



GBCA Cannon



Inside this issue: Commodore's Note • Chili Chase Regatta • Member Spotlight • SORC Nassau Cup



Commodore's Note

By Darin Keever

What an amazing year! By the numbers, that includes two Major Regattas (Performance Cup and TRW), five seminars (including the On the Water Boat Show), five skipper's meetings, seventeen after parties, and 23 races! Talk about "The Place to Race." I don't think I could possibly count the number of bottles of rum, but I bet Ron Eddleman can :)

This wouldn't be possible without an extraordinary board. I would really like to thank all the board members for making this an easy and enjoyable experience. As you can imagine, this group has a range of opinions, and sometimes bridging the gap can be difficult. However, the board has been outstanding with coming to an agreement and sticking to their decisions.

For my last note as acting commodore, I'd like to press all of the community to review your membership status. This extraordinary club only continues with your support. At \$130, it is a heck of a value.

Thanks again to everyone for a great year (or two!).

-Darin



Chili Chase Regatta

By Mike Lewis

What does a nosy pepper do? It gets jalapeño business! Thank you to everyone who came out and raced this year's annual Chili Chase Regatta! Held December 1, we had 30 boats register, 4 full categories, and according to Space City Weather, we had the 5th best weather day of the year. The race was 19.68 miles, which most people finished in about 4 hours – we did the 'star' pattern, which led to a lot of pretty images on chart plotters!

What do you call a cow with no legs? Ground Beef!

The weather was perfect, and a great example of why Galveston Bay is the place to raceSM, especially this time of year. The wind started about 9-11 from the West, died while boats were reaching the first mark, but built and shifted right for the fourth leg, leading to an exciting downwind run followed by a strategic beat to the finish.



How do you know how heavy a chili pepper is? Give it a weigh, give a weigh, give it a weigh now. This was one of those days where we are all winners for being able to race sailboats in beautiful weather. However, the winners from each category were: Firewater (PHRF Non-Spin), Rodeless Traveler (GBCA Cruising), Spitfire (PHRF Spin A), and Jackalope (PHRF Spin B). Of special note was Jackalope's harrowingly close finish to Leading Edge that nearly left a crew member on the committee boat! Special thanks go out to the Race Committee: Kelley Dees, Diane Livingstone, and Doug Lance.

Chili Champions



From left to right crews of Sanity, Firewater, Spitfire, and Jackalope - Congratulations!



Why didn't the archer fire his bow? He didn't habanero! The chili contest and race celebration was a huge success of its own. We had a star-studded group of judges, including local celebrity Charles Broaddus and the appropriately named former Seabrook Fire Chief Ray Cook. Thank you to all the entrants, the judges, and to Amy Crowell for making enough chili to feed a group of happy sailors. The tasting notes indicated that all entries were excellent, but ultimately the winners were Team Sanity (3rd), S. Lack (2nd) and top honors went to Janet Abraham (1st).

Thank you to everyone for making this a successful final regatta of the year!

 **Champion Chefs** 



From left to right: Janet Abraham, S. Lack, and Team Sanity





Student Driver crew Gary, Ryan, and Bridgett at the Chili Chase Regatta

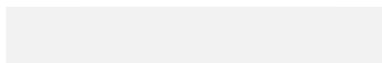
Member Spotlight - 'Tie Dye Gary' Thies

By Karen Glass

For anyone who doesn't frequent the mayhem of Seabrook Marina & Shipyard on a Wednesday night during the Clear Lake racing series or before or after racing a GBCA event, Gary Thies stands out. You will find him in a tie-dye shirt, with a handlebar mustache, and a big smile. He can be found early before racing getting his boat in the water and helping others to do the same if crew has not arrived.

It is obvious that one of Gary's passions in life is sailing. With his knowledge along with his kind and generous spirit, he is a valuable asset to our sailing community. Gary is a vibrant part of this community and you will find him participating in most Galveston Bay/Clear Lake regattas, attending seminars and sailing events, and of course, having a celebratory drink at the Classic with fellow sailors.

Gary has been a huge support to me from the moment I first arrived at Seabrook with my J22, 2 years ago. He helps raise and drop my mast, helps to keep my boat 'race ready' with regular maintenance (always willing to PATIENTLY teach) and of course sailing with me. He is always willing to practice, putting out my hippity hops in order to practice mark-roundings, practice going upwind and downwind, or doing numerous tacks and jibes. The list goes on...



At the end of every sailing session whether it be onshore performing boat maintenance or on the water practicing, you can usually find us at Seabrook's prestigious clubhouse pavilion enjoying a good rum drink.

In addition, Gary extends this same generosity to anyone who expresses a need. As a result, Gary's sailing experience, skills and kind-hearted spirit have afforded him opportunities to sail all over the world.

Q: Tie-Dye Gary, what got you into sailing in the first place?

Gary: In June 1968, after boot camp, I reported to Fleet training center Newport, RI. I had a few weeks to wait for Quartermaster 'A' school to start and was assigned to clean heads at fleet training HQ. I was finished around 12:30 every day. On E-2 pay, there wasn't a lot I could afford to do, so I wandered around the base and stumbled into the Special Services building. There I found five (5) brand new Sunfish sailboats. I inquired what it would take to sail one and was told to come back the next day. The next day I, was greeted by 5 teenagers from the New York Yacht Club. They spent the next two weeks trying to teach me how to sail and put me through righting drills. I was hooked from that point. I did a little more sailing on Lasers, while the ship I was on was in port in Subic Bay.

Q: What would you like to see more of with GBCA?

Gary: A return of the Vera Cruz Race, and more one day regattas. It's not easy to get a crew together for several weekends. I have heard, this statement a lot, "I have a hard time getting all my crew to commit for two days." I think we might have larger turnouts with one day regattas. Just look at the Rum Races, and Icicle

series. I am lucky, I have a crew that loves to sail.

Q: What would you say your favorite part of GBCA is?

Gary: The openness. No closed races, and you don't have to be a member to win or come to a party. Although, the more you show up, we will ask you to join.

Q: What do you look forward to most for the 2019 racing season?

Gary: Rum. Getting out as much as possible and bringing in more new people to sailing and the club.

Q: What is your favorite sailing memory?

Gary: I don't have just one. One of many Vera Cruz races, several Harvest Moon's, Key West Race Week's, sailing around most of the Caribbean, helping move a boat from Houston to Annapolis, Tonga to Fiji, sailing in Clear Lake on Wednesday's during the off season. As you can see, these are just a few of the many memories that make me smile when I think back to my time on the water. This does not include some of the places I have been fortunate to visit and local rums I have tried because of sailing / being on the water.

Next time you see a guy in tie dye be sure to say hello!

Know someone who deserves a little limelight? Nominate our next member spotlight by emailing askgbca@gmail.com - it's an opportunity to get to know some of the sailors in the community.





SORC Nassau Cup Ocean Race

By Chris and Karen Lewis

Coral Reef YC, Nassau YC and Storm Trysail Club hosted the Nassau Cup Ocean Race from Miami to Nassau, Bahamas November 15th and 16th. This was the first race in the Stream Series event for the 2018-19 season. With three Galveston Bay based yachts racing, this was a chance for Texas to make their mark with the East Coast yachts. Chris and Karen Lewis' J-44 Kenai returned to the SORC after missing last year's event due to Hurricane Harvey. Andy Wescoat's J-109 Harm's Way competed in their first SORC event, and Jason Seibert's Schock 40 Gamble competed – a boat he is racing offshore for only the second time.

After free rum drinks and a regatta briefing in Miami at Coral Reef YC, we noticed interestingly that the fleet had consolidated entries in the last 10 days across IRC, ORC and PHRF to one 13 boat ORC fleet split between ORC1 and ORC2. This left a cruiser and Argo the MOD70 pushing for the course record.

ORC 1 included three TP52's with Denali, Fox and Spookie. Fox being a well sailed west coast boat that is a campaigning SORC, Spookie a turbo'd TP 52 sailed by Steve Benjamin, Chris Lewis with Kenai, Jason with Gamble, and a Farr 40 comprised the balance of the ORC1 Class.

ORC2 included a range of boats from Andy Wescoat with Harm's Way J-109, Thin Ice an Aerodyne 38, and a Catalina 425 SD sailed by Russell Dunn, a former racing yacht owner.

The outlook during the week was for a 70 nm beat across the Gulf Stream into a NE

blast, but as race day came, the cold front was delayed and the fleet got off to a spinnaker start in a warm SE breeze. As predicted, the wind dropped when yachts crossed the Gulf Stream, making tactics interesting; 4.5 knots of boat speed and 3 knots of current! Boats that gybed early gambling not to benefit from a later port gybe header benefited with a better VMG to Great Isaac Lighthouse, and were the earliest to pick up the cool NW breeze that filled in across the course. Meanwhile, the scratch boats worked to maintain their lead through the stormy thermal cloud induced wind variations.

Rounding Great Isaac Lighthouse and setting course to the Great Stirrup Cay the NW breeze built from 8 to 22 knots over the balance of the race, veering to the NNE and providing fast reaching conditions during the night. Racing on the edge of control with shallow reefs to leeward the mid-fleet boats caught the TP52's. Kenai's nav was surprised to be able to pick them up on AIS during the graveyard shift. The frontal passage was slow enough to frustrate Spookie, et. al. as they gybed downwind hunting for angle and breeze.

On Kenai we set the A3, Code Zero, A5 and finally the 175 m² ("Big Red") A2 as we rounded Great Stirrup Cay. At one point, a short in our NEMA 2000 network took the boat dark and made for an exciting time steering by traditional compass binnacle until the offending backup GPS antenna was disconnected. We don't realize how dependent on digital data at night we are until we lose it all!

The sun came up to an 18-24 knot port broad reach into the finish in building seas. Kenai hit 16 knots, leaving a broad flattened sea behind as her 23,000 lbs tried to defy the physics of a displacement yacht. Thin Ice, the Aerodyne 38 finished just ahead under jib as we charged into Nassau harbor past the breakwater. The focus was on dowsing the kite as we crossed the finish with very little sea room.



The overall results reflect the impact of the slow-moving front. Kenai corrected to win OCR1 and 4th in Fleet. Gamble corrected out in third place and 9th in fleet. Russell Dunn sailing his new Catalina won the Nassau Cup and the ORC2 Class. Thin Ice navigated by H. L. Devore (prior 2x Newport Bermuda Race winner) was 2nd overall as the first yacht that was not equipped with a mast furling! Harm's Way in their first SORC race finished 6th in Class and 7th in Fleet.

Nassau YC provided great hospitality and J22 match racing on Saturday before the buffet and awards. It's always a great pleasure to be in Nassau and have such gracious hosts.

SORC is seriously fun and has great sailing conditions. **Why not plan on racing it next year?**



Commodore's Ball, February 2nd

By Amy Craig Crowell

It's getting to be that time of year again! Get ready for one of the most anticipated events of the GBCA season, when our Commodore hosts members and their guests at the annual gala. This year it will be held at the Hilton on Clear Lake, where participants will enjoy cocktails, fine dining, and dancing to live music with a spectacular water view.

During the evening, the Commodore will present the annual awards and recognize the exceptional members best exemplifying the character of GBCA. The Commodore's Ball is the perfect occasion for members to reunite with old friends and to make new ones. Be sure to get your tickets!



2019 Commodore's Ball	
Time:	7 – 11pm
Dinner:	7:30pm
Band Name:	The Classix
Band Plays from:	7 – 11pm
Ticket Price:	\$100
Menu Options:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chicken Marsala with fettuccine and fresh garden vegetables• Filet Mignon with mashed potatoes and fresh garden vegetables• Grilled Salmon with rice pilaf and fresh garden vegetables
Accommodations:	Ten rooms have been blocked off for \$99 each, each room has two double beds. Link to Hilton Room Reservation

Get Ready for....

- Icicle Race #1 - Jan 5, 2019
- Icicle Race #2 - Jan 12, 2019
- Icicle Race #3 - Jan 19, 2019
- Icicle Race #4 - Jan 26, 2019
- Commodore's Ball @ Hilton - Saturday February 2nd, 2019 [Register Here!!](#)
- Icicle Race #5 - Judge Smails - Feb 9, 2019
- Dress your crew with crew store gifts [Crew Swag!](#)

