

The Mainsheet



From The Helm

By Barry Brierley, Catalina 28 ~ Loon III Slip B-3 at Quakertown Marina



Commodore Brierley

This past weekend, the 'big prize' was finally delivered...sort of. What was the 'big prize', you ask? You probably remember that last year we conducted a naming contest for the BLSA pontoon boat. I asked members to submit names for the pontoon boat that reflected my desire to make the boat an asset for all BLSA members, not just our racing program. Many members submitted names...including myself. All those names were distilled down to a final list of four, and those four finalist names were submitted to you, our members, to vote on which one you preferred. Wouldn't you know it? I won. The winning name, "BLSA Barge", was my suggestion. How embarrassing. It's really bad form for the Commodore to win his own naming contest.

So, you'll remember at the Annual Meeting, last November, I held a drawing so that someone else would receive the 'big prize', a picnic cruise of Brookville Lake from Hanna Creek to the dam and back. The person whose name came out of the hat was Jim Weber, sometime crew to Ernie Hauser on his J24 'StrataGem'. Jim and I got together via email to plan the cruise, and last Sunday, 26 July 2009, was the big day. Jim brought his lovely wife and two other couples who are neighbors and friends, to share the adventure. They had no idea what they were in for.

Jan and I prepared for the cruise pretty thoroughly. Jan did most of the heavy lifting: she prepared a huge quantity of tortilla roll 'sandwiches', with various lunch meats, cheeses, lettuce, etc., plus two varieties of grapes and her

fantastic oatmeal/raisin/chocolate chip cookies. Our guests brought some white wine. For my part, I went to school with Ernie Hauser to refresh myself on starting and running the 'Barge'. I packed my cell phone, extra PFD's and my handheld VHF radio, and all seemed right with the world. The cruise started out in fine style: Jim and his guests were nice friendly folks and the weather was superb.



We took a short trip north into the no-wake zone to show off Big Ellie's Creek and the Indian Mound, then headed south for the dam. I had a blast bragging to Jim and his friends about the lake as we proceeded south. After a while, Jim suggested we find a quiet place to drop anchor so we could have lunch and give it the attention it deserved. I motored to the little shallow cove south of Kent's, next to the golf course, and set the lunch hook. And that's when the day took a bad turn. The Barge's outboard engine suddenly got an ugly attitude, and quit running. Emphasis on 'suddenly'.

Calendar

August.

8th
Series Races 13&14
Steak Dinner
Full Moon
Rise s at 9:48pm

15th
Series races 15&16
Beer Tasting

22nd
Series races 17&18

29th
All Portsmouth Race
Beach Party Raft-up

Now, one thing we all know: when a power boat loses it's power, you've got nothing -NOTHING - left. A half-hour of repeated attempts at starting the #@X% engine got zero results...zero, as in nada, zip, nothing. And that's why cell phones and VHF were invented. Several rather anxious cell phone calls to Ernie Hauser provided several helpful, insightful suggestions...but no positive results from the #@X% engine.



On to Plan B. VHF calls to Randy Jones (at anchor, up-lake in Big Ellie's Creek) got some wheels in motion. Meantime, our guests - sated with Jan's fine lunch and a couple of glasses of fine wine - were still in good spirits, calm and not rebellious, but definitely keen to find an answer...soon. I, on the other hand, was sweating .45 caliber bullets.

While Randy, at the north end of the lake,

tried to put some sort of rescue together, I was busy recognizing an opportunity that unexpectedly came along: another pontoon boat with an unsuspecting family aboard, came happily cruising into the same cove where we were marooned. After some wild arm-waving and pitiful begging on my part, they agreed to take us under tow and haul our sorry butts back to Hanna Creek. Can you guess how humiliating it is to be rescued when your boat has big signs on the side saying "Safety Boat"?



When we were safely back at Hanna Creek and tied up at the guest dock, our onboard guests were still in good spirits and pretty good sports about the whole thing. One said, "If we had just motored down to the dam and back as planned, we'd probably have forgotten about this trip after a couple of weeks or so. But now, we have a STORY to tell at our next party, and Lord knows it will grow over time." As I said, these were good folks.

Embarrassing as the events were, some good came out of it. Randy Jones – who knows more about how engines work than anyone I know - figured out that my problem had been an airlock in the fuel line. How the airlock came about is anyone's guess, but Randy quickly figured out the problem and got it fixed. And Rick Keeler and Steve Bossert kicked in their help by switching over the battery (which I had drained in my attempts to start the #@X% engine) to another, fully charged one. After a little fussing, they got the #@X% engine started again. Ernie came out to the lake later in the evening and added his help. And we all agreed that a little professional engine service was probably in order for the #@X% engine.

So, 'the best laid plans of mice and men'.... The 'big prize' turned out to be something less, and yet everyone still had fun despite the unexpected turn of events. I received very nice 'thank you' emails from Jim and his guests, gracious to the end. And the #@*X% engine WILL get serviced very soon, so that no one else is likely to be stranded. As Steve and Jan Cornell, two of Jim's guests said,

"Now we know why sailing is the way to go!"

Social Calendar

Mike Burd.....Bavaria 32 ~ WindSwept Slip E-38 at Kent's Harbor Marina



We had a wonderful and surprising turn out at the Cheeseburger in Paradise party



held July 11 in the picnic area. Thanks go out to hosts, Ashli & John Slawter and Bruce & Loise Muroz. They did a great job with decorations and handling the event. We had 80 people and the weather held off for a great evening.

Many of our members got into the spirit of the event with their 'Jimmy Buffett " style garb.

The next event is our steak dinner on August 8. We need RSVP's by Tuesday August 4th. Once again we plan food purchases primarily based on RSVPs. Extra steaks may be purchased upon request, please provide numbers with your RSVP. Events are open to club guests as well

We have a couple of things to work on as a



group. At the last event, we had almost 20 more in attendance for the event than had RSVP'd which made for a great turnout, but put us a little tight on food. We always want to make sure we have enough food and generally plan for extras as we recognize plans can change at the last minute. While we do plan for some extras, we don't want to waste clubs funds. Please help out the club and RSVP for our great social events. The same with requests for members to bring a side dish. Please be thoughtful enough to bring a dish to share with four – six people upon request.

We try to have some events where the club provides everything and times when we ask everyone to bring a side dish or dessert. So just check the announcement

e-mail for clarification. We also listed on the club schedule the events where we request sides. If there is ever a question feel free to contact me for clarification.

The club appreciates the turn out and I hope everyone has enjoyed themselves; it makes it all worth the effort.

Other upcoming events include the beer tasting on August 15th.



The Beach Party Raft-up is on August 29. The top photo on the front page of our newsletter was taken at this raft-up last year. We were blessed with a great day, good food and a fun raft-up. We plan for the same this year !



Like last year we will use the 'Safety Boat' to shuttle crews to the beach for dinner

Steak Dinner
Aug. 8th 6pm
RSVP by Aug 4th.
[rsvp @blsa.us](mailto:rsvp@blsa.us)

Full moon weekend !



Racing Update

Ernie Hauser J-24 ~ StrataJem Fairfield Dock

Can you believe it is half way through the sailing/racing season! With half the racing days in the books now, the standings are

extremely close. Even with *Blew-Me* sitting on a comfortable(?) lead in the P-Fleet at this point, there is only 1 point separating 2nd-4th places (*Lump Sum*, *Heron*, *Deo Gracias*)! In the J24 Fleet there is a tie for the lead between *Juice* and *StrataJem* (*Juice* holds the tie-breaker) with *Sea P A* only 2 points back.

The All Portsmouth Series is also up for grabs -- remember, we have the daily All Portsmouth awards at the following All Portsmouth race day. So, bring the boat out on Saturday, August 29th for the next All Portsmouth race . . . then head up to near Quakertown for the Beach Party Raft-Up.



Summer 2009



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