



Gale Tales

Manatee Sailing Association

Volume 41 Number 7

www.msasailing.org

July 2026

Up Coming Events

Event	Date	Time	Place
DWBH	July 8	5:00 PM	Casa Blanca Modern Mexican Tequila Bar
MSA Quarterly Meeting	Aug 13	5:00 PM	Mean Deans
Paint and Sip Social	Aug TBD	TBD	Painting with a Twist
Dinner & Movie	Sep 4	TBD	Sarasota Opera House
Beach Party	Oct 17	11:00 AM	AMI Bayfront Park
Halloween Party	Oct 31	TBD	Jackerson's House



Ahoy MSA Mates,

Passage Part II: It all began when I decided to take my family to the BVIs for a vacation in August 1987.

As you may remember I ended my last article at the end of our first day of passage from St. Thomas to Fort Lauderdale. After my first 6-9 am watch at the helm on our second morning at sea, I could already tell that the midnight to 2 am watch was going to be easier and more enjoyable. And I was beginning to see why "*Men went down to the sea in ships*". There was something elemental and exhilarating about navigating and guiding a state-of-the-art sailing vessel across vast empty miles of an indigo sea. We were still tracking our rhumb line course of 314 degrees by steering 315 to 320. There was no

Happy Birthday
America!

autopilot on Fantasy and it was impossible to maintain an exact heading in this following sea so you just had to average it out. The night was as perfect as the previous day had been and the waning 3/4 moon over my right shoulder gave enough light that it and the swell direction gave me a good feel for the heading and only an occasional glance at the compass was needed for a cross check. Now with less wind and headway it was more difficult to maintain heading. As the boat climbed and descended the backs of the swells the compass would swing 15 to 20 degrees either side of the desired heading because of the elliptical movement described by the bow.

After an hour or so Leonard started the engine to charge the batteries and increased the power sufficiently to add 2 or 3 knots to our speed, which greatly improved our steering headway. As the wind increased during the morning it shifted to more of a tailwind placing us between a broad reach and a true downwind leg with the resultant slapping and whumping of emptying and filling sails. We did secure the mainsail boom with a preventer which would keep us from having a Chinese jibe and kept the mainsheet slide track from

slapping side to side which was one less noise with which to sleep. The sounds of the boat were becoming less alien now; more background and less noticeable. About midmorning Leonard decided we had enough tailwind component to warrant putting out the whisker pole for the headsail. He and Noel spent about 30 minutes getting the jib furled, setting up the whisker pole on the mast, and securing the outer end with fore and aft stays. They then unfurled the jib clew to the end of the whisker pole and voila, the jib was held firmly in place, so it didn't fill and empty so drastically in these fitful winds.

The only life we've seen today was marine. We caught a small Jack on the hand-line that we've been trolling and during my watch at the helm a small pod of porpoises blew right in front of us then reappeared 200 yards behind us before disappearing in the opposite direction. No birds have been sighted since yesterday. Bathing on a boat in the open sea was challenging. To conserve fresh water you stood in the sugar-scoop at the stern and took a bucket of clear Caribbean seawater and dumped it over your head. Then using something like Dawn dish soap which would lather up in saltwater, unlike most other soaps, you

Certified Health Coach

Betty Burton, RN, MSN

941.518.4493
www.facebook.com/betty.h.burton
HappyHealthyYouCoach@gmail.com



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P.O. Box 4101
Anna Maria, FL 34216

washed yourself, rinsing once again with seawater. Then, from the solar shower bags of warm water a final fresh water rinse was applied and you were done while using only a pint or two of fresh water in the process. The trick was balancing on the stern of the rolling pitching boat with your eyes closed to keep soap from getting in them without falling overboard. Now I knew where the phrase "*drunk as a sailor*" came from because that was what I looked like back there.

The sun was now down on another beautiful Caribbean day. It was a picture book sunset but no "green flash" of sailor's lore; maybe tomorrow. The wind freshened a bit after the sun went down but not enough to shut the engine down. It was so much more peaceful with only the sounds of the wind and water and no engine noise. We did have a schedule to keep though and if we have to stop in San Salvador for fuel that would incur a significant delay but we tried to keep the engine use to a minimum. It was 4 1/2 hours to my midnight watch. I needed to try to get some sleep.

Sleep was elusive. With so little wind it was hot down below with very little ventilation. The V-birth in the bow wasn't any better plus there was more motion there so I gutted it out in the aft cabin until midnight. Shortly before my watch I looked out one of the ports and was greeted by the most unbelievable sky full of stars I have ever seen. The Milky Way was breathtaking in its brilliance. A black

sky full of stars was not unusual from the cockpit of a jet at 37,000 feet but that view was heavily censored by the small windows in the cockpit. Here, with the full panorama of sky stretching from horizon to horizon, the millions of stars visible were really quite spectacular. This was an added benefit of being so far from out in the ocean. There was no ground light from buildings or cities out there to dim the stars.

Leonard was a very cautious sailor. We had emergency water and supplies bagged up and ready to go into the life raft if needed. There was a strobe light equipped life-ring and an emergency VHF radio and flares. At night no fewer than two crewmembers had to be in the cockpit at all times and if anyone left the cockpit they were required to wear a safety harness and be clipped into the jack line that went around the entire deck. We sighted a cruise ship today coming up behind us. We glassed it and saw the Carnival Line name on it. We called them on the radio for a position check and what they gave us put us about 15 miles further on our track than we figured. But we decided we'd stick with our Sat-Nav data and would check with another ship later. We four have turned out to be companionable shipmates. Captain Leonard was very easy going, a laid back Tennessean from Chattanooga. The two young men, Greg and Noel, were about 20 years old and from Connecticut. They came down to the Virgin Islands to travel and find work and made a small business of importing papayas from Puerto Rico

and distributing them to the local hotels in St. Thomas. They were both pleasant, low key and had a superb sense of humor. They have been very punctual about relieving the person on watch and nobody had been more than a minute or two late yet. Leonard did the navigation, and kept up with the fuel consumption, made sure the batteries were charged for night running, cooked our meals, and made sure everything else was going smoothly; and also, never seemed to sleep.

I'll pause my article now and continue next month so stay tuned for Passage Part III in August. Our Cruising Captain Jim McGinnis is planning a Sail-Away for November 4th, 5th, and 6th. The evening of the 4th will be at anchor at the Cross (Ft.

Desoto National Park), the 5th will be at anchor behind (east of) the Don Cesar Hotel, and the 6th will be either on a mooring ball or at anchor off the Gulfport Casino. Those of us who now sail "land yachts" will meet the real sailors at the Don Cesar Hotel restaurant, the Society Table and at Pia's Trattoria in Gulfport both at 5 pm.

Keep in mind our MSA meeting at Mean Dean's at 5pm on August 13 where we will have a speaker from the Coast Guard talk to us.

Until then fair winds and happy sailing,
Co-Commodore Chuck Fulton



**5 PM DWBH July 8 at Casa Blanca
modern Mexican Tequila Bar, 4230
14th St W, Bradenton, FL 34205.**

**It is in the old Buffalo Wild Wings restaurant
by Lowes on 41.**



CRUISING EVENT

Ahoy all,

Planning is underway for an MSA Cruise to the Don Cesar Hotel and Gulfport Nov 4 to 7 2026. Should be a fabulous event for boaters and non-boaters alike.

Wednesday 11/4/26, MSA cruisers will rendezvous at 4PM at Desoto Point "The Cross" for a night on anchor. Dinner will be a pitch in. The park closes at 5 so that won't include cars.



Thursday 11/5/26, we will sail/motor to a small anchorage behind the Don Cesar Hotel. Gary Morgan tells me we've stayed there before. Boats should arrive before 4 PM for the anchorage and then meet the MSA members piloting land yachts at the Don Cesar for Dinner at 5PM! The restaurant is called "**Society Table**". Their



menu is online. Yes - it's pricey but there are reasonable burgers and salads.

Friday 11/6/26, we will sail/Motor to Gulfport and anchor (free) or pick up a mooring ball for \$22 with the Municipal Harbormaster Denis Frain at [\(727\) 893-1104](tel:(727)893-1104) or dfrain@mygulfport.us. Land yacht Captains and crew can meet us at **Pia's Trattoria** <http://www.piastrattoria.com> 3054 Beach Blvd S, Gulfport, FL 33707 (727) 327-2190 at 5PM. The dinghy dock is questionable at Gulfport so we may need to pull dinghy's up on the beach like we did in downtown Sarasota last year.



Saturday 11/7/26 Return to Home Ports! Let me know if you are interested. jmcginni@stny.rr.com. Thanks!

Jim McGinnis
Cruising Captain
S/V Brewster

A TALE OF TWO FERRIES

By Gail Gordon

Having an opportunity to take a scenic boat ride on beautiful water anywhere in the world for me has always been at the top of my wish list. Sign me up! But more times than I can count, the price of doing just that has usually been pretty hefty. So, when I heard that within our own community a local ferry service to and back to Anna Maria Island from downtown Bradenton would be available, I was



thrilled. Think about it: having a source of transportation to the beach without having to worry about traffic or finding an available parking space on the island. Amazing! And then this dream took a hit, a 2-hurricane hit, and totally blew the opportunity out of the water. Well, not really but it sure put a dent in the service for a while.

Finally, in the past year I “took the whale by the tail” and tried this mode of

transportation. I must say that I have thoroughly enjoyed the few times I have used the ferry service, especially when I had company, to show off our gorgeous surroundings and to be able to spend time on the island without it being a hassle. The ferry tickets were available online and the route was from a pier just east of the Green Bridge to the Bridge

Street marina, and took about 55 minutes. There was even free parking in the City garage near the Bishop Museum. The ferry had an overhead roof to provide some shade but was completely open air and had a fun loving crew that served up jokes and tropical music. Each time I took the ferry, we saw dolphins jumping nearby and a lovely sunset, all for a minimal cost of \$7 for seniors.... round trip! That’s a 2 hour ride on the water folks! I wanted to share this experience especially when I heard that many of my MSA friends had not taken advantage of this delightful and affordable service.

Light bulbs went off: This could be a good MSA Social Event! I spoke to an employee and she said I could return





extra tickets if needed and even mentioned that super seniors over 80 were free! So, I booked a bunch of tickets for June 26th, just before the 4th of July Holiday crush.

Summer was in full force when I returned home from my 3-week vacation at the end of June. It turned out that there was record heat all over the world. Besides that, rain had become non-existent along the Gulf Coast as could be confirmed by my yard of dead grass. No matter the



weather, I had a good group that signed up for the ferry cruise to Anna Maria and I was getting excited. I did, however, make



dinner reservations at the Bridge Street Bistro with air conditioning so we would be comfortable when we dined inspite of the heat. When we arrived at the pier at 3:45 P.M., I saw a different vessel. It was a more streamlined boat with a large cabin forward of some outside seats at the stern. Okay, we may just have A/C onboard. I also wouldn't have to worry if for some miracle, it rained. But as soon as we got underway at 4 P.M., almost everyone moved outside for some salty sea air and balmy breezes. Somehow,

though, it was not as pleasant on this boat as it was on the smaller ferry. The noise of the motor was so loud we gave up trying to talk to each other. And the cabin blocked our forward view and the breeze. I was a bit disappointed! Plus, the larger vessel went quite a bit faster which cut our time out on the water. That was the whole point of this outing.

Dinner was a pleasant respite thankfully, and afterwards, there was enough time for a bit of shopping in the boutiques that lined



sun had just set, and the sky was wrapped in lavender and pink satin. The lovely scene had to be viewed from the inside glass window of the cabin as we were not allowed out. The necessary extra crewman had left for the day. I was crushed! And to add insult to injury, several

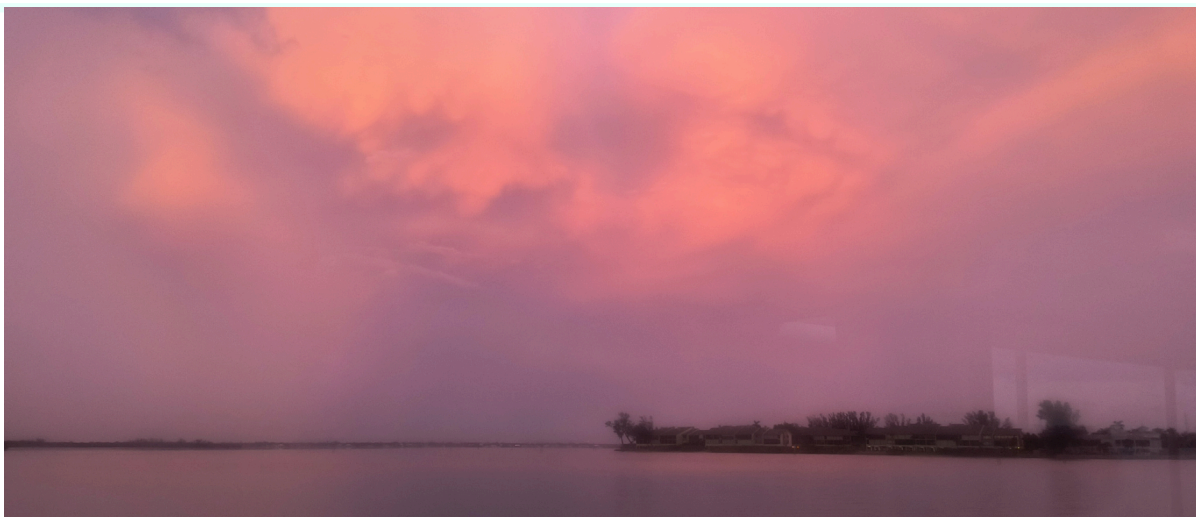
of the other passengers were inebriated and were in fact louder than the obnoxious engine. Thank goodness, for a faster boat ride this time. I've learned my lesson! Not all boat rides are the same. One must be discerning when selecting a cruise. Thank



Bridge Street. We boarded the vessel at 8:15 P.M. for our departure at 8:30 sharp, the last scheduled ferry of the day. The



you for coming along with me inspite of my innocent mistake.



ON THE HORIZON

ON THE HORIZON

JULY SOCIAL EVENT: CANCELLED! GONE FISHING!!!!

AUGUST SOCIAL EVENT: PAINTING WITH A TWIST PARTY DATE AND TIME TBA

AUGUST 13TH: MSA QUARTERLY GENERAL MEETING AT MEAN DEANS AT 5 P.M.

SEPTEMBER SOCIAL EVENT: FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 4TH DINNER AND A MOVIE, " THE PRINCESS BRIDE" TIME TBA

OCTOBER 17TH: MSA ANNUAL BEACH PICNIC AT 11 A.M. ANNA MARIA BAYFRONT PARK

**OCTOBER SOCIAL EVENT: MSA'S ALMOST ANNUAL HALLOWEEN COSTUME PARTY
OCTOBER 31ST AT THE JACKERSONS TIME TBA**

NOVEMBER SOCIAL EVENT: TBA

NOVEMBER 4TH TO 6TH: SAIL-A-WAY TO DESOTO POINT-THE DON CESAR-GULFPORT

DECEMBER MSA CHRISTMAS PARTY: DATE AND PLACE TBA

Gail Gordon
MSA Social secretary



**Happy
90th
Birthday
Roger**



Manatee Sailing Association New Membership Application

Name(s): 1. _____ 2. _____

Other members in household: _____

Address: _____

(City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip) _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell 1: _____ Cell 2: _____

Email 1: _____ Email 2: _____

Boat Make/Size _____ Boat Name _____

I voluntarily assume all risks of participating in Manatee Sailing Association events, on land or water, and agree to hold harmless against any and all losses and/or claims incident thereto, the Manatee Sailing Association (a 501(c) nonprofit, all volunteer, organization), its officers and members. If I have a vessel, I certify that my vessel complies with U.S. Coast Guard requirements and that I maintain insurance policies sufficient to protect myself and my property, including liability, medical and property coverage, which insurance is primary and non-contributory.

Signature: _____

Annual Dues: \$100 for first member of household plus \$25 for each other members of household.

Please mail or email application to:

Manatee Sailing Association or msa@msasailing.org
PO Box 14482
Bradenton, FL 34280

Contact MSA at:
msa@msasailing.org
or
www.msasailing.org



MSA 2026 Officers

Commodore - Rick Jackerson & Chuck Fulton
Vice Commodore - Tom Briggie
Cruising Captain - Jim McGinnis
Racing Captain - Sue Davidson
Secretary - Claude Solomon
Treasurer - Linda Briggie
Social Secretary - Gail Gordon
Membership - Deana Boydston
Past Commodore - Jim McGinnis