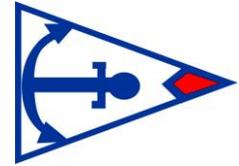




The Bitter End

Editor: Bill Reynolds AP



March 2014

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From the Bridge...

Like so many gleaming white ants, one by one the charter boats depart from their well protected nest as if they are marching to forage for the day's food. I am fulfilling a long desired item on my bucket list - a trip to Costa Rica. From the vantage of my hotel I see the charter fleet heading west to the fishing grounds thirty miles out into the Pacific. I watch them as they disappear out to the horizon trying to calculate the distance to the horizon learned in Seamanship. These vessels range from 35 to 60 feet (LOA) and are rigged for serious ocean fishing. Their towers make them appear unwieldy and certainly raise their centre of gravity. Their powerful diesel engines can be heard all the way to the horizon.

I thought it might be interesting to find out what qualifications are required to crew a charter boat and what safety equipment is required. Javier is captain of Los Suenos, a Luhr 36. He has been a charter boat captain for 15 years having worked his way as a mate on several charter boats for ten years. First mate Carlos is in his fourth year as a mate. There are no formal training requirements nor is a licence needed to captain a charter boat in Costa Rica. A captain is trained on the job although there are schools that will train a person to become a captain. In Canada to receive a Masters Certificate the requirements include experience at sea, training certification, and formal written examinations.

On board safety equipment is comparable to that required in Canada for a vessel of this size. The one addition to what we might normally carry is an inflatable life raft. With as many as seven guests and three crew members, I doubt the raft would accommodate ten persons. The charter fleet consists of several vessels with radio communication so assistance is not far away. Los Suenos is outfitted with GPS and electronic charts but does not carry paper charts. In addition to the VHF radio, the other primary electronic instrument is a depth sounder. There is no radar.

A typical charter departs at 0700 and returns eight hours later hopefully after a successful outing. The principal quarry is mahi mahi, yellow fin tuna, and wahoo. Various lures and teasers and live bait are used depending on species being fished. The charter company Costa Rica Dreams Sport Fishing owns six similarly outfitted vessels with captain and mates having qualifications similar to Javier and his crew. (See photos on Page 2)

Through CPS boating courses we attempt to provide many of the basics and advanced training that would otherwise require many years of experience to acquire. Of course additional qualifications are required to captain a commercial vessel in Canada. However, for the recreational boater, CPS courses provide an excellent foundation on which to build additional competence and confidence. Upcoming courses are listed in this issue of the Bitter End.

I invite all members to join us for the third Toonie night presentation on Wednesday March 26th. Our presenter is a member of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary. Details can be found in this issue.

David Puttock, AP
Squadron Commander



Fishing Fleet



Los Suenos



Captain Javier & Carlos

VHF Radio Course

Many boaters are under the mistaken impression that simply by purchasing a VHF radio, they have the right to use it. In Canada, we may not require the VHF Station Licence as they do in the USA but we are required to have a Restricted Operator's Certificate (Maritime). It is an offense subject to a \$250.00 fine when found using a VHF radio without the ROC(M). The certificate can be earned through our VHF Radio course beginning April 29. The course runs on Tuesday evenings at Dr. Denison High School, 135 Bristol Rd, Newmarket beginning at 7:30 pm.

Starting April 29, 2014

- VHF Radio

For information about these and other courses, costs, and registration, contact Peter Heard, Training Officer at npsinfo@mailonly.ca or refer to our website www.cps-ecp.ca/newmarket

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Life Imitates Art?

If you remember the 1997 movie *Speed 2: Cruise Control* the picture below should look familiar. It is not from the movie, however. This photo of The Zune, a megayacht, in collision with the lighthouse at Point-no-Point State Park near Seattle, Washington appeared on the Kitsano Report website in January 2014.

In the movie, Willem Dafoe plays a crazed computer hacker who takes over a cruise ship and tries to ram an oil tanker with it. Sandra Bullock saves the day by redirecting the ship into a resort on shore causing havoc and mayhem but averting an ecological disaster.

The Kitsap Report story stated that The Zune is a 16000 ton vessel owned by former Microsoft executive and billionaire Paul Allen. Built in 2007, The Zune was designed to withstand heavy abuse from man-made stationary objects. According to the article, Steven Johnson, captain of the Zune and 15 year maritime veteran said “It came out of nowhere. We are just lucky that no one got injured. There was an obvious error on behalf of the lighthouse operator.”



Initial reports from bystanders and park officials claim that the Point-no-Point Lighthouse made a series of irrational and ill-timed maneuvers in the events leading up to the crash, subsequently obstructing the unsuspecting oncoming boat. One onlooker described the actions of the lighthouse operator as taunting, claiming that the operator “was waving her hands up and down and screaming frantically in an aggressive manner just before the wreck”.

Lighthouse Operator Sharon Jones did not give a statement to the press, and was reportedly uncooperative with police and coastguard officials. She is under investigation for negligence and was placed on administrative leave immediately.

Paul Allen informed Kitsap Report reporters that while he is grateful that no one on board was injured, he will be seeking compensation from Kitsap County for the damages to his boat.

If you find this story to be odd, you should know that *The Kitsano Report* has a reputation for pushing the envelope of credibility. This story should have been saved for April 1.

Boat Show Disappointment

By Bill Reynolds

The highlight of every January for many of us is the trip to see the latest equipment and tour the new boats at the Toronto Boat Show. I expect to see all the boats I can never afford unless the lottery ticket in my wallet pays off big time. I also go to pick up new flares so I can maintain my required complement of emergency pyrotechnics which are less than four years old. The Boat Show makes the cold winds of January more tolerable.

This year I went to see the Blue Jacket 40 and my wife wanted some more nautically themed jewelry. We drove in slushy weather and avoided the rush hour traffic arriving just after the doors opened. Line-ups were beginning to grow but we saw a few of the 40 plus foot yachts before heading for the chandlery stalls and then to Henry’s for a fish lunch.

On our way back to see more boats the hall erupted in noise as the fire alarm began to wail. We watched in wonder as people wandered around oblivious to the ear piercing horns. After over thirty years in education, I was surprised that there were no lines of people forming for an orderly exit of the building. Eventually an announcement was made that the fire department had been notified but the alarm continued and no statement followed saying the alarm was false or the building was safe.

We couldn’t take the noise and finally after about five minutes, made our way to the exit and departed for home.

This was a major disappointment. I saved a few dollars on the cost of flares but with parking, lunch and admission, this year’s 2 hour glimpse of summer was over-priced and unsatisfyingly short. The alarm, I was told, rang for about 20 minutes before it stopped. Some of our friends who were also there on that day hid below in a boat

where the noise was muffled. By the time the alarm ceased, however, I was in the car and on my way back to Barrie.

Now that the groundhog has seen his shadow we have 6 more weeks of winter! The Artic Vortex chill with mounds of snow is taking its toll. This winter is definitely getting me down. I really needed the distraction of the Boat Show. Oh well, only 2 months until the boat goes in the water.

Toonie Wednesday: The Canadian Coast Guard Auxilliary

Mark down Wednesday, March 26 in your calendars. Ian Gilson will be at the York Region Police Association building at 600 Stonehaven Avenue, Newmarket, to talk about the activities of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Coastal lifesaving stations, manned by volunteers, pre-date Canadian Confederation. Some coastal services in Atlantic Canada date to the early 1800s. The country's first motorized lifeboat was established in 1907 by volunteers at Bamfield, British Columbia. Canadian Coast Guard search and rescue officials first formally recognized volunteer rescuers in 1963. Volunteer "search masters" were individuals with access to seaworthy boats equipped with radios and volunteer "rescue agents" were individuals who served as local points of communication with CCG maritime rescue controllers operating in Joint Rescue Coordination Centres. By the mid-1970s, it became clear that a formal organization for training volunteer search and rescuers was necessary in order to improve the CCG's response to maritime search and rescue incidents, particularly in remote locations. This was confirmed in a 1975 study commissioned by CCG and led to the **Canadian Marine Rescue Auxiliary** or **CMRA** being formed in late 1978 as a non-profit organization in an effort to enhance search and rescue coverage and capability, and to better coordinate volunteer efforts. The CMRA was renamed the **Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary** or **CCGA** in 1997.

Ian, a member of the CCGA, will bring a wealth of experience to life with anecdotes and stories of the work of this historic and important organization.

Please contact NPS at npsinfo@mailonly.ca to register for this entertaining and informative session. Light refreshments will be offered.

Time: 1900h Wednesday, March 26

Location: The York Region Police Association building, 600 Stonehaven Avenue, Newmarket



Dear reader:

If you have comments or suggestions for The Bitter End we would love to hear from you. Share your comments by sending them to *The Bitter End* at npsinfo@mailonly.ca.