

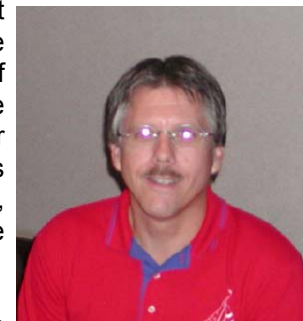


**Raft-Up for Lunch
Lake Martin Labor Day Cruise**

NEXT MEETING
October 15, 2002 - 7 PM
Ryans Steak House, Northside Dr., Macon, GA

COMMODORE'S MAINSHEET

Wet greetings to everyone, first a drought then all this water, but at least we have wind. Again I offer up my thanks to those of you that braved the rain and enjoyed the fellowship and food during our September meeting at Ryan's. Unfortunately I will miss the next get together, I have to go to Reno, NV for two weeks of school. I will be thinking of you while I am away.



For those that did not make the meeting, we have spoken with Georgia Power folks concerning their facilities and Cherry Blossom. The campground will open March 1st, and there will be a \$3.00 charge per day, per car for everyone to park at the boat ramp or the point (day use area), including spectators. They have promised to work on getting us \$600.00 in sponsorship money to help fund the event. We still need your help in running the event in the following areas

Race Committee	B. Hargrove, need one more and a boat
T-shirts/Soda sale at the point	Faye Fisher
Direct parking of boats/trailers	Need two volunteers, early morning
Sponsorship	Kenny A..
Advertisement	Need one
Score Keeping	Jan D.
Design of T-shirt and ordering	Need one to coordinate ordering
Announcer	Carl S.

Please consider these needs and help your club put on the best event ever. We need to get started working towards Cherry Blossom now.

It was also recommended that club members that race should launch Friday evening or early Saturday morning to lighten the congestion on

OUR LABOR DAY EXCURSION ON LAKE MARTIN

Or,

The Gimp Leading the Anxious
Michael Dortch

the ramp. We will change the racing start time to 9:30 or 10:00, stop for a lunch break, then race again in the afternoon. The plan is to get in at least 4 or 5 total races. More exact info will be posted as it is firmed up.

Phil will be hosting the first local Special Olympics regatta on Oct. 12 at Lake Tobo. Everyone is encouraged to attend the event, and help out, or just watch. Contact Phil for more info, or check out the web site "Events" page.

Remember this is your club; the only way to make it better is to participate. Take a friend sailing and to the meeting/social.

See you on the water,
Carl

I felt like dad needed to put something else in here other than Cherry Blossom, so he left it up to me to throw in a little fact about America's Cup racing, since I'm such a fanatic!

For those of you dreaming of one day sponsoring your own America's Cup syndicate, a good fact to know would be the average mainsail costs not \$40,000, not \$60,000 but \$90,000! They also have one for just about every wind condition, and a spare for each of those. Ouch...

~Ashley

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**Treasure Hunt or Poker Regatta**  
Kenny Allen

The Treasure Hunt scheduled for September 21 was post-poned until we can fit it into an open weekend date. The water level at Lake Juliette is way too low right now. On Sunday, the 15th, there was only 17" of water at the end of the ramp. We want to have it later or substitute it with A Poker Run Regatta if the weather and water is too cold. A Poker Regatta would be in a category like a Treasure Hunt (no timing, no "racing", just luck of a draw, with competitive fun and prizes). There is a club race scheduled for Oct 19th at Lake Juliette.

To all of you who missed the Labor Day Cruise at Lake Martin, a loud Bronx Cheer and a hearty Naa-Naa-Na-Naa-Naaa! We had a great time . . .and ya'll missed it. For Charlie, Killian and myself, this was our first time going off somewhere with the Club. Some of you are aware of the health problems that Charlie and I have to deal with, Charlie has sporadic and acute anxiety attacks due to medications she takes for her transplanted kidney and I have a spinal column that resembles a six year olds' tinker toy project due to a case of extreme, sudden deceleration trauma. (It's a long story involving a motorcycle redlined in high gear, a parked car and a complete lack of fear of my own common sense, but I digress)

A lot of you have been trying to talk us into going on one of these forays and we finally decided that Lake Martin was close enough that we could keep Charlie sedated and I could probably make the drive without collapsing in a quivering heap. So we began planning. Being novices at this great endeavor, the planning began to take on a "Stephen King meets the Marx Brothers" aspect. With the aid of copious notes and checklists littering the house and taped to every available surface, we finally managed to confuse ourselves completely and fell back on the old "hey, that looks good, throw it in the truck!" trick. We got half packed when Mother Nature decided we needed to be harassed, confused and wet. We finally managed the load out, picked up the kid from school and headed to Alabama. (damn, forgot the banjo) Inclement weather has a detrimental effect on both of us and I was beginning to wonder if this was going to be worth it. I didn't say anything to Charlie, which was just as well. She was curled up in a ball, vibrating at 60 cycles and spinning at about 78 rpm. After we stopped to gas up "the Beast" (my old and decrepit Chevy Suburban) and checked to see if it still had all of it's bodily fluids (she loves that 50 weight), Charlie medicated and assumed the position in the back seat. Killian grabbed the beef jerky, cranked up a Lynard Skynard tape and off we went. The rain stopped by the far side of Crawford County, Charlie was relaxing enough to take a nap and my meds were starting to kick in, things were looking up.

We pulled in to Wind Creek State Park Friday afternoon to be immediately greeted by a light drizzle, a funny noise coming from under

the hood, and a broken spreader on the Thera-P. After exhausting my vocabulary of four-letter epithets and a frantic search for the drill, which we determined was relaxing contentedly on the back bench of the shop back home, (laughing, no doubt) Jimmy and Charlotte Harrell arrived like the Cavalry in a grade B western just as the rain quit. Jimmy loaned me his drill thereby saving this poor pilgrims' hide. Tom and Katie Barker arrived with Jimmy and Charlotte, so there was lots of moral, technical and physical support for the arduous ceremony known as "rigging the blow-boat". We got the boat rigged and launched and I decided that, discretion being the better part of valor, I'd worry about the funny engine noise Monday. While some of the folks from the Club went back in to town for "store bought" supper, I got to spend my time upside down in the bilges tracing wires when my bow and cabin lights refused to co-operate. Oh, the joys of low budget yachting.

Wind Creek Park is a very nice facility. Two bucks a head to get in, nice new (and clean) bathrooms with showers, a Laundromat, a not too outrageously priced store, several boat ramps (wide too) nice docks and a slip for Five bucks a night. The slips do not have water or electricity at this time but, rumor has it, these amenities will be run in the near future. Seven boats made the trip, by my count. (which could be wrong but I think I've got it right) Along with the Harrell's and the Barker's mentioned above, (both sailing San Juan 23's) there was Bob and Carolyn Hargrove (Bay Hen 21), Mike and Linda Nixon (Precision), Tom and Renee Wellman (MacGregor 26X) and Bob Horan and his daughter, Linda (MacGregor 25). On Saturday morning we had a semi-unofficial meeting on the dock and by unanimous acclamation appointed Bob Horan to the post of "Fearless Leader" since nobody seemed to have a clue as to the alleged itinerary. I believe it was Mike Nixon who had talked to someone in the Dixie Sailing Club and caged an invite to a "Tex-Mex" fiesta they were throwing that evening. Their facilities are located at the southern end of Lake Martin and Wind Creek being at the northern end, this offered the opportunity of a nice long sail followed by a party and a free meal. Things were definitely looking up.

After purchasing a chart and making sure my GPS actually worked, (yes, Jimmy, I do have something on this tub that actually works!) we proceeded out the channel to the big water. We headed out under heavy overcast skies that appeared to have imminent deluge written all over them, although the temperature and the winds were just right. Perfect sailing weather if the rain held off. Winds were fairly steady with just enough gusts to keep it exciting. We had some fairly long stretches with

the rail in the water. According to the GPS, we hit seven knots, which, for me, is up there in the "yee-ha" range. The knot-meter on the boat seemed to be stuck at half a knot when it did give a twitch. Gotta fix that too. We tried to stay close to Jimmy and Tom's San Juan 23's as I did have a VHS radio, but it didn't work either, (The list of in-operable equipment installed on the Thera-P is staggering) and not having much experience at navigation, the idea of wandering around an unfamiliar body of water lost and no way to complain to anybody but the crew about it, struck me as the kind of educational experience I would rather put off for another time. Besides, the crew gets surly when I complain and mutiny is an ugly thing. (Charlie's E-Mail address is Keelhauldacapn)

We rafted up for lunch and a swim on the lee shore of a spot called Doctor's Island, where we were treated to our first glimpse of Tom and Renee's famous amphibious "Porta-Pooch", George. (I guess you had to be there, but I got pictures) Bob and Carolyn Hargrove decided to endeavor to persevere as the Bay Hen wasn't setting any speed records and passed up the chance to dine and frolic. The swim (more like a leisurely float) gave my back a break and loosened the "anxiety lines" on Charlie's forehead, not to mention expending some of that in-exhaustible supply of 12-year-old kinetic energy also known as "Killian". Alas, all fun things must make way for more fun things; we were off again with Bob Horan leading us out to catch up with Bob and Carolyn.

After another nice run, mostly downwind or on a beam reach, I became hopelessly confused as to exactly where on the lake we were. Not lost, you understand, just a might confused. Yeah, right! I blame it on a marina and a bridge not marked on the chart. No problem, I just religiously set way points on the GPS and tried to stay glued to Jimmy Harrell's transom. I think Bob Horan found a shortcut somewhere, I lost sight of him about this time. Drive on, Jimmy, I'm right behind you! The lake began to close up. A lot of islands and twisting channels. The wind got pretty twisted, too. At one point, Tom Wellman and I tried to occupy the same spot on the lake due to a wind shift and a bad course correction on my part. I think we both needed a drink after that one.

Eventually we came to the really interesting part of the journey, Acapulco and Chimney Rock. This is a narrow cut between two towering cliffs that appeared to be about a quarter of a mile wide and wall to wall power boats, pontoon boats, jet skis, bass boats, etc. It looked like someone

had kicked over an aquatic fire ant bed. We found out later that this spot is "Party Central" for the younger set. Jimmy hailed us over the "lung communicator" and informed us that Bob had radioed him to give us a heads up on this floating obstacle course and allowed as we might want to drop sail and motor through. Jimmy, deciding that although discretion may be the better part of valor, it ain't near as much fun, elected to run the gauntlet with rags in the wind. Well, not wanting to wimp out, I took a deep breath and followed him through. It wasn't as bad as it looked, most of the folks eased over and gave us room. We didn't have to dodge too much. Tom Barker came through behind us and after we were all through they closed back up. I guess the rest of the fleet had a similar time of it as we all arrived at the Dixie Sailing Club in one piece.

The Dixie Sailing Club is one impressive outfit. They own a pretty large chunk of waterfront acreage. The best I could tell, they had at least two coves for mooring and encompassed several private homes, (membership in the club being a part of the covenants) a beautiful Clubhouse, great facilities and the nicest, most hospitable members of any club I have ever visited. We all rafted up in one of the Club's coves and one of the members graciously offered to play water taxi. Upon arriving at the Clubhouse, we were greeted and feted like we was somebody. The food was fantastic, the margaritas were cold and the conversation and fellowship, stimulating and convivial. Truly, southern hospitality at its finest. I think I shook more hands than a politician, met so many nice folks the names began to blur. (Even with nametags supplied) Charlie was a bit put off on the food situation, as she doesn't eat cheese! (can you cook Tex-Mex without it?) All things considered, it was a perfect finale to really great day of sailing. By the time I went down for the count, I was one whipped puppy . . . But oh, it hurt so good!

Sunday morning we bade goodbye to our gracious hosts and motored out under the ever-present overcast to be greeted by some fairly stiff winds. As usual, we were the last ones out. As I still was not fully recovered from the previous days exertions, we decided to reef down for the return voyage. We had made tentative plans to sail over to check out an imported lighthouse with the Wellmans but my motor started in with a strange case of hiccups. Being a cautious person by nature, (read wimp, if you must) we decided to fore-go the sightseeing for progress back to the Park. I took her through the Acapulco-Chimney Rock cut behind Bob Horan with no traffic problems this time, (the party folks were still off recuperating, I guess) and then turned the tiller over to Charlie. I took my pain meds and kicked back. Charlie asked me once

if I wanted to take over and I replied that I would take it when we caught up with the rest of the fleet. She sailed the rest of the way and did a really great job, but that's Charlie's story and I'll let her tell it. We finally caught up with Jimmy and Tom's San Juan's right before the Park where I took over and motored us in to a slip. After a long, luxurious shower, Charlie allowed as how she did not get to partake of the wonderful Mexican banquet of the previous night, (due to her aversion to curdled and aged dairy products) I owed her a supper and it better involve a big chunk of red, rare meat and a steaming baked potato. The Barkers, the Harrell's and my crew finally ended up at a steak house in town where we stuffed ourselves silly, then sat back and watched as Killian wreaked havoc on her entree and the salad and desert bar.

Monday morning, after a couple of aborted attempts and a good bit of help and amusement, we finally wrestled the Thera-P onto the trailer, got everything squared away and headed for Maconga. We made it back with only a couple of pauses for a few minor snags. (broken bow strap {twice} and obstinate trailer lights) The "Beast" got us back home with minimal grumbling and muttering, bless her dented, ragged hide. Still has that new strange noise under the hood, though. All in all, it was one of the best weekends of sailing I have had yet and I really appreciate all the "old salts" that helped out and gave this poor novice lots of priceless advice and assistance. You guys (and gals) really made this trip a wonderful experience for us.

THANK YOU!  
Gimp

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**Our sympathy goes out to Ron and Linda.
Linda's father, Glen Chappel passed away on
September 15, 2002.**

Penalties and Protests

Jay Harrell

Now that you know most of the rules, you certainly plan on always following them when you go racing. But what happens when you forget or just mess up and break a rule? Fortunately, the rules give you a fairly easy out. All you need to do is immediately sail clear of other boats and do a “720 degree turns penalty”. This is usually called a “720” and consists of two complete 360 degrees turns in the same direction with two tacks and two gybes.

There are two important points to note about the “720”. First, you are required to do your turns right away. You can’t wait until it’s convenient or the wind is better – you have to do it right then. Second, you are required to include two tacks and two gybes and you have to turn at least 720 degrees around. If, for example, you break a rule at the gybe mark on a triangle course, the gybe that you would have made anyway at the gybe mark does not count as one of two in your penalty turn. You have to make two complete turns and then go back to racing, which might take even some more turning.

And of course there are some exceptions. First, if you break a rule and significantly damage another boat, you are required to retire from the race. Likewise, if you break a rule and as a result gain significantly in the race, you are not allowed to take a “720” penalty and must retire from the race. And finally, if you touch a mark while rounding, the penalty is just one turn (one tack and gybe), instead of two.

It is also very important to note that the rules require you to take a penalty even if no one else notices that you broke a rule or protests you. Because there are no umpires on the race course, competitors are expected to voluntarily follow the rules and take their penalties when they don’t. The rules also allow and even expect anybody to protest any breach of the rules that they witness, even if they were not involved.

Now what if you see someone else break a rule or someone fouls you? First you must hail the word “Protest” and except on small boats you need to fly a red flag. The other boat should go ahead and do a 720 and if they do, then the matter is resolved. Of course, it’s possible or even likely for there to be some disagreement as to who if anyone actually broke any rules. If the protested boat does not think they broke

a rule and does not do a 720, then a Protest Hearing will be held on shore after the day’s races.

Once back on shore, the protesting party writes down information about the incident and gives this paper to the race committee. The race committee will first notify the protested boat and then gather a few experienced racers to hear both sides of the story and issue a decision. If the committee decides that a boat broke a rule they will disqualify them from the particular race, or may issue a alternative penalty if the sailing instructions allow.

Unless you are racing in the Americas Cup, a protest hearing need not be a formal, stuffy, painful process. The hearing can be open to all racers to observe and should be an educational experience for everyone involved. The rules of sailing can be complicated and subtle and open discussion of disagreements should be encouraged so that everybody can understand the rules better. Do not avoid filing a protest just because it is too much trouble. If rules are broken on the race course, then a protest hearing is the way to sort it all out so that it is less likely to happen again.

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### 2nd Annual DIYRA Portsmouth Championships

The second annual sailing of the DIYRA Portsmouth Championships will be held this year in conjunction with the 2002 Barefoot Open Regatta, October 4-6, 2002. Barefoot Sailing Club in Atlanta is the host for the 2002 regatta.

For more information, see [www.riverside.net/LJSC](http://www.riverside.net/LJSC) or contact one of the following: Will Lee, Regatta Chairperson, 404-307-3438 or Pam Keene, DIYRA Portsmouth Championships Coordinator, 770-965-2441

## Trip to Pick up Calvin's and Grayson's Hunter 260

Jimmy Harrell

Since Calvin had a hip replaced just a few weeks ago, I volunteered to help pick up his new-to-him boat in Jacksonville, Florida. I packed my overnight bag (about 3 pounds total) and left Lake Sinclair about 4:30 on Friday, September 20, and headed to Macon to pick up Calvin. Grayson was a little concerned about Calvin traveling so far so soon after his surgery. She had packed his bags and a cooler full of goodies and all the stuff we might need for the trip including a spare tire for the trailer (about 300 hundred pounds total).

The trip to Jacksonville was uneventful. Stopped at a motel about 1 hr from our destination. Arrived at the marina about mid morning.

The next morning we drove to the marina, exchanged pleasantries with the sales lady and proceeded to hook up the trailer. Had the right size ball. Chains and break away cable attached OK. The lights were another story. The trailer wire and the truck receptacle were the same sex. I had never seen this before. We asked the sales lady at the marina if they had any adaptors which might solve our problem. She started giving us directions to Boat US. We pointed out that we were trailer sailors and that we could probably find what we needed at Walmart if one was nearby. Off to Wally World, Calvin bought about \$15 worth of trailer connectors and wires and we returned to do surgery. Did a sex change operation on the trailer wire, plugged a 2 foot extension connector and all the lights worked. We were ready for the road and considering Murphy's law it had not taken that long.

But Murphy was not finished with us. Pulled out of the marina and proceeded slowly to be sure everything was working OK. Everything looked good so picked up speed. Suddenly the trailer started fish-tailing. I slowed down and the swaying seemed to be amplifying. What should I do. Decided that if it was going to turn over, it would be better at a slow speed so continued to decelerate. At a significantly slower speed it did stop swaying. After I gained a little composure, asked Calvin if he was as scared as I was. We decided that we were both at about the same concern level. After we gained a little more composure we discussed our options and decided that we would proceed at slow speed to a rest area that we knew was a few miles ahead. I had noticed that the swaying started at a little over 55 mph so we decided to keep it below 50. This worked fine for us but others on Interstate 10

near Jacksonville are not used to going this slow. We got some stares and a few 18 wheelers blew past us.

We knew we needed more tongue weight to go faster. Otherwise it was going to be a long trip back to Lake Sinclair. We discussed what we could do. Moving the boat forward or the axle back on the trailer would be a preferable fix but not within our means with the limited tools we had and the lack of a ramp at the rest stop. Calvin pointed out that there were several items in the rear of the boat which could be moved forward to increase tongue weight. We moved the dingy motor and gasoline tanks containing approximately 15 gallons of gasoline to the truck bed. The rubber dingy (felt like about 150 pounds) which was rolled up inside the boat was moved to the bow.

Back on the road with fingers crossed and an eerie silence in the cab, we increased speed above 55 mph. Got all the way up to 70 and everything was steady. We decided to keep it at or below 65 and relax a bit.

The rest of the trip was uneventful until we were approaching OSYC. We had forgotten that there was a Thistle regatta going on and boats and trailers were everywhere. We were able to find a place to part the boat temporary and returned the next day to launch it.

Calvin seemed no worse for the wear of the trip. He did a good portion of the driving but left most of the other chores up to me, Grayson, and Ronnie Hartley who helped launch the boat on Sunday. Calvin stood around holding his cane and using it to point at things that needed to be done. His recovery seems remarkable to me. Although Ronnie and I wondered if he had really had a hip replacement or if this was a way to get us to do the hard work.

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The RUDDER is the official publication of the Lake Juliette Sailing Club. Statements and opinions appearing herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the group position of the Lake Juliette Sailing Club. The Editor reserves the right to edit all material for publication and to publish only that material which is felt to be in the best interest of the LJSC.

**"Long Time No Sea"**  
**Or**  
**"Oh Brother, Where Art's Thou"**  
"Hazardous" Greg Milan

Now here's a tale of a good trip winch could have been a great one, had it not been for the woes of over preparation and under planning, however. The latter could have been avoided for the most part. In my case hindsight is 20/40! However, the knowledge gained is hard won yet valuable for my next excursion to the Georgia coast and is excellent for those of you should you get the craving for some nearby salty sailing!

Sunday, August 25, 2002, my new first mate Jackie and I departed for Savannah Georgia ostensibly to sail off the coast of Tybee Island and perhaps get over to Hilton Head. For over a week I had packed trailer bearings, cleaned and refitted the boat, purchased supplies, stowed sails and binoculars, VHF radio, ropes and boat hooks and all the things needed for the trip, (or so I thought). I don't suppose any other group of people think they need so much stuff as we sailors, but really folks, we don't. More on this later.

We departed from Griffin at six a.m. so as to have some cool traveling weather. The heat wave of the past two months had me drained completely. The Chevy Suburban was totally packed and the boat relatively empty, save for the light items like sails and cushions, etc. A light boat tows better!

Well folks, we hadn't gone but four miles when our first disaster struck! From out of absolutely nowhere a herd of deer ran out into onto, and in front of the big SUV (Suburban universal vehicle). It was like a scene out of Star Trek when the Enterprise encounters an asteroid belt! They were everywhere! I must have hit four or more and been hit by several more. Deer went flying like bowling pins.

We got out to survey the damage. Well it didn't look too bad, a broken plastic grill, one headlight dangling, like a cyclops eye, and the right side passenger door badly pushed in, no radiator leaks. I had, fortunately, only been traveling about 35 m.p.h. and the 3/4 ton Chevy was built like a tank. We would be able to continue! A bit of duct tape to stabilize the light and flapping grill and we were off proclaiming loudly that I would get even with their species, come deer season. Really

folks, they had to really go out of their way to collide with us. In a lesser vehicle the trip would have been over. Can't say enough for Chevy Suburbans, if you ever own one, you will always own one! Nuff said!

We made good time down to Macon and 1-16, the loneliest super-slab in Georgia. Even towing the portly Lancer we averaged over 60 m.p.h. and made it to our destination in four hours flat.

I somehow got discombobulated and took the wrong road out to Whitmarsh Island where lay the Savannah Bend Marina. Instead of crossing the bridge at Thunderbolt and hanging a left, we came in the back door and hung a right. If you find this part of the story confusing, read on mates!

The week before I had called the dock master, a nice young man named Steve Woods, who, as luck would have it, was also from Griffin, Ga. It's either a small world or there's just a lot of people! I went in and introduced myself and presented him with a day old copy of "the Griffin Daily news" which he gladly received. "Long time since I saw one of these" he exclaimed!

I checked out the public boat ramp in front of Despositos (formerly Espositos for decades, I don't know why they added the d) and found that it would serve my purposes, but then I realized that it was still a long way to Tybee Island. To get there by boat from here would mean a northern course up the Wilmington river, under the drawbridge at Causton Bluff and then a wildly zigzagging course through "the Marshes of Glen " and into the south channel of the Savannah River. It would still be 12 miles or more out to Tybee Spit and the entrance to the big old Atlantic Ocean. Too far I reckoned!

I asked Steve if there was another ramp farther out, perhaps on Tybee Island itself. He informed me that there was a ramp on Lazaretto Creek almost exactly across from the entrance to Fort Pulaski. "Sounds good," I said. Be careful what you wish for folks, you just might get it! I would eventually find my dream ramp only after finding my "nightmare ramp" and my "desert ramp" (more on this later).

When we got to the ramp on Lazaretto Creek, it was a bit after noon. The tide was in but about to go out fast. We raised the mast and transferred all the gear from the Suburban into the boat, (my second mistake!) By the time I "backed 'er down" into the water, I fully realized

that the tide really doesn't "wait for no man." And believe you me, when the high tide decides to leave tens of thousands of acres of tidal marsh through a creek barely forty yards wide, it's as though someone had flushed a giant toilet and me and my boat were, well, use your imagination! The boat was fairly sucked off the trailer dragging me through the water by the bow painter! The boat backed out and went broadside against the tiny dock as I "supermanned" behind it. I felt like a tadpole playing "tug o' war" with a whale. If I didn't get onto the dock like right now, the boat would go without us.

First mate Jackie had been parking the truck while I was being drowned but came running down the dock with a boat hook just in time. She grabbed the starboard shroud long enough for me to clamber out of the muck and without even starting the four horse Merc. We jumped aboard. At "six knots and sideways" we were on our way! I feverishly pumped the tank bulb and began yanking the start rope. I needed steerage and now! Fortunately, it came to life on the fifth pull and I laid the tiller hard to port and got her nose in the right direction. My heart was truly in my throat, I could actually feel it beating right behind my Adams apple!

With the motor wide open and in the middle of the torrent we rounded a bend at what seemed like twelve knots and beheld a dock to starboard with a dozen shrimp boats right under a bridge! I had been told that the mast would clear but it looked too low! No matter now, we were committed! At this point I felt that I should be committed to the nearest mental institution! (I hear there's a nice one in Milledgeville).

I held for the center of the span and grimaced waiting for the clang of the mast hitting the bridge. It never happened; we went under with what seemed like only inches to spare.

Wow! I thought, what a beginning! Fifteen minutes of terror! I began breathing again. For a while back there I had been very busy and scared. First lessons of salt water sailing folks, know your tides and how they affect your area. Particularly, where you will be launching and recovering your boat or you may not have a boat to recover!

We motored out into the sound in sunny weather, which was about to change. This area, behind the Tybee Lighthouse, is literally packed with dolphins and boaters out to watch them. It's said that they come in there to breed, but I say that the confluence of the Savannah River,

Lazaretto Creek and the Atlantic ocean sucks them in there and they have no choice!

Well it was time to set sail (or was it). I hoisted the main and the number 2 jib (my third mistake, a storm jib would have been more appropriate), we sailed out of the lee of Tybee Island and into the mouth of the Savannah River where we were met by four foot swells and a lively sea-breeze! The boat heeled over and began to porpoise (dolphin?) in the swells. First mate, Jackie, not used to the joys of salt water sailing, grew suddenly ashen and got seasick. I had to get her back in the lee of the island into smoother water till she got her sea legs. I came about only to discover that someone previously aboard (who knows when) had needed a piece of rope and had cut six feet off one of my jib sheets! The short side ran out to where the figure 8 knot stopped it at the block and instead of being on a port tack, I found myself more "hove too" than anything else. I had a spare jib sheet below and gave Jackie the tiller while I went below to find it.

Down below it was turmoil! All the "spares" and "extras" were all over the cabin, and on the floor. I wasn't ready even after all that preparation. We limped into the lee and I threw out the Danforth, praying that it would set properly. The anchor set hard and we weather vaned into the wind. I dropped all sail and caught my breath. Once again a reminder, this is no place for lake Juliette mushroom anchors. Here, bigger is better!

With the boat anchored I began to "re-stow" all the junk that I was now wishing I had left behind. If you can't stow it, leave it! You need to be able to reach any essential gear on a moment's notice. You cannot do this when your cabin looks like a yard sale!

As I had launched the boat earlier, I remembered seeing dark skies to the north and the roll of distant thunder. Now the distant storm decided to pay us a visit. The tide had gone completely out and we found ourselves at low tide only thirty scant yards from the beach. It began to rain. It felt good! I stood on the fore-deck, and took a shower, I even got out the deck brush and the Clorox, and swabbed down the topsides. I made up new jib sheets and we ate a snack under the Bimini. Jackie was feeling better and so was I. I sat back on the fore deck leaning on the mast and sipped on a cold beer as the rain continued to fall. As I did, I noticed something. The small squall line, which had passed, was now giving way to a much larger and more sinister front. The whole

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north sky was now the color of blue-black coal with vast quantities of "chain- lightning" running from horizon to horizon with enough thunder to scare Moby Dick himself! I didn't want to be this far out with Jackie aboard (or me either). I stowed the jib in the forward hatch and bunged the main to the boom. Then I weighed anchor and started the Merc.

The storm was coming like the mouth of hell itself and we were still a mile from the mouth of Lazaretto Creek. It was my plan to .....  
.....(continued next month)....

That's all we have room for this month.  
Tune in next month for Part 2 of Greg's story.

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TO:

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Sale or Swap

American Daysailer. 14.5 ft with 3.5 hp Sears motor, 1995. Galvanized trailer, roller furling jib, single reef main, UK flyer. \$3500. Contact Al Pfeifer 478-474-0911.

2001 Raider 19. New. Galvanized Trailer. \$4650. Contact Carl Saylor 478 755 1006

Impulse 21. Trailer. \$3800. Contact Carl Saylor 478 755 1006.

Hobie Holder17. Trailer, 4 hp Johnson. \$2400. Contact Carl Saylor 478 755 1006.

Starwind 19 + Harding trailer + Nissan 9HP (I think) motor. Attractive price. Contact David Block, 478 454 1071

Sailboats Wanted: Donate your Hobie 16's for the Special Olympics Program at Lake Tobesofkee and get a tax writeoff. Contact Phil Martin, 478 751 7363. Will also accept other boats which will be sold and the proceeds used to support the program.