



# ***UNDER THE BRIDGE***

## ***SUMMER EDITION***

### ***FROM THE COMMANDER***

***Cdr. Marlene Sobkowich, AP***

### ***MISSING NEWSLETTER***

We did not have a July edition of Under the Bridge as our Newsletter Editor was Under the Weather.

Other squadron members that could use some cheer:

Harold Fletcher was in a serious accident on the causeway and is hospitalized.

Minta Dietrich had surgery on both of her knees and is on the mend.

Upton Lea has a slight stroke and is getting along quite well.

### ***BILOXI CRUISE***

Well, we survived the Biloxi Summer Cruise. Good food, good weather, good company. And, thank goodness for the Piloting and Advanced Piloting Courses. They were put to good use for this event. More on the Biloxi Cruise in other articles.

### ***FREEDOM BOAT CLUB***

There is a new boating service available to USPS members as well as to the public. Freedom Boat Club is a members-only boating service company. Freedom Boat Club has been in business for 16 years, has 34 locations and approximately 2,500 members, they have just opened the Slidell location at Oak Harbor Marina, (985) 645 3982. Members enjoy unlimited use of a variety of boats including deck boats, bow-riders, center cockpit, and cruisers. You can choose the boat to fit a specific use for the day whether you have a large group or small, whether it is for entertaining, sightseeing, fishing, skiing, tubing, cruising or pure relaxation. FBC takes

full responsibility of ownership, maintenance, insurance and dockage.

The cost is a fraction of owning a boat. FBC offers a variety of membership plans. They are offering a 5% discount to USPS members off the regular FBC membership price for the Slidell location.

### ***SEPTEMBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING***

We look forward to seeing all those smiling faces at the September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2005 General Membership Meeting at The Maritime Museum – Madisonville. We missed you over the summer. Let's welcome fall and get together and have some good food and good company. Find out what interesting things everyone did over the summer. We will have pictures (edited of course) of the Biloxi Summer Cruise.

### ***LOOKING FOR A JOB?***

It is time for the Nominating Committee to meet. The Committee is composed of Bill Dietrich, Bob Albers, and Trubee Racioppi. Some positions are elected, most others are appointed.

If you would like to get involved with your squadron and are willing to make time available, we will find a job for you. Contact, Bill, Bob, Trubee, myself or any other member of the Bridge. We will provide you with additional information.

### ***SHIPS STORE – SQUADRON BURGEES***

Burgees for Lake Pontchartrain Sail & Power Squadron have been reordered and should be in very shortly. See Alan McDonnell, Supply Officer, if you would like to place a burgee order. We have two sizes 14 x 21 inches and 16 x 24 inches.

## *A SAILOR'S PERSPECTIVE*

Wanda Mascari, AP



*Wanda in a relaxed moment*

Nothing went as planned, but it was still a good cruise.

We began on Thursday, a day before the rest of the group. We were traveling by sailboat so our plan was to arrive in Biloxi on Friday along with the rest of the group.

Thursday was a beautiful day, very light winds at first, and then the wind died. We motored most of the way to the CSX Rigolets Bridge. The bridge was working fine, until we arrived, then it stopped. We waited for a few hours hoping they could get it opened. When that didn't happen, we turned around and headed home.



*CSX Bridge at entrance to the Gulf of Mexico*

We called Bob Albers to let him know about the bridge problem and told him we were going to try again Friday morning. Later, after checking the charts, Bob told us that we should have enough depth to go

through Little Lake Pass.

Friday, we started out again for Biloxi, the winds were good, we were able to sail most of the way. But, the same as Thursday, the CSX Rigolets Bridge still wasn't working. Two boats, *LADY NORMA* and *SUGARPLUM*, from our group caught up with us at the bridge. We all waited until the bridge tender said he wasn't able to get the bridge open and told us the CSX Pearl Bridge was working and we could go through that way.



*Roy making their vessel ready*

We all headed for Little Lake Pass and the Pearl River Bridge. We continued on at our 4-knot speed and were passed by the other two. There is no contest between sail and power. We arrived at the CSX Pearl Bridge, *TALK ABOUT GOOD!*, from our group caught up with us. They soon passed us up also. There was no way that we could make it to Biloxi Friday evening so we anchored at Cat Island for the night. We heated some left over food from the day before then, finally, went to bed. There was a wonderful breeze coming through the boat so we were able to get a few hours of sleep.

After breakfast Saturday morning, we pulled anchor and headed for Ship Island. As if it were planned, we arrived at Ship Island the same time as *TALK ABOUT GOOD!*. The group spent a few hours exploring Ship Island and Ft. Massachusetts. Lunch was served aboard *Talk About Good!*. While everyone was enjoying the food and conversation, word came that a storm was heading in our direction. It was time to weigh anchor and head for Biloxi.



*Ft. Massachusetts on Ship Island*



*LPSPS members enjoying the fort's shade*

After arriving at Pointe Cadet Marina Roy and I ate at Isle of Capri. After dinner, Roy went back to the boat to relax. Me, I stayed at the casino and returned \$40 richer!

Sunday morning we fueled up and replenished our coolers with ice. We left the marina at 0824 and headed for home.

Everything was fine until we got caught up in a storm. It was my first storm on the water so it was a little frightening at first. There was no lighting, just wind and rain. The wind blew most of the rain past us so the only water we felt was from an occasional wave that would come onto the boat. The storm lasted about 30 minutes but it seemed like it was a lot longer. Roy knew exactly what to do and we made it through the storm.

It was nearly dark when we arrived at the CSX Rigolets train bridge. The bridge tender said the bridge still wasn't working. We told him we would anchor and wait until morning. He said if he got it to work, he would let us know. We proceeded toward a

safe anchorage spot. Half way there, the bridge tender hailed us and said he may be able to open it enough for us to pass. We headed back to the bridge. It opened this time.



*Roy and Wanda heading home*

When we reached the Rigolets 90 Bridge it was too dark to see. We looked for lighted markers and used our spotlight to search for unlighted markers and any obstacles that may be in the water.

We did ok until we tried to find the mouth of Bayou Liberty. According to our chart, which was 9 years old, the marker at the mouth of the bayou should be a red flashing light. There are lots of red flashing lights around and in Lake Pontchartrain. We headed for the one that we thought was ours. When we got closer, we found out it wasn't. We checked the coordinates on the chart and began to steer to those coordinates. When we got closer to our bayou, a small fishing boat came zooming by and went into the bayou. HURRAY! We found the mouth of the bayou.

The light on the marker wasn't a red flashing light as indicated on our chart; it was a white flashing light. This was the first time we had entered the bayou after dark. We had to slowly pick our way through the twisting bayou. Our spotlight had a bad switch, so Roy constantly had to hit the light to try to get it to come back on. We inched along at about 2 knots with Roy on the bow lighting the way and telling me which way to turn. We arrived back in our marina at 2330. After 15 hours of travel, we were exhausted, hungry and grateful to be home. After a nice, late dinner at IHOP, we went

home and for the first time in three nights, had a good night's sleep.

We learned a lot on the cruise and we were able to use a lot of things that we've learned through the classes we've taken from the power squadron. Thanks to all the instructors who have taught or helped teach the Seamanship, Cruise Planning, Piloting, and Advanced Piloting classes, we were able to find our way to Cat Island, Ship Island, Biloxi, and back home again. Roy and I thank all of you for your dedication in teaching these classes. We look forward to continuing our boating education through more of the squadron courses, and we are looking forward to the next cruise.

**SEASONED VETERAN NOW!**

Patsy McDonnell



*One GLANT leap for Patsy*

Thanks to Bob Albers, Chair and Cruise Captain, and his committee, Doug Brooks, George and Helen Trousdale, and Allan McDonnell, the summer cruise was a splashing success.

At approximately 9:00 A.M. Friday, July 22nd, the *LADY NORMA* was joined by the *SUGARPLUM* east of the Causeway. Art Roberts was at the helm of the *LADY NORMA* with his wife, Norma, as his co-captain, accompanied by guests, Bob and Merle Albers. Allan McDonnell was at the helm of the *SUGARPLUM*, with me, his wife, Patsy, by his side. Those who are aware of my boating fears were, no doubt, surprised that I actually made the trip. A decision, I must admit, was reached just three days prior

to departure. So, this report will be from my unseasoned perspective.

Lake Pontchartrain was calm. The weather was hot. A problem solved proportionately by one's traveling speed. So, for once, Allan was able to split the water without any complaints from me.



*Capt. Allan Mc Donnell - Complaint Free Trip*

We were joined at the Rigolets by sailors Roy and Wanda Mascari. For them the trip was slower.

A mechanical problem with the Rigolets Bridge caused us to lose time and eventually forced us to take a detour through Little Lake.

My heart skipped a few beats when I realized that we were actually in the Gulf of Mexico. As we made our way east, the only sign of land was port side. A line of trees and scattered buildings, were soon replaced by a thin tan stretch of sandy beach. On the other three sides was nothing but water. Water, water everywhere. A frightening yet exhilarating sight.

We stopped for fuel in Gulfport and docked in Biloxi at Point Cadette Marina around 3:00 P.M. A little later the *TALK ABOUT GOOD!* arrived. Mechanical problems had delayed their starting time. But, in spite of the complications, Captain George Trousdale was a trooper, and his wife, Helen, was itching to go. That evening we feasted at the Isle of Capri buffet. I see no need to report what was consumed by whom. Let's just say that the kitchen help was fairly busy keeping an adequate supply of food available for the other diners.

Saturday was a good time. We all traveled aboard the *TALK ABOUT GOOD!* to Ship Island, where we were joined by Roy and Wanda.

A visit to the fort, lunch aboard the vessel, good conversation, and dolphins playing in our wake on the return trip filled the day.

That evening we dined at the Beau Rivage. Some attended a performance by Michael Bolton afterwards. Others did according to their choosing.

But all things must come to an end. So, on Sunday morning, we headed back to our individual destinations. And, in spite of whatever problems were experienced by some, the trip proved one thing: *TALK ABOUT GOOD!* is more than a vessel. It's a way to describe good times with good friends.

### **MY TAKE ON THE BILOXI CRUISE**

Capt. George Trousdale



*Capt. George at the helm*

Of all the new experiences of boat owning plus the planning and execution of the cruise was somewhat of an overload! I did not know what questions to ask, much less know any answers! I thought I was ready when Ron & Marlene, our guests, arrived Friday morning early. They brought enough groceries to feed not only all of the cruisers, but some of the bridge attendants, dock hands, etc. We just had installed new radar, GPS, shades, ETC. Supposedly, almost everything was done.

After joining *LADY NORMA* below the Tchefuncte Bridge, I noticed the starboard engine was overheating. That entailed having a mechanic meet us at "T-Rivers." He did

what he could. Feeling somewhat confident we proceeded to Biloxi. Enroute we found the new GPS would not display detailed information and the radar was off about 20 degrees.

Almost the last straw, *TALK ABOUT GOOD* developed an air conditioning problem on the way to Biloxi. When we arrived at Point Cadette, Bob Albers, Art Roberts and I checked out the A/C. We found a blown fuse and an overload problem with the forward A/C unit. The unit for the master stateroom seemed to function ok.



*Bob, Art and George looking it over*

So Ron & Marlene ended up sleeping on the *LADY NORMA*. While Helen and I toughed it out with the "good" unit. The next morning, Helen was not feeling good. But, she's a trooper and we were off to Ship Island with the entire group aboard to explore and have lunch.



*Helen on the way to Ship Island*

After returning and later that evening, Helen's

Lake Pontchartrain Sail & Power Squadron  
1815 N. Causeway Blvd  
Mandeville, LA 70471

CHECK the Lake Pontchartrain Sail & Power Squadron website – [www.lpsps.org](http://www.lpsps.org)

---



*Cdr. Marlene and Helen ready for Ship Island*

health deteriorated so we elected to get a room at Isle of Capri. We departed Biloxi early Sunday morning. Our return to Madisonville was fairly uneventful with the exception of the Rigolets rail bridge being inoperable.

If the above sounds like a Chinese fire drill, you should know that the trip was interesting and very instructive. Also, the people involved were a delight to be with and we're looking forward to the next UNEVENTFUL CRUISE!



*Only shade for 300 yards on Ship Island*