Four winds

WINDJAMMERS SAILING CLUB

http://windjammersailing.com

The Newsletter of the Windjammers Sailing Club

CEDAR CREEK SAILING CENTER · BAYVILLE, NJ FALL 2026 windjammersailing.com

FROM THE COMMODORE

Commodore's Letter

BY RICHARD BARKER



I know it's a sad time, but it's not the end of the world. It's only the end of the sailing season, which actually is the same thing, isn't it ? All right, so it's the end of the world but only for four months. December through March is tough for weekend sailors. Can't sail. The weather is usually not good enough to work outside on our boats. But taking a break is not such a bad thing.

Winter is a good time to take things home to fix, clean, or refinish. Winches can be cleaned safely in a plastic tray in a warm kitchen or garage. Small woodworking projects usually come out better in a controlled environment. How about adding a leather cover to your steering wheel?

"The sea is the same as it has been since before men ever went on it in boats"

— ERNEST HEMINGWAY

Winter is a great time to plan to do some of the things you wouldn't take time to do during the season. There are maritime museums near all of us, some you might not be aware of unless you do some internet research. There are lighthouses and lifesaving stations all over NJ. (see Elizabeth's article below) A drive up to Mystic Seaport is worth a weekend or two, especially during the holidays. A little farther north (Massachusetts, actually) is the New Bedford Whaling Museum, which is an unbelievable museum, but not a good aquarium (look it up, it's hilarious).

There are so many wonderful books that make you feel like you are out on the water, people doing everything from crazy ocean crossings to local cruises. If you need a book this winter let me know, I'll loan you one.



Robert Wewers anchored at Governors

And, of course, there is the internet with infinite videos on every topic; how to plan your next cruise down to every detail, how to repair anything, etc. etc. Sometimes I search "sailing wooden sailboats" and I'm occupied for hours.

It goes without saying that we will all be going through our, and others, photos of the seasons adventures and remembering exactly how that felt. The rough weekend at Myers Hole, a serene weekend at Governors ~~Cut~~/~~Cove~~/Mansion. Remember the perfect sunset sail with family, or friends, or spouse. Remember the moons' reflection on a warm night sail. Tom's River, Forked River, Conklin Island, Cattus Island. All the way south then all the way north with 12 to 15 knots on the beam. You look at the pictures, and videos, and you can see it, and hear it, and smell it. You're back on the water. It makes you happy and sad at the same time and spring seems an eternity away.

The holidays and family help us through the off season but April will be here before you know it if you find ways to stay connected to your beloved boat.

CRUISING LOG

Cape May or Bust!

BY JIM MCGOVERN



Fair Winds, New Friends, Dolphins, and a Few Lessons Learned Along the Way

A Windjammer Sailing Club Adventure | July 17–26

Four Windjammer sailboats, a week in Cape May, great friends, plenty of dolphins, and a few unexpected sailing challenges added up to an unforgettable adventure—and stories sure to be shared at future Windjammer gatherings!

During the week of July 17–26, four Windjammer sailboats ventured south for a week of coastal cruising, relaxation, and camaraderie in Cape May. *Hannah*, *Dream Catcher II*, and *Galena* made the journey together, while *Foolish Heart* joined the adventure later in the week.

Our voyage began at 0500 from Cedar Creek Sailing Center, with 77.6 nautical miles ahead of us to Utsch's Marina in Cape May. The three boats traveled together, maintaining visual contact and keeping the conversation going on VHF channel 78. After approximately 12.5 hours and an average speed of 6.2 knots, we arrived in Cape May, having enjoyed an uneventful passage.

Along the way, we encountered numerous pods of dolphins swimming along the coast, particularly as we approached Cape May. There is something magical about watching dolphins play in the ocean alongside your sailboat. No matter how many times you see them, the experience never gets old.

Upon arrival, the crew of *Natural High*, who elected to make the trip by car, was waiting to greet us at the dock. *Hannah* continued to Cape May Marina, while *Dream Catcher II* and *Galena* settled in at Utsch's. Our Cape May adventure was officially underway!

Good Friends, Good Food, and Great Sailing Stories

The weather cooperated for most of the week, providing plenty of opportunities to explore Cape May. Of course, Mother Nature couldn't resist adding a little excitement, with several evening thunderstorms and even a few tornado watches to keep everyone on their toes. Fortunately, the days provided plenty of opportunities for bike riding, shopping, beach outings, and enjoying the many restaurants and watering holes that Cape May has to offer.



One of the highlights of the week was our Wednesday evening gathering at Willow Creek Winery. Crews from *Perfect Fit*, *Obrigado*, *Natural High*, *Lorelei*, and *Alliance* drove down to join the festivities. We also invited several new sailing friends we met at the marina. It was a wonderful evening of good food, enjoyable conversation, and the kind of friendships that make being part of the Windjammer Sailing Club so special. While we may sail different boats and take different routes, our shared love of sailing always brings us together.

And speaking of new friends, Utsch's Marina proved to be a wonderful place to meet fellow sailors traveling up and down the East Coast. Many cruising sailboats stop there along their journeys, and it doesn't take long before dockside introductions turn into conversations about boats, destinations, weather, and future adventures.

One of those new friendships even led to an exciting opportunity for Al Morris, who will be crewing aboard *Sea Whisper*, a 49-foot Hunter from Hampton, Virginia, on a voyage of more than 1,400 nautical miles to Antigua this fall! Now that's taking a casual dockside conversation to a whole new level!

During the week, *Galena* ventured out into the Atlantic twice with family and friends, enjoying more time sailing and, of course, more dolphins. The dolphins were determined to be the unofficial welcome committee for our Cape May adventure.

The crew of *Dream Catcher II* needed to return to home port early, departing at "zero dark thirty" on Sunday morning. The rest of us continued enjoying a week at Cape May before preparing for our own journey home.

The Adventure Continues—But Mother Nature Has Other Plans

On Saturday, July 25, the crews of *Hannah* and *Galena* departed Cape May for Cedar Creek, hoping for another pleasant coastal passage. Mother Nature, however, had made other arrangements.

Instead of the comfortable conditions we enjoyed on the way down, we encountered northeast winds of approximately 20 knots, directly on the nose, accompanied by 4–5-foot swells, with an occasional six-footer thrown in for good measure.

"Any fool can carry on, but a wise man knows how to shorten sail in time"

— JOSEPH CONRAD

Anyone who has sailed into steep seas and a headwind knows that progress can be painfully slow. Every wave seemed determined to remind us that coastal cruising is quite a distinct experience from an afternoon sail on Barnegat Bay!

As we approached Atlantic City, we calculated that, at our current speed, it would take another nine hours to reach Cedar Creek. After discussing the situation, the crews made a group decision to anchor at Rum Cove for the night and hope for improved conditions on Sunday.

It turned out to be a wise decision and a valuable reminder that **good seamanship isn't always about pressing forward. Sometimes the best decision is to know when to change the plan.**

We also gained better appreciation for wave forecasts. Forecast wave heights generally represent significant wave height—the average of the highest one-third of waves—and individual waves can be considerably larger. It's a useful reminder that a forecast of 4–5-foot seas don't mean every wave will politely stay within that range!

Barnegat Inlet—A Ride We Won't Soon Forget!

Early Sunday morning, we weighed anchor and continued north toward Barnegat Inlet. Conditions had improved, with swells of 2–3 feet, but the northeast wind continued at 10–15 knots.

As we approached Barnegat Inlet, we could see six-foot rolling breakers approaching at a 45-degree angle to the inlet.

Suddenly, our routine trip home became considerably more interesting.

We battened down the hatches, secured everything we could, and prepared to enter the inlet.

The first large wave lifted *Galena*, rolling the boat to starboard as we began to surf down its face. It took a firm grip on the wheel to maintain control and keep us safely clear of the jetty. The force of the water against the rudder was substantial, and we worked to regain our heading before the next set arrived. Then came the second wave.

Once again, *Galena* rolled and turned to starboard as we surfed down the wave, with the rudder fighting the tremendous force of the water. Adrenaline kicked in as we again headed toward the jetty, before straightening out and regaining our heading.

After the third set of rollers, we finally regained our course and entered the much calmer waters inside Barnegat Inlet.

What a relief!

And just when we thought the excitement was over, a pair of dolphins appeared inside the inlet, almost as though they had been waiting to escort us safely home. After the ride we had just experienced, their appearance seemed like a fitting welcome back to Barnegat Bay.

Interestingly, *Hannah* entered the inlet about fifteen minutes behind us and experienced much calmer conditions. Sometimes, in sailing, timing really is everything!

Lessons Learned Along the Way

After reviewing the conditions, we realized that the breaking waves at the inlet were largely the result of the northeast wind opposing the outgoing ebb current. When wind and current oppose one another, waves can become steeper, shorter, and more dangerous, particularly near inlets and shoaling water.



That experience reinforced several important lessons about coastal sailing.

First, understanding the relationship between wind, tides, currents, and wave conditions is essential when planning a coastal passage. An inlet that is relatively calm under one set of conditions can be challenging, or even dangerous, a short time later.

Second, timing matters. Whenever possible, avoiding strong opposing wind and current conditions can make an enormous difference. Wait for the slack current if possible. It is also important to observe wave patterns and assess whether an inlet can be entered safely. Waiting for a more favorable tide, sea state, or weather window is often the better choice.

And finally, **there is no substitute for sailing with good friends who look out for one another.** Maintaining communication, sharing observations, and making decisions together gave us confidence throughout the journey.

These are lessons we won't soon forget—and ones that will make us better prepared for our next coastal adventure.

Once safely inside Barnegat Bay, the final 1.5-hour trip to Cedar Creek was relatively uneventful.

Well, except for the thousands of boats heading toward Tices Shoal for Floatshoalla! After battling ocean swells and navigating Barnegat Inlet, dodging the weekend boating traffic seemed like one final obstacle between us and our home slips.

When we finally tied up at Cedar Creek and began unloading after a week aboard, there was a wonderful sense of accomplishment—and a little appreciation for solid ground!



Looking back, our Cape May adventure was everything a Windjammer cruise should be...beautiful destinations, memorable sailing, wonderful friendships, a few unexpected challenges, and plenty of stories to share. We enjoyed great meals, explored Cape May, welcomed new friends into our sailing community, saw countless dolphins, and learned some valuable lessons about coastal cruising and seamanship.

Most importantly, we were reminded that **the best part of sailing isn't always the destination or even the journey itself, it's the people who share the adventure with you.**

Fair winds, following seas, and here's to the next Windjammer adventure!

Although, next time, we wouldn't mind having those following seas on the trip home!

HISTORY

Lighthouse Challenge of New Jersey 2026

BY ELIZABETH SCHAFFER, HISTORIAN



Celebrating America's 250th anniversary

From sunrise October 17th until sunset October 18th, Frank and I experienced a nautical adventure! Each of the 11 lighthouses we visited gave us a wealth of knowledge about the maritime history of the Jersey Shore. 4 Life Saving Stations also paint a rich history of New Jersey in 1776. The British ships attacking from our shores, the shipwrecks and plundered cargo, as well as the advancement of ocean safety and rescues are all documented. I was unaware of some of these gems, and I highly recommend you see for yourself the museums within the lifesaving stations. Check with each location for hours before visiting. For more about the annual lighthouse challenge: https://lighthousechallengenj.com



Lighthouses & Life Saving Stations on the Route

Sandy Hook Lighthouse – 26 Hudson Road, Highlands

Spermaceti Cove Life Saving Station – Hartshorne Dr, between lots D&E, Sandy Hook

Navesink Twin Lights – 2 Lighthouse Road, Highlands

Sea Girt Lighthouse – Ocean Ave & Beacon Blvd, Sea Girt

Squan Beach Life Saving Station – Ocean and 2nd Ave, Manasquan

Barnegat Lighthouse

Barnegat Light Museum – East 5th Street and Central Ave, Barnegat Light

Tucker's Island Light – 120 West Main Street, Tuckerton

Absecon Lighthouse – 31 South Rhode Island Ave, Atlantic City

US Life Station #30 – 801 Fourth Street, Ocean City

Tatham Life Saving Station – 117th Street and 2nd Ave, Stone Harbor

Cape May Lighthouse – Cape May Point State Park, Cape May

East Point Lighthouse – May be closed/ http://eastpointlight.com

Delaware Bay Lights – 8 lighthouses in the Delaware bay, accessible only by water

http//delawarebaylightkeeper – friend.org

Finns Point Lighthouse – 199 Lighthouse Road, Pennsville

Tinicum Lighthouse – 70 Second Street, Paulsboro

ON THE WATER

Racing

BY MARK ZAVENELLI

On September 19 the Windjammers faced off against Tall Oaks in our annual Challenge Cup. It was a windy day as is typical for this race, and we had great turnout with a total of 10 boats on the starting line. All boats which started also finished the race with no mishaps other than the starting pin floating away pre-start. Brent and Colleen on Daylight were able to chase the pin down and the race started with a short delay. Tall Oaks put on a dominating performance, retaining the Challenge Cup, with Daylight taking line honors. Elenora, skippered by Bob Fahey, was the fastest finisher for the Windjammers. Race committee as usual did a terrific job running the start, timing all the boats and taking great pictures. We had a very well attended party at Berkeley Island Park with both sailing clubs after the race. It was a day where friendly competition, seamanship, and camaraderie were on full display. We'll be back again next year to try and win the Cup back! The participating Windjammers boats were: Elenora, Shanty, Sashay, Sundog, and Lotus





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BOAT TALK

A Short Season

BY JOE DIGAETANO



We enjoyed our Chesapeake cruise in 2025, but it got Terri thinking of what she really liked in a cruising sailboat. Our Island Packet 350 was a wonderful boat, but it lacked some things making life on board more enjoyable. Terri could not help making comparisons to the Catalina 350 we owned in the past. We sold the Catalina after entering our lagoon became impossible due to shoaling. We ended up selling the Island Packet last fall after the entrance to our lagoon was dredged. The search to find our Catalina 350 began.



I looked at the first boat with my daughter Alysa. She was too young to remember our previous Catalina. I asked her what she thought after going through the boat. Her response was, "This is disgusting". I agreed and the search continued. I placed a wanted ad in a few Catalina Facebook groups a year ago and received a couple good responses. One owner was not realistic with his asking price and our discussion ended. I eventually looked at another boat in the summer and reached an agreement of sale during my visit. I was excited! It was a nice, well maintained boat. Unfortunately, the owner called me the next day and decided he wanted to keep it as his children and grandkids gave him a hard time about selling the boat. The search continued. I looked at boats in North Carolina, the Chesapeake, Long Island, and New Jersey but came up empty. The search became more challenging when Practical Sailor did a You Tube video on the Catalina 350 calling it the best thirty-five footer... something Phil and Nancy already knew. I was getting desperate and decided to look at a boat on Lake Ontario in August. While it seemed like a nice freshwater boat, it lacked air conditioning and getting it home was not ideal. The day before I left for New York, I received a call from the Facebook owner who was not reasonable with his price many months ago. We had a good discussion and I shared with him a print out of asking and sold boat prices over the past eighteen months. We seemed to be in the same ball park after going through the listing.

The road trip was on. Syracuse, New York and Warwick, Rhode Island. The Syracuse boat was just ok. The Warwick boat was great! It was the ninth Catalina 350 I inspected. Alliance was a very well kept boat. It had an almost new 12" Garmin chart plotter with radar, almost new wind and depth gauges, new mainsail, air conditioning, ultra leather seating, Zarcor opening companionway doors, davits, and solar. Oh, and no exterior teak! A deal was struck and I was sailing south in August with a little detour to Block Island.



So why the Catalina 350? Terri loved the 6' 8" headroom. The forward berth is not pointed at the bottom and has side entries, the head has a shower stall, the galley has a separate freezer, the refrigerator has top and side loading access, lots of ventilation, good storage, a big cockpit with fixed cockpit table, a walk through transom, 4' 6" draft, and 52 foot bridge clearance.

Unfortunately, the season was short, and trips to the University of Rhode Island for Sarah made it shorter. The boat is on the hard now, but I am getting through a big list of projects so we can get off to a great start in 2027! Anyone up for a trip to New England in August? One thing remains. We need a name. Contenders are True North, Full Circle, Encore, Suggestions?

SAFETY AT SEA

What We Did Right and What We Did Wrong — Lessons Learned

BY NANCY ONFFROY



Late in the afternoon on Friday, July 3rd, Phil and I were debating going to Myers Hole to try to secure a good spot to anchor our boat for the July 4th weekend. We were aware that four WJSC boats were already anchored at Meyers Hole (Foolish Heart, Galena, Hannah, and Elysium) and that if we left by 6:00pm from Cedar Creek, that we could be safety anchored by 8:00pm and would be able to watch from our cockpit the sun setting while hopefully drinking an adult beverage. So we cast off from the marina and were very excited for the weekend plans.

We were done anchoring by 8pm and the weather was spectacular. Phil and I watched the sunset and commented on how beautiful the sky was. Life was Great!! Then all of a sudden we noticed a big dark cloud coming into our view. It seemed to be coming straight at us and it was moving fast. We have weathered many thunderstorms in our 29 years of sailing, and although we were monitoring this approaching storm, we were not really that concerned. We made sure to put away the cushions and pillows in the cockpit so they would not get wet and awaited the storm. Then the storm hit. Right from the beginning the winds were really strong (over 60+mph) and the boat was rocking back and forth so badly that going down below was dangerous as you could get tossed around and easily get hurt. The rain was strong and sometimes coming at you horizontally. Phil looked at me and said for me to get the PFD's and he was going to start the boat so he would have some way to try to control the boat.

So here is a run down of what we did "right" when the storm hit.

#1). Always put on your PFD's first. With the wind and the waves, there was a chance that you could get thrown off the boat. And with it now being pitch black, losing someone overboard without a PFD could really complicate the situation.

#2). Start the engine. This will give you (hopefully) some control over the boat. We were terrified that we would crash into another boat. Thank God this did not happen. Keep in mind that it was now pitch black and the only time we could see the other boats was when a lightning bolt lit up the sky.

So what were the lessons we learned?

#1). Know where all the important things like PFD's, flashlights and rain gear are located down below. This is no time to be going thru several lockers looking for what you need.

I had a good idea where everything was but still it took way too long to assemble everything in the dark and get it back up to the cockpit while the boat wildly rocked back and forth. The rain gear wasn't much help at this point because we were both soaked from the rain. Unfortunately, when I was down below, I heard what I thought was our anchor slipping and that the anchor rode was somehow being let out.

Now we had a new thing to panic about, we were going backwards quickly right toward the 4 WJSC boats.

2). Turn on the cockpit radio on channel 16 and channel 78. This gives you the ability to communicate with the other WJSC boats and hear what they are saying to each other. Things were too wild in the cockpit to try to call someone on their cell phone.

We unfortunately did not do this soon enough as we were consumed with trying to get some control over the boat. If we had turned on our radio and listened to channel 16, we would have heard that Al Morris had already contacted the Coast Guard who were sending two boats to help us. We would have heard that two Boat US ships were also heading to help us.

3). Make sure you have a robust snubber on your Windless. (And having 2 snubbers to use for bad situations like this is even better. We now have two very strong snubbers on our boat.)

We did not realize until after the storm had finally calmed down that we were not dragging our anchor like I had thought. Our snubber had fallen off the Windless with all the strong rocking back and forth which resulted in 225 feet of anchor rode being let out. This situation made it extremely hard to control the boat.

We were lucky that we made it thru the storm with no personal injuries and no big issues with our boat.

HANDY REFERENCE

The Bridges of Ocean County

Print this pocket size version to keep for reference.

Bridges of Barnegat Bay, North to South
Call on Channel 13 Using These Names:
Brielle Railroad Bridge (do not call)
Rt, 35 Bridge (732-899-2992)
Rt. 88 Bridge (732-899-9341)
Rt. 13/Loveland Bridge (732-899-1520)
Mantoloking Bridge (732-477-1430)
Rt.37/Mathis Bridge (732-929-1606)

IN MEMORIAM

Robert Wewers

"If a man is to be obsessed by something, I suppose a boat is as good as anything, perhaps a bit better than most." — E.B. White

I found that there may be a few people who have not learned that Robert Wewers passed at his home in Denver on Sept. 27. He was a longtime Windjammer and loved being on his boat, whether sailing or relaxing dockside. Swimming at Governors Mansion was a favorite weekend pastime. A more optimistic and generous person you will never meet. He always had a positive attitude and a smile on his face!

Robert will be missed by his four daughters, nine grandchildren, nine great grandchildren, three siblings and many, many friends.

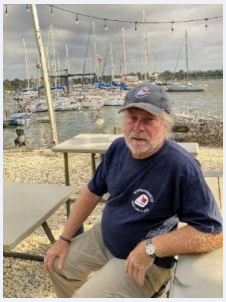


Robert Wewers on the lookout

Make sure you are flying our colors!!!

To order go here: Windjammer Merch

Or see Richard Barker on the dock



HUMOR

Pat's Punchlines



A wealthy corporate executive decides to leave the rat race behind, buy a grand two-masted schooner, and hire a seasoned old sea captain to teach him the ropes.

On their first voyage out into the open ocean, a terrifying storm blows up. Rolling waves crash over the bow, winds howl through the rigging, and the boat tosses wildly in the swell.

Panicking, the owner clutches the rail and screams over the roar of the wind, "Captain, captain! We're taking on water! How far are we from land?!"

The old captain calmly looks up at the sky, checks his pocket compass, glances over the churning waves, and nods thoughtfully.

"About two miles," the captain hollers back over the thunder.

The owner exhales a massive sigh of relief. "Oh, thank God! Two miles isn't bad at all! Which direction? North? East?"

The captain points "Down Mate, Straight down…"



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SEA LORE

Why Did Sailors and Pirates Wear Earrings?



1. Burial Insurance

Payment for a funeral: The most famous myth turned practical belief was that a gold or silver earring served as upfront payment for a proper Christian burial. If a sailor drowned and their body washed ashore, the finder could sell the earring to cover the cost of a coffin and burial.

Home port engraving: Some sailors reportedly engraved the name of their home port onto their earring so strangers would know where to send their body or news of their death.

2. Portable Wealth

A mobile bank account: Seamen lived transient lives and rarely trusted banks or carried heavy chests of currency on shore. Wearing precious metal meant you always had a liquid asset on your body that could be sold during hard times.

GALLEY

Boat Friendly Avocado Pasta Dish

A quick and easy pasta dish to prepare onboard

Ingredients — serves 4

- 1 pound uncooked pasta (rigatoni, penne or similar)
- 2 large, ripe avocados
- 1 clove garlic, peeled and smashed
- ½ cup olive oil plus 2 Tbsp.
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 1–2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp. butter (optional)
- A few tomatoes or cherry tomatoes (optional)
- Fresh parsley (optional)

Directions

Cook the pasta. While the pasta cooks, slice each avocado in half lengthwise around the pit and open it. Remove the pit. Scoop out the avocado.

Add garlic, olive oil, salt and pepper. Add a good splash of lemon juice to prevent the avocado from browning. Mix well with fork or food processor until the sauce turns smooth and creamy. If the sauce looks too thick, drizzle in the additional 2 Tbsp. olive oil and mix a bit more.

When the pasta is done, drain it and return it briefly to the pot. Add the avocado sauce and butter. Toss gently until the sauce is evenly distributed.

Top with sliced tomatoes and chopped fresh parsley, if desired. Serve and eat immediately.



Newsletter Submissions

Frank Schaffer
Newsletter Chair

Please share your cruising stories, maintenance tips, general sailing news, great boat recipes, boat related classifieds, Barnegat Bay news, etc. I'm also looking for people who are interested in writing regular features – I'd love to hear your ideas! Please send your suggestions and original submissions to:

newsletter@windjammersailing.com

