandered to who, how and where they were all berthed at night? It was informative as they recalled the rivers, canals, and lakes travelled. Truly a grand adventure and a memorable trip for these first time boat owners

(except for an inflatable kayak), and a bold beginning to many adventures at sea as they eventually plan to be 'cruisers'.



Figure 6: The Alsworth family's new ride while in Oswego.

This may already be more than a 'hobby'! Welcome aboard.

- Maggie

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# From the Education Director

By Katie Alley, JN

SV Tomfoolery

## Ignorance Is Not Bliss



Why do we need boating education resources? Isn't boating something you can kind of teach

yourself? Just get out there on the water and figure it out as you go? Well, no. Reddit gave me an amusing reminder of that the other day with this post:

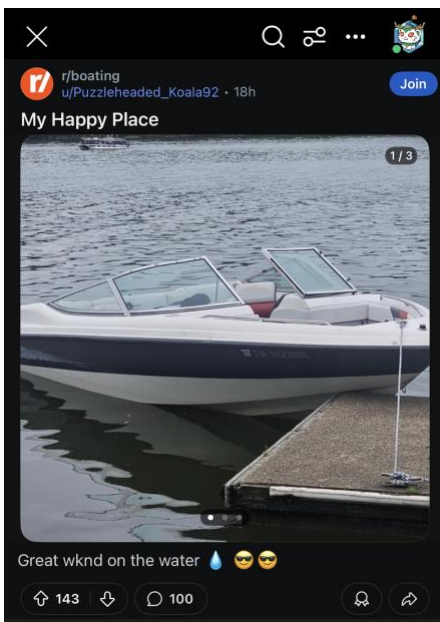


Figure 8: Reddit post.

(For those of you who are not familiar, Reddit is a social network of specific discussion forums.) This post came from the “boating” community.

And, oh my gosh, if this isn't a prime example of why we need boating education classes, then I don't know what is. With that



Figure 7: Not the greatest picture, but Chief Meteorologist Rhonda Lee from WETM TV came to teach the class's lesson on tropical weather. She was very energetic and engaging, and certainly an inspiring Black woman.

park job, it'll only take one mid-sized wake for the concrete dock to stab a hole into that powerboat's hull.

“Holy fuzzz... who ties a boat like that?! Crazy,” one commenter said. The original poster responded: “All good.”

Another comment read: “Can't wait for you to come back and ask how to repair a hole in your hull,” and the original poster said in return, “Yeah that's not gonna happen lol.”

The ignorance was impressive – in a bad way. While the consequences of this poor docking technique may just be an inconvenient fiberglass repair, other instances of ignorance can have devastating effects. For instance, it certainly will not be “all good” if you don't know what to do when a crewmember falls overboard in cold water, or when you fuel up incorrectly and start a fire (or explosion) onboard. The consequences may include loss of life and not just getting brutally

destroyed in the comments of your Reddit post. That's why boating education resources, like our group, are needed.

The Education Department has been very busy this year! On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, Weather students took their final exam. All six students got a score in the 90s! What an incredible testament to the passionate students, effective instructor, and comprehensive materials.

Our squadron also just finished up one of the biggest educational endeavors we've undertaken – an ABC class with 34 students! I was feeling quite overwhelmed, but with other members volunteering their time, the class went wonderfully. I truly appreciate Kris West, Scott Williams, and Jim McGinnis for teaching with me. I am also grateful for the organizational support we received from Charlie Fausold, Glenda Gephart, and Phil Cherry. We conquered all the challenges - registration, book distribution, provisions, covering all the

material within the given time constraints, and grading exams.

The Valois-Logan-Hector Fire Department worked out as an ideal venue. Several firemen and their friends took the class with us. I hope we can host future events there!

33 students finished the final exam and ALL OF THEM PASSED! Again, another testament to our amazing instruction. There were a handful of old guys in the class who were lifelong boaters and less than happy that NYS was forcing them to take the class. One gentleman reported that he, "...did learn something after all!"

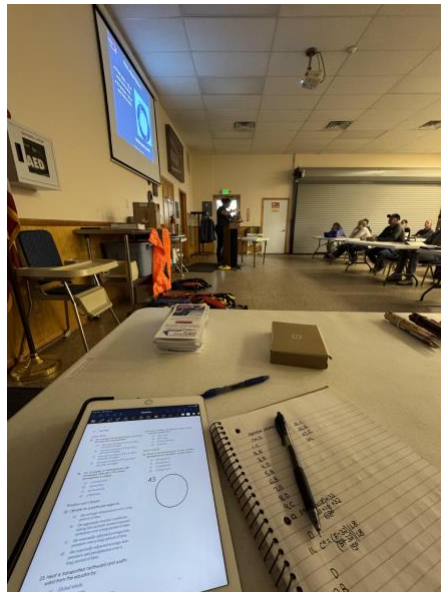
Another woman in the class shared that she went from knowing only to hold on to the side of a canoe to understanding so much about boating in general! She was very happy and glad that she took the class. That comment tells me our class was undoubtedly valuable!

Our youngest student, who I think was around 14 years old, was overjoyed that she passed her exam after Charlie helped read the questions aloud to her. We should all feel accomplished that there are 33 more safe and

knowledgeable boaters out on the Finger Lakes now.



*Figure 9: 34 students listening to me (fueled by a RedBull) teach. Whew.*



*Figure 10: I was studying for the Weather exam while Kris taught her section of the ABC class!*

Up next on the calendar (after dealing with months of insurance drama and finally securing on-the-water coverage), we have the

*Boat Handling* class. Jim McGinnis is acting as lead instructor, with several guest stars coming in to help teach, for six students. We are also planning to do the Man Overboard seminar at our Sampson Rendezvous on the first Saturday in August. Should be fun and hands-on!

Remember..., it's always better to know more than you need to than to not know enough. Take the time to dock your boat properly so you don't ruin your "great wknd on the water." We're here to help you learn and not end up like that Reddit poster. The great thing about boating is that there is always more to learn! And you'd probably rather learn it from us than from the brutal commenters on Reddit.

- Katie

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*Figure 11: Shane Alsworth and Tom Alley's presentation at 29 Neat on June 24<sup>th</sup>.*

# Secretary's Sidenotes

By Jeff Mack, JN

SV Project

## Race Around the Barge – Part 3



I woke up around 6 a.m. and peeked out over the foredeck to inspect the muddy mess I'd made the night before. The

sun wasn't yet over the trees, and though I'd only slept a couple hours, I felt rested. Still, I decided to steal one more hour of sleep before heading north.

Later, I made coffee, tidied up, and got ready for a spirited 15-mile downwind sail. The cloud layer that built up overnight had lifted into a pale blue sky streaked with mares' tails—perhaps hinting at the westerly shift I hoped would come the next day. The persistent breeze from the south had freshened nicely.

I started the engine, hauled anchor, and jammed the muddy rode and chain under the dinghy, wedging the anchor across the bow stanchions to deal with later. I peeled away from shore, unfurling just a slice of the Genoa to starboard. It was plenty. The sail pulled and the building waves pushed as *Tina* locked into her groove. I focused on steering, catching rides down the face of the waves.

We reached Geneva in under an hour and a half. At quarter to nine, we bounded past the hulking

steel barge that would serve as a race mark the next day amidst an entourage of waves wearing white caps. I'd reserved a slip at the Seneca State Park marina for the weekend.

As I entered the harbor, I furled the Genoa, fired up the engine, and motored toward the Cayuga-Seneca canal at the harbor's eastern edge. I passed the Seneca Yacht Club, eyeing sailboats that looked like they were preparing for something.

Creeping into the marina and squinting to find my number on E Dock, I noticed someone watching me from across the fairway: an old salt, standing on the stern of a pristine 1980s Pearson 30. Aviators mirrored the sky. A corn cob pipe was cinched between his beard and mustache as he leaned back against his backstay, soaking in the sun.

Suddenly, I felt self-conscious—my messy deck, my solo docking. But when I looked back, he was gone. I docked without an audience, which was a relief.

After a bit of rest and a fried egg and bacon sandwich from my little propane stove, I got to work. I dropped the dinghy in and tied it off. I rinsed off the mud and stored the anchor gear. My neighbor to port loaned me a hose. My neighbor to starboard sipped coffee on her stern deck and struck up conversation. She recalled being rescued during a storm as a child when her family's wooden sailboat began to sink.

"You were a mess when you came in," she said. "Good thing you're cleaning it up."

Later, I decided to try the sail kit on the dinghy. I'd stashed it in the quarter berth and figured the marina fairway was wide enough. Just as I was rigging it, the old salt reappeared on the Pearson.

"You better be careful with that thing," he called out.

"I won't hit your boat," I assured him.

As soon as I dropped the daggerboard and sheeted in, I was instantly shoved straight at his boat. No room to tack, no way to bear off. He helped fend me off, and I scrambled with the sail, paddling away with an oar. The wind pushed me and the dinghy dangerously close to slipping under the dock.

Thoroughly embarrassed, I apologized and introduced myself to Paul. He wasn't nearly as grumpy as I feared—despite having warned me moments earlier. It was a perfect "I-told-you-so" moment, but he chuckled it off.

"You might want to row out to the canal first," he suggested gently.

I thanked him, and rowed back to my boat with my sail between my legs.

By afternoon, sailors from the south shore began arriving. That evening, I joined Chad, skipper of *Sweetest Thing*, for dinner. We chugged across the harbor through some chop aboard his

O'Day 28. Clouds rolled in from the west as we walked to Cosentino's, where we carb-loaded in preparation for race day.

By the time we finished, the sky had broken into chubby cumulus chunks with patches of pink reflecting the sun's descent behind the hills. A spectacular color show—maybe even a good omen for tomorrow.

Back at the marina, the docks were quiet. I walked through the park as still darkness gathered under the giant oaks. At the shoreline, I spotted a heron silhouetted against Geneva's waterfront lights, which shimmered in the shallows.

The bird moved with slow, meditative grace—its posture like some kind of bird tai chi. Barely rippling the surface, it craned its

neck deliberately, then snapped into the water like a bullwhip, spearing a small fish.

Its wings unfolded, and it rose—silent and slow—gliding away low across the water into the dark.

*To be continued.....*

- Jeff

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## ABC-FLX News

### Happy Birthday!

Happy birthday to our members!

#### July

Kris West

#### August

Christa Wolf  
Bob MacBlane  
Tom Alley

### Loaner Life Jackets Stocked



Phil Cherry, Membership Chairman for America's Boating Club-Finger Lakes Chapter, and Kris West, ABC-FLX Commander, have filled the club's free loaner life jacket tree at the Clute Park kayak and canoe launch in Watkins Glen. Their friend Phelps shows off his own life jacket. The club also has a fully stocked loaner life jacket tree at the Clute Park boat launch

on the canal. We've been providing this service since 2019.

### Congratulations Weather Class Graduates!

Congratulations to the recent graduates of our Weather class:

- Katie Alley
- Shane Alsworth
- John Chesebrough
- Jeff Mack
- Larry Simpson
- Linda Simpson

### Record-Sized ABC Class



Our largest class in a very long time to take America's Boating Course filled the community room at the Valois-Logan-Hector Fire Hall for three nights in late May and early June. All of the 33 participants who took the test passed, and they included one with a perfect score! The youngest student was 14.

Led by Education Officer Katie Alley, other instructors were

Commander Kris West, Assistant Education Officer Scott Williams and Membership Chairman Phil Cherry. A few chapter members also helped in a variety of ways. A great team effort to inform our friends and neighbors about safe boating!

### NTSB Preliminary Report

On June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) released its preliminary report on the collision of the Mexican navy training ship *ARM Cuauhtémoc BE 01* with the Brooklyn Bridge. While the report doesn't identify any root causes or come to any conclusions about this fatal incident (that will be in the final report), it does provide a closer look at the sequence of events leading up to and immediately after the crash.

You can find the report here:

<https://www.nts.gov/investigations/Pages/DCA25MM039.aspx>

### Got News?

If you have news to share that you think would be of use to your fellow boaters, please submit it to you friendly newsletter editor so that it can be included!

## Upcoming Classes & Seminars

### Where Do I Start?

To work through the progression of Boating Classes and the progression of Boating skills development we have organized the classes and skills on the Long-Term Schedule. If you have any questions or want a class offered sooner let me know.

See also: <https://usps.org/sss-where-do-i-start>

### America's Boating Course (ABC)

Earn your NYS Boater's Safety Card - a certification now required for all boat operators in New York! ABC-FLX prides itself on offering a unique version of this 8-hour course that includes an optional on-the-water session. During this on-the-water session, students are able to translate their newly acquired knowledge from the classroom to an actual boat ride. Our version of this class includes two hands-on classroom sessions, a review session, the exam, and the optional on-the-water-session.

#### What You'll Learn:

- Information about NYS boating laws, regulations, boat registration, and licensing
- Required boating safety equipment
- Basic navigation and rules of the road
- How to handle medical emergencies and mechanical problems onboard

- The basics of towing and trailering

Class size is limited. Contact Katie at [SEO@abc-flx.org](mailto:SEO@abc-flx.org) to be the first to receive information on how to sign up.

**Prerequisites:** None

**When:** Summer 2025

**Where:** TBD

**Duration:** Two 3-hour classroom sessions, a 1-hour review session, and the exam.

### Boat Handling

(Previously known as *Seamanship*) Learn how to handle your boat in a variety of situations and become the skipper you want to be. Gain confidence in docking, underway, anchoring, and other seamanship skills.

Our new Boat Handling course is intended for newer recreational boaters who have completed a basic boating class (like America's Boating Course) and want to gain more knowledge, skill, and confidence to boat safely and have more fun in a variety of situations.

Covers the following topics:

- Rules of the Road
- Docking
- Confidently handling your boat underway
- Anchoring
- Emergencies on Board
- Knots and Line Handling

Each topic is also available as a free-standing seminar.

Our instructors will enrich the course with local knowledge, experience, and discussion that will help you expand your boating horizons.

Includes on-the-water sessions!

**Prerequisites:** None

**When:** Right now! (Still time to join if you want.)

**Where:** Classroom Watkins Glen Yacht Club. On-the-water sessions at the Watkins Glen Village Marina.

**Duration:** 7 weeks (including final exam).

### Man Overboard Seminar

According to the US Coast Guard, in 2023 over half of all fatalities among recreational boaters occurred from people ending up in the water, either voluntarily or involuntarily. 87% were not wearing life jackets.

Do you know what to do if someone falls off your boat? Getting to the person in the water is just the beginning. How are you going to get them back into your boat?

We'll show you. Better yet, we'll let you practice this with on-the-water exercises during the Boater's Weekend event at Sampson Marina this summer.

**When:** August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025. Time TBA.

**Where:** Sampson State Park Marina

This event is still in the planning phases. Additional details will be announced soon, but it's not too

early to get your name on the list! Attendance will be limited based on the number of boats and instructors we will have available to conduct the class.

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## Instructor Development & Certification

The course has been designed to demonstrate interactive teaching methods focused on adult learning. Students are required to prepare lesson plans and give three presentations to their peers utilizing a variety of teaching aids and presentation skills. The instructor may assign a topic for these presentations, or you may use material and PowerPoint slides from existing USPS courses, and they may build on one another.

For those who are already certified instructors, don't forget that your certification must be renewed every four years. Fortunately, this is easily done by attending a 2-hour seminar to get you caught up in the latest teaching techniques and recommendations.

Details for these sessions are still being finalized, but it's not too early to get your name on the list if you're interested in helping our club share its knowledge of boating.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Instructors:** Jim McGinnis & Charlie Fausold

**Cost:** FREE to members

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## Operations Training

To many, America's Boating Club (a.k.a., the USPS) is a large, complex organization shrouded in mystery. For many, this is an impediment to getting more involved in the club, which directly impacts your ability to get more *OUT* of the club.

Come join some of our more experienced members to learn how our club is organized and how all these groups work together to get things done. Not only will be time well spent, but the instructors will ensure you have a good time as you learn more about our club!

**Prerequisites:** None

**Lead Instructor:** Jim McGinnis

**Cost:** FREE to members

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## How to Register

If you have questions about any of these courses, or better yet, if you wish to sign up, please contact: Finger Lakes Chapter Education Director, Katie Alley:

[seo@abc-flx.org](mailto:seo@abc-flx.org)

Or you can go to the national web site ([www.usps.org](http://www.usps.org)) and register under the "Find A Boating Class" tab on the member home page.

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## Looking for Something?

ABC-FLX would be happy to hear your requests and ideas. Feel free to contact me, Katie Alley, at

[SEO@abc-flx.org](mailto:SEO@abc-flx.org).

Available subjects for instruction can be found on the chapter web site:

[www.abc-flx.org](http://www.abc-flx.org)

# Get Your Vessel Safety Examination!

By Ray Margeson

SV Hattie L.

Seneca Lake, the largest and deepest of the Finger Lakes, is a beloved destination for boating, fishing, and water recreation. With its scenic beauty and bustling summer activity, ensuring safety on the water is more important than ever. One of the most effective ways to promote safe boating is by getting a **Vessel Safety Examination (VSE)**—a free, voluntary inspection offered by the local American's Boating Club – Finger Lakes Chapter.

## Why Is a Vessel Safety Examination Necessary?

### 1. Compliance with New York State Law

**As of January 1, 2025, all operators of motorized vessels in New York State — regardless of age — must possess a valid Boating Safety Certificate.**

This law aims to reduce accidents and promote responsible boating. A VSE helps ensure your vessel meets the required safety standards and that you're prepared for emergencies.

### 2. Peace of Mind

A VSE checks for essential safety equipment such as life jackets, fire extinguishers, navigation lights, and distress signals. Passing the exam gives you confidence that your boat is properly equipped and compliant with federal and state regulations.

### 3. Avoiding Fines and Delays

While the VSE itself is not mandatory, failing to meet safety requirements during a routine law enforcement stop can result in fines or being ordered off the water. A VSE sticker shows the authorities that your vessel has been checked and meets safety standards.

### 4. Protecting Lives and the Environment

Seneca Lake is not only a recreational haven but also a source of drinking water for surrounding communities. Safe boating practices help prevent accidents, fuel spills, and other environmental hazards.

## How to Get a Vessel Safety Examination

You can schedule a free VSE through the local chapter of **America's Boating Club**. Examiners will come to your boat—whether it's docked, trailered, or in the water—and walk you through the process. It's educational, non-punitive, and designed to help you, not penalize you.

Whether you're a seasoned boater or new to the waters of Seneca Lake, a Vessel Safety Examination is a smart, proactive step toward a safer and more enjoyable boating season. Would you like help finding a local examiner or preparing a checklist for your inspection?

The local Examiners are Charlie Fausold, Don Kloeber (Sampson) and Ray Margeson (Seneca Harbor Marina). You can request an exam by emailing [VSC@abc-flx.us](mailto:VSC@abc-flx.us).

- Ray

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# The Last Word

By Tom Alley, SN-ON

## Graduation Season



The two months since our last newsletter have been the peak of “graduation” season. In May it was the

universities and colleges, and now in June, it’s the high schools releasing their graduates into the wild. Reminiscing on my own graduations many decades ago and the doors that were opened to me because of my education, I wish this current generation of graduates all the best.



*Figure 12: Tomfoolery graduates from her decommissioned state to being operational for another season.*

In addition to the academic graduations, I’m pleased to report that my own vessel has graduated from her winter storage to floating once again in

her slip. This will be her 60<sup>th</sup> year afloat!

Aside from the graduations, the past months can be summed up with a single four-letter word: Busy. Both *Tomfoolery* and I are getting accustomed to some refurbished systems. This year finds us with a new refrigerator and new instrumentation. A lot has changed in the 30 years since the prior systems were installed. New instruments didn’t fit in the old holes. New cables didn’t fit through the old raceways. The new refrigeration components were quite different from the old ones. And the new operating procedures for all these devices haven’t (so far) fit into my old brain. As a result, this boating season is destined to be a season of discovery – and of the frustration that accompanies it!

On the other hand, the wisdom acquired from using the older systems for three decades did result in some adjustments to the design of the new systems. For example, the cabinet covering the back of the new instruments is an inch shallower than the old one. This should improve access to the galley sink and make it easier to do the dishes after meals when we’re on overnight trips. The new refrigerator was selected with features that promise to improve its electrical efficiency two-fold. (We’ll have an opportunity to test this at the end of June on a weekend trip to Geneva!)

*SV Tomfoolery*



*Figure 13: Tomfoolery's new teak instrument panel.*



*Figure 14: Interior cabinet covering the back of the new instruments and wiring.*

Along the way, as always happens, I learned some new and interesting things. For example: Where to find teak lumber? I had pretty much resigned myself to taking a day off work and driving up to Rochester or Buffalo to a yard that stocked it. On a whim I typed in “teak” in the search bar of Lowe’s web site and – a hit! They carried it. I never would have guessed that!

Lowe's teak was a bit more expensive than the big-city lumber yards, but for the quantity I was buying it was cheaper than driving a couple hundred miles and taking a day off from work, so I figured I'd give it a try and ordered enough for this year's projects.

The lumber arrived a few weeks later and it was a 10-minute drive from my house to pick it up. The quality was good and, as you can see by the photos above, it cleaned up nicely and looks pretty sharp!

This year was also a refresher course on NMEA 2000 data networks. Almost all boat instrumentation communicates through these protocols nowadays. On one hand, it simplifies sharing data between various onboard systems, and it standardizes the cabling and connectors used. On the other hand, you have to understand a little bit about how it works to install it properly. The hardest part is reading through all of the user manuals for the instruments themselves to configure them to look for data from the other instruments!

One final plug for Sea Frost, the manufacturer of the new refrigerator that's aboard *Tomfoolery* this year. A couple of weeks after commissioning the new unit, it suddenly stopped working. No error codes, no fault lights, no obvious anomalies other than the fact that the compressor simply wouldn't turn on. Some basic troubleshooting on my part didn't provide any great revelations, so at 10:30pm on a Friday night I sent an email to the company to ask for some assistance with figuring out what was wrong.

Shortly before 7:00am on Saturday morning, I received an email from the president of the company: "What's your phone number?" Now THAT'S customer service!

I replied with my cell number and told him I would be on the boat shortly after noon that day. Sure enough, a little after 1:00pm he called and spent about 10 minutes stepping me through a couple more checks. He then told me to swap a couple of probes around and let him know what happens.

When we got back to the dock, I completed the steps he suggested (they would have been inconvenient to do while underway) and suddenly the compressor started up. At this point I figured out that it was probably a bad connector for one of the temperature probes used by the thermostat. Some more poking and prodding isolated the troublesome intermittent connection.

Another email later and the Sea Frost president said it would be an easy fix to either re-solder the connector or just bypass it directly to the screw terminals on the circuit board.

Companies with employees that provide that level of personal service definitely should be recognized! Best of all, there's cold beer aboard *Tomfoolery* once more!

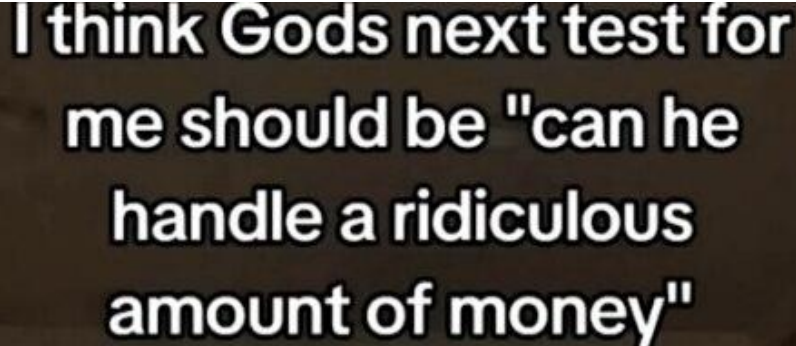
See you on the water!

- Your Editor, Tom

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*As always, send your thoughts about this newsletter to:*

[editor@abc-flx.org](mailto:editor@abc-flx.org)



I think Gods next test for me should be "can he handle a ridiculous amount of money"

# Long-Term Class Schedule

Seneca Education Department

BOC Level	Title	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Inland Navigator	Classes	ABC	C / X	X	X	X	X
		Boat Handling	U		X	X	
		Engine Maintenance			X		
		Marine Electrical Systems		X			
	Seminars	Using A Chart					
		VHF/DSC Radios					
		Using GPS			X		
		Basic Weather and Forecasting		X			
	Skills	Basic Powerboat Handling			X		
		Fire Extinguishers					

BOC Level	Title	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Coastal Navigator	Classes	Marine Navigation	X				X
		Marine Communication Systems		X			
		Weather	C			X	
	Seminars	Tides & Currents					X
		Rules of the Road				X	
		Anchoring					
		Mariner's Compass		X	X		
	Skills	Coastal Nav			X		
		Pyrotechnics		X			

BOC Level		Title	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Advanced Coastal Navigator	Classes	Advanced Marine Navigation		X		X		X
		Cruise Planning					X	
		Radar	X					
		Emergencies Onboard					X	X
	Sem.	Marine Radar (Retired)						
	Skills	Advanced Coastal Nav					X	X
		First Aid						

BOC Level		Title	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Offshore Navigator	C	Offshore Navigation		X				X
	Sem.	Computer Weather Forecasting	X					
		Thunderstorms / Severe Weather	X					
	Skills	Offshore Navigation					X	
		CPR/AED	Contact American Heart Assoc. or Red Cross.					
Endorsements		Sail		X		X	X	
		Boating on Rivers, Locks, and Lakes						
		Canadian Regulations	X					
		PaddleSmart		X		X		
Other		Instructor Development	X			X		
		Instructor Recertification	X	X			X	
		Operations Training	X			X		
		Celestial Navigation			X		X	

### Table Key

X = Planned

U = Underway

C = Completed

# Calendar of Events

## July 2025

- 01 Finger Lakes *Drum* July issue publication date.
- 08 Bridge Meeting (1900).
- 18 Deadline for *The Deep 6* articles. (D/6)
- 31-8/3 D/6 Rendezvous, *Sylvan Beach, NY*. (D/6)

## August 2025

- 01 *The Deep 6* summer issue publication date. (D/6)
- 01-03 Summer Boater Weekend, *Sampson State Park Marina, Seneca Lake*.
- 12 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 22 Deadline for *Drum* Articles

## September 2025

- 01 Finger Lakes *Drum* September issue publication date.
- 01-17 USPS Governing Board Meeting, *Grand Rapids, MI* (National)
- 06 Seneca Lake Barge Race, *Seneca Yacht Club, Geneva, NY*.
- 09 Bridge Meeting (1900)

## October 2025

- 14 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 17 Deadline for *The Deep 6* articles (D/6)
- 18 District 6 Fall Council & Conference, *Cavalry Club, Manlius, NY* (D/6)
- 24 Deadline for *Drum* articles

## November 2025

- 01 Finger Lakes *Drum* November issue publication date.
- 01 *The Deep 6* fall issue publication date. (D/6)
- 11 Bridge Meeting (1900)

## December 2025

- 09 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 19 Deadline for *Drum* Articles

## January 2026

- 01 Finger Lakes *Drum* January issue publication date
- 13 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 16 Deadline for D/6 *The Deep 6* articles. (D/6)
- TBA Finger Lakes Change of Watch

## February 2026

- 01 *The Deep 6* winter issue publication date. (D/6)
- 09-15 USPS Annual Meeting, *Myrtle Beach, SC* (National)
- 10 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 20 Deadline for *Drum* Articles

## March 2026

- 01 Finger Lakes *Drum* March issue publication date.
- 10 Bridge Meeting (1900)

## April 2026

- 14 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 17-19 District 6 Spring Council & Conference, *Binghamton, NY* (D/6)
- 17 Deadline for *The Deep 6* articles (D/6)
- 24 Deadline for *Drum* Articles

## May 2026

- 01 Finger Lakes *Drum* May issue publication date.
- 01 *The Deep 6* spring issue publication date. (D/6)
- 12 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 16-22 Safe Boating Week (National)

## June 2026

- 09 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 19 Deadline for *Drum* Articles

Calendars are "living documents." For the latest information on squadron activities, please check our web site or our Facebook page:

<http://www.abc-flx.org>  
<http://facebook.com/SenecaPowerSquadron>  
 for any last-minute changes.