

The Jib Sheet

January 2008

A Publication of the Watauga Lake Sailing Club – Founded 1979

Commodore

Wayne Catoe

Vice Commodore

Skip Green

Race Captain

Jim Little

Secretary

Robert Banks



Treasurer

Mark Galloway

Cruise Captains

Bill Murdoch

Jeff Arnfield

Member at large

David Bryson

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WLSC Sails Into New Year In 8th Annual Frostbite Race

(Photos courtesy of Dave Boyd, Johnson City Press)

Eight boats participated in the annual Frostbite race, Tuesday, January 1, in a knock-down, drag-out battle against driving wind, blowing snow, poor visibility and wind chill near zero degrees F.

Capt. Kevin Donovan took top honors aboard "Virginia" in an event that really lived up to its name: Air temperature 35° F; wind rarely below 25-30 knots; gusts to 55 knots; blowing snow.

Despite a collision between two boats, a new digital camera committed to the deep and a few broken sail slugs, there were no injuries and no serious damage to vessels or crew. If you were there, God bless you! If you missed it, you'll be forced to hear the play-by-play for at least the next year. This was really one for the record books!

John McMillan and Sam Shaffer, aboard "Dasher," crossed the finish line in second place, but everyone with guts enough to race was declared a winner!



The aptly named "Windward," Jeff Arnfield (foreground), and "Slippery II," John Middaugh, slog it out to windward during the annual New Years Day Frostbite Race.



Kevin Donovan charging for the finish.

Meet the New Bridge Officers for 2008

Commodore Wayne Catoe, Banner Elk, N.C. – Catalina 27

Hot off an exciting year as race captain, Wayne brings a lifetime of sailing and racing experience to the club.

Introduced to the sport by his wife Danielle in Paris, France, in 1961, the former AT&T operations manager served as commodore of the Lake Murray (South Carolina) Sailing Club, and has sailed his way through a virtual fleet of one-designs and cruisers since first purchasing an O'Day Mariner in 1970.

"We traded our Mariner for a Lightning," Wayne said, "...and raced it for the next 25 years in South Carolina, New Jersey and Dallas, Texas, with our two sons as crew."

During his tenure in Dallas, Wayne raced J22s and J24s, then purchased, raced and cruised a Pearson 30 after moving to Richmond, VA. In search of a wider-ranging cruiser, he moved up to a Hunter Legend 37.5 for cruising Chesapeake Bay and the Bahamas.

Wayne and Danielle moved to Banner Elk in 2004, and acquired a Catalina 25 "...to enjoy Watauga Lake and to do a little racing." The Catalina 25 was sold in June and replaced with a Catalina 27 which is being updated.

"I really enjoyed my year as race captain, and I'm looking forward to serving as commodore for the 2008 season," Wayne said. "I've been a member of six different sailing clubs over the years - and enjoyed them all - but the WLSC is the friendliest and most helpful club I've ever been a part of. And when you compare the total membership to the number of members that actually come out for races and social events, it's the most active club I've ever belonged to. Great club, great people, I don't know how you can say much more than that."

Vice Commodore Skip Green, Elizabethton, TN - Catalina 27/ J24

Skip Green (sometimes spelled "Grienz" if you believe the Johnson City Press) is a long-time member of the of the WLSC, a perennial two-boat owner (generally keeping at least a cruiser *and* a racer in his personal fleet), a past commodore, and one of the members upon whom the WLSC has long depended when a job needs to be done.

Typically soft-spoken, content to work in the background, Skip says he prefers serving as vice-commodore, a position he's held numerous

times in his tenure in the sailing club. "I don't mind letting somebody else lead," he said. "I'm more than happy to keep a low profile until I'm needed."

Despite that assertion, Skip became one of the early movers and shakers who were instrumental in building an active sailing community on Watauga Lake. One of the primary reasons so many Hunter sailboats are seen on Watauga Lake is because Skip brought them here!

In the 1980s and '90s, Skip owned and operated a Hunter dealership from Lakeshore Marina. Many of the boats he originally brought to Watauga still participate actively in WLSC events, including Bobby Linebarger's "Obsession", Robert Banks's "Susan Bee", Matt and Sandy Milam's "Good Bad Habit" and Kevin Donovan's "Virginia", to name a few.

An able rigger, a life-long sailor and an enthusiastic racer, Skip and wife Patty bring welcome expertise to the WLSC, whether at the helm of a sailboat, scaling the mast or diving into the bilge of a club-member's boat to assist in a repair or plying a spatula at one of our dock feasts.

Race Capt. Jim Little, Kingsport, TN. - "Wild Blue Yonder"

"I've had many highs and lows in my years of sailing," 2008 race captain James Little reminisced. With little or no sailing experience, Jim purchased a Capri 14.2 in 1988, with the expressed intention of "teaching myself to sail..."

What follows must be one of the low points:

"On a fairly warm day in December 1988, I set out on Patrick Henry Lake my wife Sandra and son Matt (*a very young boy, at that time - the editor*). The wind was blowing very hard and we headed downwind and the "little" boat (no pun intended) broached and capsized immediately. Sandra and Matt swam to shore and I remained with the boat. I spent an hour in the water before a park ranger arrived to rescue me. I wouldn't leave my boat and the ranger

threatened to arrest me. Since I was obviously insane and couldn't be reasoned with, he finally agreed to tow me to shore. After several hours in front of a heater, my core body temperature finally returned to something near normal. A smarter man would have sold the boat and found a more reasonable sport, but I'm still here (*Surprisingly, so are Sandra and Matt...*). I suppose I figured things could only improve after that."

Like many of us, Jim is a graduate of the Clarke Lucas School of Seamanship and Applied Humility, beginning to crew with Clarke in 1992. It remains a staple of WLSC lore that on his first sail with Clarke, Jim hoisted the headsail upside down, earning a gentle rebuff from the "soft-spoken" Capt. Lucas.

After getting his sea legs, Jim later captained many charter trips to the BVI, Leeward Islands, Outer Banks, Chesapeake Bay and other vistas with the Eastman Sailing Club. Serving eventually as president of the Eastman Sailing Club and as 2007 commodore of WLSC, Jim brings a high level of professionalism and personal commitment to the position of race captain.

Additionally, for the past two years, Jim has done excellent journeyman's duty in setting up the club's pictorial website. To see a visual history of the WLSC, check out <http://littledomain.com/wlsc>

Co-Cruise Captain Bill Murdoch, Kingsport, TN. – "Canary"

Self-described as "...the balding guy with wire-rim glasses; Adair's husband," Bill has served, with the exception of treasurer, in every elected capacity in the club, and with Adair, has kept us fed, rigged, repaired, educated and entertained since joining the club in 1983.

It is, perhaps, in his unelected capacity that Bill most shines. He and Adair, plan, organize and supervise the club's premier social event: The Fourth of July Pig Roast. In addition, Bill and Adair do similar duty for the several "dock feasts" held throughout the year.

And if Bill is losing a little hair, he still has all his boats. "I've owned three sailboats, all of

which I still have," he said.

Admittedly, the little 14-foot Flying Fish has sailed the back yard for the past few years, but Bill's Tanzer 22, "Canary", remains a competitive race contender on Watauga, and has sailed the length of the Tennessee River and most of the east coast between Baltimore and St. Augustine. The Murdochs latest addition to the fleet is a Pacific Seacraft Crealock 34, berthed in New Bern, NC.

In 2005, in his first year as cruise captain, Bill was instrumental in revitalizing a long-standing WLSC tradition, the annual salt-water cruise. Since then Bill and Adair have shepherded three club cruises to Pamlico Sound, the Murdochs' new home waters.

Co-Cruise Captain Jeff Arnfield, Elizabethton, TN. – "Windward"

Sharing the position of cruise captain for 2008, Jeff is renowned as the owner of the world's most highly customized Chrysler 26, the sailing vessel "Windward." Many members of the WLSC have watched with no small degree of admiration as Jeff - over a period of years - transformed a once tired production sailboat into a safe, seaworthy cruiser and a competitive racer.

Jeff, whose great grandfather was a Great Lakes captain, began power boating at six weeks old under his grandfather's tutelage. After learning to sail in 1975, he crewed on 27-30 footers racing on Lake St. Clair and Lake Huron until he found his way south in 1981.

Following a stint as vice-Commodore in 2004 with back to back years as commodore in 2005 and 2006, Jeff exemplifies a high-energy approach to racing, cruising and his never-ending commitment to wring the last fraction of a knot from Windward (despite steadily increasing her ballast with such essentials as a stovetop cappuccino maker). His years of experience cross country skiing, snowshoeing and winter backpacking may partially explain his penchant for winter sailing and overnights.

Of course, Jeff is not just about speed and

near-arctic sailing; he remains a dedicated cruiser committed to safety at sea, and is an acknowledged local expert on anchoring and mooring on a lake where secure anchorages are a slim commodity.

Often sailing with wife Laura and son Duncan, he takes his sailing seriously, with a healthy dose of humor. Jeff tells us another salt-water cruise and lots of local "overnighters" are definitely in the works for 2008, beginning with a Leap-Year Overnighter on Friday, February 29th.

**Secretary Robert Banks, Bristol, TN. –
"Susan Bee"**

Robert bought his first sailboat at age 14, a \$150.00 used, yard-damaged, Lockley Sea Devil - little more than a sloop-rigged sailboard. "Buying that first sailboat is a slippery slope that can lead to financial ruin," he said.

That little board-sailer, financed by a major grant from an indulgent father, was followed in succeeding years by a 15-foot Merlin Rocket, a 16-foot American Daysailer, a 1966 26-foot Seafarer Meridian, and finally, the "Susan Bee," a Hunter 28 named for his wife.

"Susan and I trailered our daysailer to Watauga for the first time in 1998, renting a cabin at Lakeshore for the weekend," he said. "We walked out to the sail dock to see 'the big boats', and found one of Bill Murdoch's dock feasts already in progress."

Invited to stay for the picnic, Robert and Susan accepted, and later purchased a mid-60s classic-plastic Seafarer from the late Bill Kibler, a long-time club member who had recently retired from sailing.

In the intervening years, the couple earned American Sailing Association cruising certifications, and have bare-boated several times in the British Virgin Islands and North Carolina's Pamlico Sound.

Robert continues to develop his skills through the United States Power Squadron, serving that organization as education officer for 2008.

**Treasurer Mark Galloway, Johnson City,
TN. – O'Day 272**

"Although I had been around lakes and boats all my life, my first experience with a sailboat was several years ago when the WLSC hosted a day sail for the Eastman Sailing Club," Mark recounted. "A friend and I sailed with Robert Banks on his old Seafarer, and I was hooked."

A year or so later, Mark bought a "slightly used" Chrysler 22 in need of "a little TLC." After a year working on the hard, he was able to launch. To his astonishment, he said, the old 22 managed to keep most of the water on the outside, allowing him to complete the remaining work afloat.

"That first year, I crewed for several people during the spring series, then crewed for Clarke Lucas in the fall," Mark said, explaining *his* initiation into The Clarke Lucas School of Seamanship and Applied Humility. "Several people - including Clarke - warned me not to put the headsail on upside down, but I was never sure why he seemed to think even a novice sailor would make a silly mistake like that."

Struck by an attack of "bigger-boat fever" (be careful, Mark says, it's contagious) he began to suspect he might be more comfortable aboard something a touch larger than a 22-foot pocket cruiser.

"By fall (2006) I decided I wanted a bigger boat," he said. "That winter I looked for boats at several different lakes, on the internet, in the sailing magazines, and finally decided on an O'Day 272 LE that had made its way to Kentucky Lake from the Great Lakes."

Mark began racing on his own keel during the 2007 fall series, only to discover that the more intense motion associated with racing brought on a few unique challenges.

"Racing seemed to bring on the failure of every weak component in the motor or electrical

system, so we only managed to run couple of races last year," he said. "Hopefully after a new water pump, new impellor and a lot of time spent tracing wiring problems - all done with lots of help from Clarke Lucas, John Middaugh and others – the spring 2008 races will mean more racing and less repairing."

Member at Large David Bryson, Kingsport, TN. – O'Day 272

"My wife Jan and I have a long history of searching for hobbies that we both enjoy" said Dave Bryson. "When you consider our friendship with James and Sandra Little, it was probably inevitable that we ended up on a sailboat. And if the Littles pushed us a little in that direction, they have also taken us under their wings, providing instruction, guidance, and help when we were in trouble."

Dave's entry into sailboat ownership might not be described as "smooth sailing". About a year and a half ago, he bought a Merit 22 in something less than pristine condition.

"On the inaugural trip home ... the trailer wheel actually came off and passed me," he said. "This gave me the opportunity to learn how to fix trailer hubs – immediately – and how to patch holes and repair fiberglass – ultimately.

"Much to my surprise - after all, my initial experience was a little unnerving - the Merit turned out to be a jewel; it was simple and fast. We got it repaired and refitted in time for the fall 2007 race season. After spending many weekends sleeping on our little boat, Jan and I decided standing headroom and a few more creature comforts might not be such a bad idea, so we bought John Keefer's O'Day 272 in November. We love it and are spending weekends learning to sail a larger boat in the high winds that are more common during winter.

"I have learned so much thanks to all the old (and not so old) salts on the docks. Everyone has taken Jan and me in and made sailing possible for us. Every trip out of the dock is a

new opportunity to learn."

Recently, Dave was reintroduced to the "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" rule. "Sometimes, the trick to sailboat maintenance is knowing what *not* to do," he said.

"Recently, I was ready to install a bow eye in the "hole" I found in the bow of my boat. Luckily, John Middaugh was there to inform me it was the drain for my anchor locker... The great thing about the WLSC, is that there always seems to be someone available to show me what I should do, what I shouldn't do, how to rig things correctly, or to just to encourage us to cast off the lines and go sailing."

*** Pan-Pan, Pan-Pan, Pan-Pan:**

Dues are Due – Please Do the Right Thing!

A message from Treasurer Mark Galloway:

Several years ago, the membership voted to change the annual dues "due date" to January 1. Unlike some of our sister boating organizations, the WLSC has no national organization to assist with membership anniversaries keyed to separate billing dates. We prefer to use an "honor system" rather than sending out individual billing statements.

Like most policies in the WLSC, we like to keep it simple: Everyone's dues are due January 1.

Remember, for returning members, dues are \$15.00 per year – new members pay a \$10.00 premium in the first year only, so \$25.00.

We'd like to get our first new membership list completed by February, but if your dues aren't paid, you won't be included on the list, nor will you continue to receive this high-quality publication, schedule changes or advance notice

of upcoming events.

Please make a check out NOW, to “WLSC” and mail to:

WLSC
c/o Mark Galloway,
2202 Forest Acres Dr.
Johnson City, TN 37604

If you think your dues are already paid for 2008, please contact me at 423-534-8055 or at: galloway@eastman.com

Looking forward to a great year; can't wait to see you all on the water,

Mark

* *Pan-Pan (pronounced Pahn-Pahn) is the marine radio transmission used in serious, but not necessarily life-threatening emergencies. Used to open a radio call when a person or vessel is in jeopardy, but not in imminent danger of sinking or immediate demise.*

Proposed Jib Sheet Changes

A message from Secretary Robert Banks:

Many of you have requested that you receive *The Jib Sheet* via electronic mail only. The WLSC would be happy to accommodate (postage and printing ain't free, you know).

Personally, I'm somewhat torn on the issue. Please consider that the newsletter can be an effective recruiting tool. If you decide to eliminate your "snail-mail" subscription, please print out the electronic version so it can be left on your coffee table, magnetized to your refrigerator, whatever...

While it's not likely guests to your home will log on to your computer, they may glance at a copy of *The Jib Sheet* resting on your coffee table.

If you would like to receive *The Jib Sheet* only via e-mail, please notify me at rtbanks10@embargmail.com and use "Jib Sheet E-Mail" in the subject line. We'll get a distribution list compiled before publication of the next issue.

Notice Concerning Club E-Mail:

We have recently changed the method in which we transmit bulk e-mail to the club. In order to receive advance notice of upcoming events, special announcements, schedule changes, etc., you must have a yahoo account and join the Watauga Lake Sailing Club Yahoo Group.

You will not receive e-mails from the club unless you have a Yahoo account and are a member of the WLSC Yahoo group.

The good news is it's easy, fast and free.

1. From your web browser, enter www.yahoo.com.
2. Follow the instructions. Establish an account name and password.
3. Select an alternate e-mail address where you would like to receive club e-mail if Yahoo is not your primary internet service provider.
4. Log on to the WLSC website: <http://wlsc.lizards.net>.
5. Click on "WLSC Interactive Forum" on the bottom right side of the home page.
6. Follow the instructions; join the group.

WLSC Honors 2007 Racing Crews

Although Club and PHRF racing honors were claimed by the usual suspects, several new faces made challenging runs for the gold in 2007, despite the dominance of the old guard.

Annual PHRF Series: First Place – John McMillan/Sam Shafer, "Dasher"; Second Place – Clarke Lucas, "My Love II"; Third Place – James Little, "Wild Blue Yonder".

Annual Club Series: First Place – Little; Second Place – McMillan/Shaffer; Third Place – Lucas.

Spring PHRF: First Place – McMillan/Shaffer"; Second Place – Lucas; Third Place – John Middaugh, "Slippery II".

Spring Club: First Place – Little; Second Place

– Lucas; Third Place – Robert Banks, “Susan Bee”.

Fall PHRF: First Place – McMillan/Shaffer; Second Place – Lucas; Third Place – Little.

Fall Club: First Place – McMillan/Shaffer; Second Place – Little; Third Place – Richard Hallier, “Puffin”.

2007 Race Captain Wayne Catoe (now commodore) began a new tradition in the last racing season, awarding new honors for:

Most Improved Sailor: James Little

Outstanding Crew Member: Jan Bryson

The **WLSC Annual Service Award** was presented to veteran WLSC members **John and Billie Middaugh**, by incoming Vice Commodore Skip Green. A classic Weems and Plath Yacht Lamp was appropriate recognition for the Middaugh’s years of service to the club, and for “lighting the way” for so many of us to follow.

Congratulations to these fine skippers and their hard-working crews, and to the rest, and in the immortal words of Charlie Brown: “JUST WAIT ‘TILL NEXT YEAR!”

Farewell to the Fleet from 2007 Commodore Little

The year has really passed quickly from the Frostbite Race to the Fall Dinner Meeting. It has really been an honor, a pleasure and a unique experience serving the WLSC as your commodore.

I have been a member of the club for many years, but for the majority of those years I only raced with Clarke Lucas and attended very few of the social activities. Two years ago we purchased an O’ Day 272, and last year traded it for a Catalina 270. In these last two years, my family has attempted to participate in all the activities of the club, including races, overnights, cookouts, fun races, etc. I now realize that we missed out on a lot of fun and great memories in those early years.

I would like to thank all of you for your help in making the club activities a success during the last year. It is so refreshing to be part of an organization with so many willing and capable volunteers! Thanks to all of you who served as officers, helped others learn to sail, serviced new members’ boats, cooked meals, prepared newsletters, placed race markers, served as committee boat, prepared the pig roast site, submitted pictures, arranged overnights, presented seminars/workshops/slideshows, maintained the web site, updated the mailing list, etc. To an outsider, this would sound like a lot of work, but in actuality all of the work is permeated with an abundance of fun and fellowship.

I especially want to thank my wife Sandra for all her support and hard work. I look forward to serving as race captain in the coming year. I have a lot to learn, but there is no shortage of experienced former race captains to assist me.

Long live Commodore Catoe!

Jim

Will There Be A Winter Blahs Party?

In years past, the “Winter Blahs Party” has been held in private homes, local resorts, restaurants, a VFW hall and probably a few other venues of which the secretary is unaware.

Be that as it may, it’s time!

If any of you have any suggestions for a date, time and venue, please get in touch with the officers at wlscofficers@yahogroups.com.

It’s time to stir up a little excitement! Winter won’t last forever. Be the first kid on your block to host the “Winter Blahs Party”.

And remember, what happens at the Blahs Party, stays at the Blahs Party!