

By the time most of you read this, you are either out of the water or seriously thinking about it. In spite of a cool, wet start to the summer, we had a great time at our events. Thankfully, the end of summer was as dry as the early part was wet. I hope you all had a chance to get out and enjoy it. I know for our part, the weather for the Lake Simcoe picnic at Hawkestone Yacht Club was flawless and both the people and the location were delightful.

LOCA is, first and foremost, an association with the simple aim of providing fun and interesting events where Catalina owners can get to know one another. To do that, we need a variety of people circulating through the different positions bringing their individual ideas and enthusiasm to the association. So it was very gratifying this year that a number of people expressed interest in joining the Executive next year. It will make for a great 2010!

On a more serious note, I'd like to share a cautionary tale that is good to keep in mind as we pursue our adventures on the water. It is easy to fall into the trap of believing what you see (buoys would never be in "the wrong place" would they?) or what you hear (anyone on the radio at a marina must know boats, right? And they are an expert in their own channel conditions, right?) that you can wind up in serious trouble.

While cruising to the Bay of Quinte, we were considering pulling in at Port Hope but changed our mind when we heard a 'Mayday' from a Catalina 30 that ran aground in heavy swells at the Port Hope harbour entrance! I've attached the article from the local newspaper the next day for your reading pleasure.

We even had an interesting experience of our own the next day outside Presqu'ile. After being assured that our 4.5 foot wing keel would have no problem entering a marina, we became hopelessly hung up on weed beds and bog. Weather was calm and no harm was done so we carried on further towards Quinte hoping to find safe harbour. (My many thanks to the fellow boater (yes, a power boater) and his son who did what the marina owner did not do which was help us get free.) Surprisingly, we averted the same disaster a second time when I explained to a well meaning, but obviously less experienced, person on the other end of CH68 that wing keels and record weed problems in shallow water DO NOT MIX and that I would try a different port. As we prepared to change course, we saw a Catalina 320 under power trying take a short cut at a full 6+ knots. He apparently forgot that Lake Ontario does have rocks in parts and was headed for a deadly shoal lying submerged about 1-2 feet. We were able to hail him just a few boat lengths before disaster. I'm sure he meant to radio back his heartfelt thanks but was probably too busy explaining to his admiral what led to his lack of attention.

When we got to the dock at Fraser Park in Trenton, I had time to pull the strainer out of the raw water intake for the diesel and clean it out. It was quite amazing. It looked like had jammed an entire Rendezvous-sized salad in there but there was nary a protest from the trusty Universal diesel. I love that engine!

Our experiences this year and the stories you will read on this site refreshed my memory on a couple of basic facts. The person on the other end of the VHF may not, in fact, even be a boater!

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They may not have ever navigated their own channel. Or they may not know about how boats are built or designed. And, yes, buoys can lie too!

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Lazarus-Catalina 350 #362