



Classic Yacht Association

USA Fleet



Summer 2020 Newsletter

Living Aboard in the time of COVID-19



I have always felt a special kinship to wooden boats. Having grown up in the 1970's on Martha's Vineyard, I spent many days, summer and winter, on the waterfront. My first memory of a small boat was "fishing" with friends in a 1950's vintage Chris Craft Sedan Cruiser with a bad attitude, bad leaks and a bad bilge pump. I loved every minute. It would be a decade after college before I could realize the "joy" of owning a classic. Starting with a 1958 Goudy & Stevens "Boothbay 33". She was a great boat with solid bones and stable. But, I wanted something different. So, a few years later, a unique 1965 Newfoundland-built, 42' ketch came into my life. For the next 9 years, we poured blood, sweat (tears, of course,) and money into the boat. While she might have been the most attractive vintage yacht in the harbor, she never performed to satisfaction or comfort, so that led to a few years in a *plastic* 44' Flushdeck Trojan. Then, in 2015, Annie Laurie came back into my life. I had crewed aboard for many voyages under the previous owner (past CYA Director, Barry B. White,) and had only the fondest memories of this magnificent vessel. Without a second thought, I signed the papers and moved aboard with my cat. Of course, life has been nothing but smiles and rainbows since then. Annie is a curious and at times challenging mistress. She has attitude and rarely rewards hard labor with halcyon days of trouble free cruising. But, through it all, I have resolved my mind to join those who have preceded me in accepting her eccentricities. During the initial COVID19 scare, she was my safe-space/quarantine prison.

Scary waypoints along my personal journey from January until we could suddenly breathe again in May:

- January 16-18. CYA Change of Watch in Seattle.
- January 19. Business trip to California. (It was uneventful)
- January 30. A Global Health Emergency. (It won't be an "American" problem, of course.)
- February 11. It has a name. (Never in New England)
- February 29. An American Death. In Seattle.
- March 6. Returned from a week in California. Anxiety is growing.
- March 16. Connecticut begins closing down.
- March 20. My company closed. I helped file emergency unemployment forms for my staff. Church closed. Restaurants are closed. There's no toilet paper. I need to start cooking.
- April: What happened to Easter?!



Change of Watch in Seattle 2020



January 17, 2020: My first *Change of Watch*.

What a great time, and how proud I felt to be part of such a great organization (*decked out in a tux with stars on my pocket*)! The photo above right shows CYA Director Ted Crosby and I enjoying the first of *several* glasses of wine during the evening of the annual meeting and banquet.

The strength of an organization is derived from several sources. Some groups can claim great heritage and antiquity, church communities and fraternal organizations are good examples. Others derive strength in membership from common goals and opportunities, yacht clubs and flying clubs could be thus classified. The list of categories could be exhaustive, but another example are humanitarian organizations that promote the common good, such as The Red Cross, or Food For the Poor. So, the question that comes to my mind is: What do we, as the Classic Yacht Association stand for, and why should we grow the organization and continue? (*More on the last page!*)

Much good comes from our devotion to the life of our vintage craft. We support not only marinas and their people, but artisans, suppliers (some very specific/unique vendors come to mind), and we should also consider an educational aspect. Many of us have learned some of our skills from “old salts” or just old family members! Now, it’s our turn to pass these skills forward; we need to get the *next* generation engaged and on board!

Perhaps this is also a good *raison d’être* for CYA?

As for me, I would appreciate some help sanding and varnishing. ☺

Let’s share some ideas-

Let’s grow the USA fleet!

Mike Fazio



Living aboard during COVID19, continued

While Connecticut wasn't totally "locked down," we were nervous about leaving home. Rumors around the marina circulated that it might also lock down – I had no "plan B". Word came from the Governor's office that marinas (and marine supply stores!) fall under this new definition: *ESSENTIAL*. Masks become a reality, and slowly boats started to get their bottoms painted and launched. A member of the yard staff came aboard Annie one morning, and shared his feelings of anxiety over the events around us while warming up with some *socially-distanced* coffee. We felt oddly safe in the refuge of the marina. One morning, I was informed that Annie Laurie was moving over to "the Island" and with the yardboat firmly tied to the bow, we were gracefully relocated across the channel. Thankfully, I had removed the cover the day before. On Essex Island, some 150 feet from civilization, Mr Orange Cat and I remained alone every night; the ferry having stopped at 6:00pm. It was a solitary existence, but the good folks at Safe Harbors allowed our lives to safely move forward without additional anxiety. As the warmer weather settled upon us, things got easier. The ferry started running later, (great, since by then I had my inflatable back in the water!) And then, almost unthinkably, we were suddenly allowed to eat at a restaurant: "At" but not "in". It was oddly satisfying, yet curiously uncomfortable. A few weeks later, we could eat "in" a restaurant. Still, not comfortable, but we felt confident that restaurants would be taking good measures for the safety of all.

Meanwhile, whilst many of my friends were suffering with self-imposed exile, I found several fun projects demanding my unexpected free time! Some months previous, I had milled some mahogany for a new sole in the aft cabin. These grand old ladies, most of the cabins had ply-wood (or generic soft pine) decking in the cabins covered with linoleum or carpet. I decided to make a new floor of mahogany. This completed, the signal mast needed some serious refinishing; in my experience they are often neglected.

As the old finish started coming off the crosstree, I realized that there was more rot than wood, so it was really time for "new". Happily, I found an old boom from a 1936 25'

Matthews Sailer (if you're wondering, Matthews built 37 of these sailboats) and I happened to have a 10' lathe in my factory which hadn't been used in years. Throwing caution to the wind, (*translation*: I had no idea what I was doing!) I began turning the rectangular-shaped boom into a round, tapered thing. After several starts and stops, devising new methods of attaching the chuck to the part, the final push was on: then two hours later, it was done! I was still shaking in fear while I poured my first cocktail that night. Two weeks later, the parts were finished, re-assembled, and on their way to the boat. There were several other less-glamorous projects involving sandpaper, wiring, paint and varnish. But, it was all rather pleasant to accomplish without the ever-present fear of a timeline!

Now, it's time to start sanding and varnishing everything else!





Let's GROW the USA Fleet!

The health of an organization is directly proportional to the strength of its membership. **Classic Yacht Association** is an amazing group of like-minded folks who are committed to preserving a wonderful segment of America's maritime history.

To that end, if each of us could bring just one new member aboard, the USA fleet would double, right?! It's easy! I have prepared a small invitation package that includes a brochure, a newsletter and application. I have given out three in the past few weeks, without seriously "prospecting"! If you might want a few sets, please let me know – we'll get them off to you asap.

The New USA Fleet Newsletter & SOCIAL Media

First of all, I apologize that this newsletter might read more like "Little Mikey's report on 'What I did for spring vacation,'" but I wanted to get the first edition together and out on the "interwebs." Now that is done, and we would like to see this newsletter come together for our fleet. Any member one who would like to share some info, a story or just some photos is welcome! You can email me directly USACommodore@classicyacht.org

Also, please do check us out on FACEBOOK: [Classic Yacht Association – USA Fleet](#). Currently, we have 146 followers – *are you one?!*

Getting Social With Social Distancing?!

In light of the Zombie Apocalypse, (a.k.a. COVID19,) our options for gathering are somewhat limited. Still, some measure of convocation is possible; masks, handwashing and distancing considered. I would welcome suggestions – one being perhaps a visit to our home port here in Essex. Essex Island has over 40 transient slips, an outdoor restaurant (with a bar of course), an open-air gathering porch, a pool and an ice cream stand! We could gather and remain safe while enjoying some camaraderie. Any other suggestions graciously welcomed!



Cheers,
and if we don't connect in person, have a **wonderful summer!**

