

Weather Report:  
Blue Skies, Puffy Clouds  
Temperature: 82 Degrees  
Wind: West, 14 Knots

# DOCKLINE



Volume 13 Issue 4

Catalina 34 Fleet 12 Chesapeake Bay

November 2003

## NEW FLEET CAPTAIN ELECTED

Eugene Norris was unanimously elected Fleet Captain for the 2003-2004 year at the November 1<sup>st</sup> Fleet Meeting in Williamsburg, VA. He succeeds Mark Rochlin who served as Fleet Captain for several years. Gene is a retiree who joined Fleet 12 in 1996. He and his wife, Lois, berth their boat "Quintet", #1255 in Mill Creek, Solomons Island. In addition to their participation in Fleet 12, Gene and Lois are also active in the Southern Maryland Sailing Association.

There was no "old business" brought forth at the meeting. Along with the election of Fleet Captain Norris, Mark Rochlin noted that Joan Davies would continue to be Fleet Secretary/Treasurer. Jackie Martin and Jim Brener will continue producing the fleet newsletter, The Dockline. The Spring meeting will be hosted by Bill and Kathleen Nuttall.

There was no other business and the meeting was adjourned in record short time.



### FLEET CAPTAIN'S SIGNAL

Sitting at my computer I can look out at Back Creek in Solomons and see Zahnheiser's Marina across the way. Nearer is an old oak tree that at shoulder height is about six feet in diameter. It's probably older than the Navy base that was here on the Calvert Marina side of Back Creek in the 1940's. I'm grateful that the tree came through the hurricane with no damage. There's a moderate NW breeze blowing, although the sunrise temperature was only down to 45 degrees. It's been a strange year, weatherwise, as I don't need to remind you. I've actually been sailing in November!

As the old year passes, a new one awaits—funny how cyclic phenomena work. For Fleet 12 that means thinking about the upcoming sailing year and what we each can do for our organization. We already have volunteers, the Nuttals, to host the Spring meeting. How about YOU hosting the summer Crab Fest or the Fall meeting? Cap'n Ron Hill has agreed to get the new sailing season started, but he'd like some help organizing the raft-up calendar. YOU're not too busy for this, are you? Jackie Martin and Jim Brener are continuing their stewardship of The Dockline, but they can't write all the articles, YOU can help out there, too—a brief, however informal paragraph or three about

some matter of interest to you as a Fleet 12 member will interest others and contribute to our shared community. Joan Davies is continuing her duties as Treasurer and membership coordinator. She needs to hear from YOU pronto if you are continuing your membership. A check for \$20 to Joan Davies is needed to keep your membership in force and to keep the Dockline coming. (See Notice on Page 5.)

The Fall meeting in Williamsburg, October 31 – Nov 2, was a smashing success, and many thanks are due the Fords for organizing every detail of it so well. Dinner at their home Friday evening was memorable. Sailing hats off to Ross and Louisa!

Your new Commodore is thinking about a cruise to North Carolina in the May-June timeframe in 2004. Anyone who is interested is welcome to plan and participate in some part or all of a 3 – 4 week exploration of Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds. Just so's ya know, I can be emailed at [e\\_norris@verizon.net](mailto:e_norris@verizon.net). I'm always glad to hear from you.

--Gene  
Quintet #1255



### ANOTHER WONDERFUL FLEET 12 MEETING HELD IN WILLIAMSBURG

The Fall Meeting, 2003 for Fleet 12 was held at the Ramada Inn, 1776 in Williamsburg, Virginia on November 1. Ross and Louisa Ford, hosts of the entire event, hosted a dinner in their home on Friday evening, October 31. The dinner was reported to be perfect and included warm weather, a sunset over the water, and great food. (Your editor sadly missed it.) On Saturday afternoon Fleet 12 members attended an educational presentation at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) near Yorktown, Virginia. Members of the faculty

and administration of VIMS presented a program focused on the research VIMS is involved in in trying to revitalize the oyster population on the Bay and its tributaries.

Fleet 12's business meeting commenced at the hotel after the trip to VIMS and was followed by cocktails and hors d'oeuvre. The hotel later provided dinner for the event.

**YOUR INPUT NEEDED IMMEDIATELY!**

I would like to include an article in the next Dockline about how you named your boat. Some boat names are different and have unusual stories behind them. Please write to me and tell me why your boat has its name. This can be any length, but shorter is probably better. I am sure that most of you have interesting stories to tell about the name of your boat.

NOTE: PLEASE EMAIL THIS TO ME NOW! THEN I WON'T HAVE TO BEG YOU FOR INFORMATION AT THE LAST MINUTE. Our email address is: [jbrener@erols.com](mailto:jbrener@erols.com)

ALSO: AFTER YOU EMAIL THIS TO ME, THEN GET OUT YOUR CHECKBOOK AND SEND YOUR DUES TO JOAN DAVIES. PLEASE DO IT NOW SO THAT YOU DON'T FORGET!

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

As of November 1, 2003, Fleet 12 had a balance of \$2060.36. We have 36 paid up or almost paid up members for the year 2003. We voted to donate \$50 to our dinner speaker, Captain Richard Asaro [USCG ref] and \$150 to VIMS. Ross and Louisa Ford will be submitting expenses. Normally about \$150 to \$250 is allocated per meeting. This summer the Treasury provided \$100 towards the Crab Fest.

A new supply of burgees was purchased this year with a new price of \$20 each.

Thank you to the Fleet members who paid their 2004 dues: Berman, Brail, Cochran, Cook, Dalton, Davies, Gardner, Gulotta, Heffernan, Hill, Maher, Norris, Nuttall, Rochlin, Rupp and a signed-in-blood promise from Caruso/Merritt. Did I miss anyone?

A Welcome to new members Roberta & Tom Abbott of Weems, Va. C350 # 8 Graeagle.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan E Davies

**1999 CATALINA 380 FOR SALE**

After 5 enjoyable sailing seasons on "Cat's Aye", we are putting her on the market. The boat is in excellent condition and fully equipped, including AC/heat, upgraded electrical, upgraded canvas by Chris Ford. New batteries (2002), electric head (2002) and many other options. Light and airy, with great space for comfortable cruising.

Contact Duane Maher, H-301-570-9356, W-301-803-6707 or email [duane@maher.name](mailto:duane@maher.name) for more details.

## RON'S MAINTENANCE TIPS

by Ron Hill, Apache

**Cleaning Engine Pulleys.** While the engine is running, the drive belt tends to leave a glaze on the engine's three pulleys: drive pulley (on the bottom), internal water pump pulley on the top, and alternator pulley on the port side. Enough glazing and the belt will start to slip until it gets warm placing more wear on the drive belt. Over tension of the belt to compensate and you put too much side stress on the water pump shaft bearing, causing it to fail. The solution is simple. Remove the belt (why keep it tensioned during winter lay up?). Take a rag with lacquer thinner or acetone and clean the grooves in the three pulleys. You'll be surprised how black your rag will be from old belt residue. Most mechanics do not recommend using "Belt Grip." I don't recommend it either.

**Replacing the Heat Exchanger Zinc.** We all know this zinc keeps the copper tubing in the heat exchanger from being eroded by electrolysis. If you replace it at fall lay up (rather than in the spring) you'll also drain the "raw water" anti-freeze mixture inside that is left over from winterizing the engine. That's not all bad, because when empty it'll never be a freeze threat. Before replacing the new zinc, which you've cut off to the correct size, clean the threads on the bolt holding the zinc as well as the female threads in the heat exchanger. This insures a good electrical contact so the zinc sacrifices itself rather than the brass heat exchanger or copper tubing inside. This cleaning task is made easier with the purchase of a \$5.00 battery terminal brush from any auto parts store. The stud threads get cleaned with the female wire brush, while the male wire brush cleans the threads in the heat exchanger itself. Remember, no lube or sealant of any kind, as you want good thread to thread contact.

**STUCK ENGINE VALVE.** This fall I experienced a stuck valve. This is a real "attention getter," as that rocker arm was making a banging rather than a dull clicking sound. I had just left a raft up with Bill and Kathleen Nuttall and immediately retied to "Irish Lady" and shut down the engine. I didn't hear my engine problem over both engines running, until I started to pull away. After doing some checking, I restarted the engine and everything was okay. In retrospect, I think that the 40+ degree temperature change overnight and associated

condensation were the culprits. If this situation (a big temperature change) happens again, I'd let the glow plugs engaged an extra 15 seconds. If you suspect a stuck valve, I'd also crank the engine over a few times with the decompression lever engaged and the fuel cut off "out" before attempting to restart the engine. I was lucky, as a stuck valve could do serious engine damage.

**ALTERNATOR WIRE CHECK.** I've heard of two problems with the heavy primary (Red +) wire connection on the alternator. One was that the nut securing the ring connector and wire to the threaded stud backed off. The other was that the internal nut to the threaded stud connection allowing the entire stud to back out of the alternator case. To preclude the first incident, always use a self-locking nut on the alternator connection (or in my case and Jim Brener's, connection s). During your "preflight," shake that wire connection and make sure everything is solid.

I've always questioned whether my 12v charger for the laptop was working correctly or not. I finally called the company that made the charger and talked to their tech support. As I started to describe the problem and I mentioned charging on a "boat". The tech then described the problem!! - that the charger would sometimes charge with the green charging light on and sometimes it would blink on and off. He said that my Air/Auto charger in an airplane or in a running automobile that always had 12+ volts and it was a common problem in a boat, because the computer company sells the wrong charger for a boat application!! ( the charger company makes over 90 types of chargers)

So, I sent the charger back to the LIND Corp. in Minneapolis, MN and they will swap out mine (which said 11v min.) for one that will go down to 9v min. Free Of Charge! Guess with the added length of wire, even 11.75V (a.k.a. 100% battery charge) the 11v charger was on the boarder line and that's why it would cut on & off. Thought I'd pass the info on, but if you already know this - hit delete! Ron

### FREE WINTERIZING GUIDE AVAILABLE

Boat U.S. is offering a free guide for winterizing your boat. You can obtain it online at [www.BoatUS.com/Seaworthy](http://www.BoatUS.com/Seaworthy) or you can call for a free copy at 800-283-2883.

## COMMENTS ON PROSIT'S ELECTRICAL REHABILITATION

by Duane Maher, Cat's Aye

I enjoyed reading Bill's article in the last *Dockline* regarding *Prosit's* Electrical Rehabilitation. Since I have done two of these upgrades, a C34 and C380, Bill thinks I know what I am talking about. It is more like a one eyed Jack in a room full of blind Kings.

I agree with Bill that the Emon monitor is overkill. In Whiskers, I had a cheaper monitor, not as accurate as the Emon, but it did the job. The Emon is a sophisticated monitoring system that is capable of monitoring multiple sources; for example wind generators or solar panels. It is also capable of driving the regulator. It has alarm features that have alerted me to high voltage and battery temperature on Cat's Aye allowing me to quickly fix the problems. True, the LCD is difficult to read, but it is a type that has almost no draw on the system.

It is unfortunate that Bill had problems with Jack Rabbit and Ample Power. There is no excuse for Jack Rabbit and Ample Power to treat customers this way.

In my dealings with "Jack" I found that he could be testy. I had to send the alternator back because he insisted, on the original order, that it was the correct mounting foot, even though I told him it was wrong. When I did return the alternator, he wanted to be sure it was not used. I reminded

him that it was impossible to use because it was the wrong mounting foot. However, he did provide some valuable assistance by reviewing my wiring diagram and making some suggestions. I noticed that Jack Rabbit was not at any of the boat shows this year.

Ample Power does have a chip on their shoulders because of the way they have been treated by the marine industry over the last 10 or so years. They consider most reviewers from organizations such as Practical Sailor--because of lack of credentials--as incompetent on many technical subjects. I think in many cases they are right. Ample Power has done more to educate and remove myths about 12 volt systems than any other vendor. Ample Power can be difficult to deal with. They assume that you have read their books, *Living on 12 Volts with Ample Power* and *Wiring 12 Volts for Ample Power*. Sometimes I think when you call or email them, they look in their database to see if you have bought their books and treat you accordingly. I know this is absurd but there is some truth to this. You may want to check out this site: [http://www.amplepower.com/ps\\_reports/index.html](http://www.amplepower.com/ps_reports/index.html)

Would I use Ample Power products again? Most certainly I will, especially on my next boat. Is it over kill for the bay? Probably. There are cheaper and simpler systems that would meet most requirements.

**2004 DUES ARE DUE NOW!!!!**

**DUES MUST BE PAID BY THE SPRING, 2004 MEETING  
FOR YOU TO REMAIN ON THE FLEET MEMBERSHIP ROSTER**

**PLEASE SEND \$20 TO JOAN DAVIES, SECRETARY/TREASURER**

**THORN HILL ROAD, P.O. BOX 475  
JACKSON, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03846**

*Any questions you may have can be emailed to Joan at [jedavies@retoree1/romcatpm/edi](mailto:jedavies@retoree1/romcatpm/edi)*

## STORMY LABOR DAY RAFT-UP, ST. MARY'S CITY, HORSESHOE BEND, 8/31-9/2, 2003

by Jan Rupp, Brigadoon

APACHE (Ron & Phyllis Hill) and BRIGADOON (Walt & Jan Rupp) met in Horseshoe Bend for what was to become the shortest rendezvous in Fleet 12 history. Our raft-up was a scant 10 minutes total. No sooner had we rafted and gathered in BRIGADOON'S cockpit for a long awaited visit and munchies, the rumble of distant thunder heralded what was to become one of the worst storms ever.

APACHE broke off BRIGADOON and anchored just in time for the wind to start blowing, the thunder to crack and crash and for the most intense cloud-to-cloud and cloud-to-ground lightning to occur. One simultaneous thunder/lightning combination occurred right over our anchorage. APACHE'S anchor light went out and I thought they were hit by the lightning, but as it turned out Phyllis turned off the power. Whew! What fireworks. I'll take the 4th of July fireworks any day before one of the St. Mary's County storms of this year. St. Mary's County is a bad omen this summer.

We who live in the county have had our share of storms this summer. While we were still rafted (remember, for only 10 minutes) Phyllis looked at Janet and asked, "Is this St. Mary's County?" Janet replied in the affirmative. The storms of St. Mary's County have made television news. The storm of the week previous to our Labor Day Cruise took out the transformer in the Rupp's neighborhood, and we departed on our Labor Day Cruise weekend knowing when we returned home we would have to find out why one-half of our house did not have electrical power.

Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m. Brunch is served at the Student Union at St. Mary's College. Bon Appetit is contracted to serve the students and others (we fall into the "and others"), and this is the same contractor that served our March, 2003, social at the Palmer-Daugherty Commons. If you have never been to the college for Brunch or Dinner, you can only imagine how plentiful, diversified, appealing and delicious the food is.

During Brunch Walt and I were transfixed by Ron's latest escapades with boat maintenance. The summer was

hot and humid, enough to keep anyone else in air conditioning, but Ron was in his boat removing his fuel tank, washing it out with acetone, pulling new injectors in his engine, replacing fuel lines, and every time the phone rang Phyllis was sure it would be the medics and Ron would be the subject of concern.

Janet asked Phyllis, "How would you like to be the mother of a child like Ron?" I don't remember that Phyllis answered the question. After all, Phyllis had to go back to APACHE with Ron.

On Saturday afternoon our super-duper-boat-snooper and his first mate departed for parts unknown (probably Virginia to get out of St. Mary's County) while BRIGADOON remained in Horseshoe Bend until Monday morning. The Labor Day cruise was the first cruise of the year for BRIGADOON. Thanks, Ron, for asking Walt and me to be Labor Day Cruise Leaders or we wouldn't have been out even on that cruise. However, we wouldn't have missed that 10-minute raft-up relay nor the Horseshoe Bend Fireworks Show and anything.

Monday morning at 4:00 a.m. the wind picked up from zero velocity to around 10 knots, then 13 knots, then 16 knots. At 7:30 a.m. BRIGADOON was ready to sail home. The sky was cloudy, rain was predicted and the wind was supposed to be from the East. As it turned out, the wind was from the West, having clocked 360 degrees from Saturday to Monday and we had another West wind all the way up the Bay, as we did on Saturday sailing down the Bay. Monday was a good day, but not without its little rain shower in the early evening.

As I write this H. Isabel is history leaving a trail of debris behind her and H. Katy is in the Caribbean. I have a sailor friend who has observed that the June/July hurricanes generally hit Florida, Georgia and South Carolina. The August/September hurricanes generally hit North Carolina and up the East Coast through Pennsylvania and the October/November hurricanes generally hit the New England states. We'll check out that theory in the future.



## Rain Proof Raft-Up

by Dan and Maryann Brail

Considering how the Catalina 34 raft-ups fared so far this year with too much rain and storms, the Brails decided to have an all weather raft-up (dock-up) at their house. While Dan and Maryann have the option of going out and finding a nice spot on the Magothy River for anchoring, their community dock provides docking for several Catalina 34s. Fair weather sailors had the option of driving their cars. While it is nice to have everybody come by boat, many people like to keep their horses drier. Only Bill and Kathleen Nuttal toughed it out and sailed over in the light rain.

Although it rained a little in the morning, guess what? At the designated raft-up time of 2:00 PM the clouds went away and the sun came out. Everybody took advantage of the Brails deck overlooking Deep Creek just off the Magothy River.

We spent a pleasant afternoon with Warren and Susan Cook, Dave and Dee Ewing, Jim and Jackie Brener, Jaap and Ernestine Kapor, Bill and Kathleen Nuttal with friend Virginia and Skipper Brail. Our food stayed dry and we enjoyed a pleasant evening.

## AFTER THREE TRIES AND MUCH COMPLAINING BY HOST, MEMBERS FINALLY ATTEND RON'S RHODE RIVER RAFT-UP, 10/27/03

by Ron Hill, Apache

After licking our wounds from Isabelle, only the hearty attended. Bill and Kathleen Nuttall were only minutes behind us as we set the Bruce. Jaap and Ernestine Kaper evened out the raft. Much later Hank Recla showed up after coming up from his hurricane hole in the Solomon's area. He had stopped by his dock to let off a very seasick passenger who took him back to Solomon's

to get his car. They had motored all the way from the Patuxent River. The water was flat so it must have been Hank's rough running that caused the motion sickness. With a severe weather forecast, the raft broke up before dark. Apache and Irish Lady stayed at anchor while Sea Rover and Bay-Tripper returned to their docks. Looking forward to a better raft-up season next year.

## MEMORIES

by Charlie and Emily Copeland

Several years ago we sold our much beloved Catalina 34, "Carolina Breeze", simply because we had reached the point where our sea legs seemed to be getting a bit waterlogged. Of course some work was necessary to prepare her for sale. A major problem was an extensive crack in the keel sheathing.

Earlier, a quarter inch crack had developed in the fiberglass sheath that encases the keel. It appeared close to the keel-to-hull joint and ran just about the length of the keel. At the leading edge, the crack was about 3/8 inch wide and tapered to about 3/16 inch near the trailing edge. It was obvious that the keelbolts had either loosened or stretched or, likely both.

As you might guess we first tried to close the gap by tightening the keelbolts. Because of the weight of the keel, nearly 3 tons as I recall, we couldn't budge them. It was apparent we would need to find some method to relieve the tension in the joint before we would ever be able to draw the keel back up hard against the hull. We finally hit on the idea of using the Travelift to accomplish this.

Using the Travelift in the usual 2-sling mode, we raised the stern of Carolina Breeze off the keelblocks and lowered only the bow back to the ground. Only the leading edge of the keel then touched the ground. This had the effect of placing most of the weight of the boat on the forward edge of the keel. We then quickly climbed aboard and "Presto", the keelbolts all tightened down beautifully! With the keel properly tightened and once more in snug contact with the hull, I then went to work on rebuilding the fiberglass sheath that encapsulates it. This sheath varies in thickness from about 1/4 inch to around 1/2 inch.

The fiberglass work on the keel was extremely labor intensive and tedious! I began by grinding away the 'glass to within about 4 inches of either side of the crack. The grinding was done all the way down to bare lead in a way that allowed me to scarf a valley or sloping trench from the outer edge of grinding to the center where the crack was. I then laid up 10 alternating layers of fiberglass cloth and resin to build my fix up to the level of the original keel sheath. The whole new surface was then ground smooth to blend with the existing sheath. With a couple of coats of paint the "new" keel looked perfect!

This experience made a believer of me in the value of regularly tightening keelbolts. There's a lot of weight down there to be carried by a few 1 inch machine bolts. Also, there is the additional stress every time you take the ground, hit a rock or smack a hard sand bar under speed.

One footnote: This past weekend Emily and I visited our old marina where we kept Carolina Breeze for many years. She is still there. It was our good luck to find her this time up on blocks. Although we had visited her many times since giving her up, we had not seen her out of the water since the sale.

Six years following the repairs described above, we were delighted to find the keel still in Bristol shape with no evidence of any further separation. Also there was no evidence of blisters which had plagued us in earlier years. Carolina Breeze was every bit as pretty all over as the happy day we commissioned her 15 years earlier. After a little wetness around the eyelids, we returned to our home in Richmond.