

HARBOR LITE YACHT CLUB

EST. 1964

RACINE, WI



A Yacht Club Built on *Friendship*

by Mark Hendricks

It all started around 1962-63. Friends Dane Anderson, Jerry Hendricks, Norm Nelson and Russ Von Wald set out to start a yacht club. Seems the boat club they spun off from only wanted "outboard" craft. This was the dawn of boating, as it is today, and Dane, Jerry, Norm and Russ wanted to be a part of it. So, it was



The Way We Were!

time for a fresh start. But where? A small office building and scale house with river frontage next to a marina looked like a good spot. But, was it for sale?

YES! In fact, Mr. Pugh, at the time, was talking with prospective buyers and the fishermen who rented dock space there were interested. This was the time to act. After a brief conversation, Jerry Hendricks, representing the group, wrote a check for \$26,000 to Mr. Pugh and Harbor Lite was born!

The boys bought a used bar from a Kenosha supplier along with other fixtures and set it up at the top of the now existing stairs that lead to our present dining room. A pool table sat where the salad bar now sits. What is now the kitchen was Mr. Pugh's private office. There is still an alabaster fireplace buried in the east wall of that room. The first rest rooms were, and still are, located in the basement. In the early years fish fry dinners were prepared in the basement. Some remnants of that little kitchen still remain today. In 1964, we officially became an LMYA club (Lake Michigan Yachting Association). As such, we have attracted membership wanting an "upscale" atmosphere without "snootiness." This makes our club a "good fit" for where it is today.



Counter clockwise:
Dane Anderson
Norm Nelson
Jerry Hendricks
Russ Von Wald

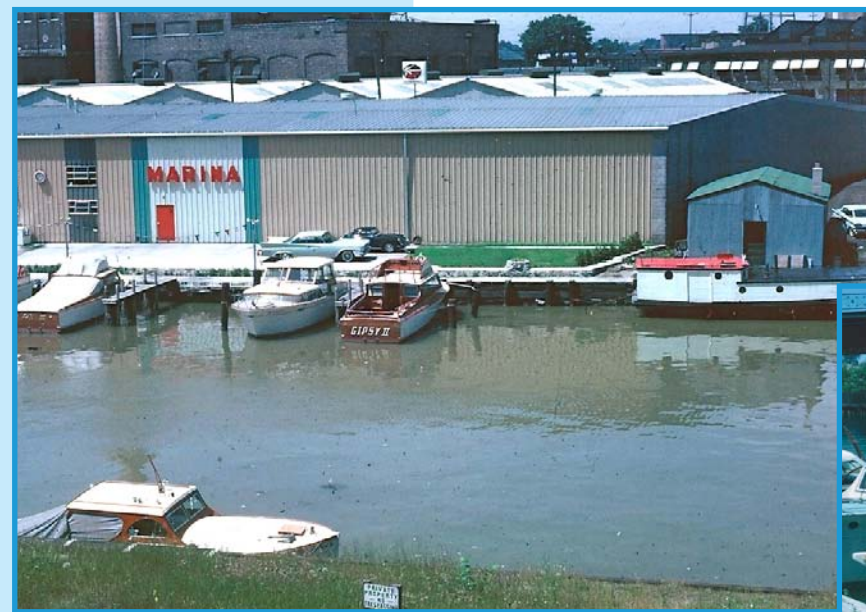


About Russ & Dane

Russ was Harbor Lite's first Commodore. He was a very hard worker and had many friends. He was asked what he was going to name his boat. He answered, "I Dunno" so many times, that "I Dunno" became the name of his boat. After a family situation (divorce) he left the club and never kept in touch after that.

Herlof "Dane" Andersen was Deputy Sheriff of Racine for 30 years, retiring in 1963. He tried running for Sheriff in the 60's, but did not get elected. He came out of retirement and became a Police Officer for the Town of Mount Pleasant for 12 years. Along with being a founding member, Dane was a Past President of the Southeast County Pistol Association and a member of the Retired Men's Golf Club of Johnson's Park. His wife's name was Alvina and they had one son.

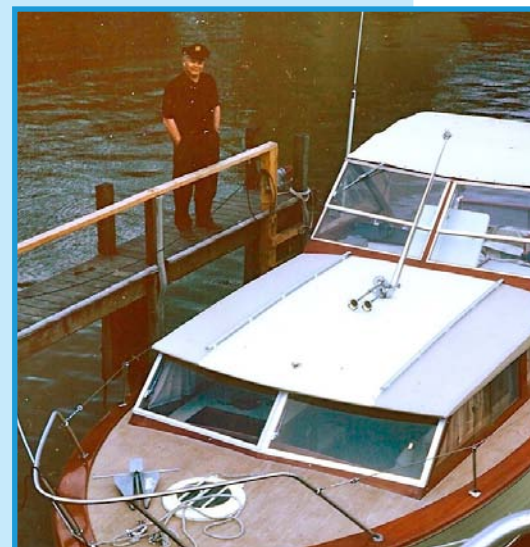
Fern Tingwald recalled, "Jerry, Norm, Russ and Dane would stop at her restaurant, hungry and tired, after a long day cleaning up coal dust."



Left: Jerry's boat, the Gypsy III docked near "the soon to be" HLYC. Notice the old fish shack that used to stand on our parking lot. Below: Russ Von Wald's boat, I Dunno.



Above: "Open House" Event where many area yacht clubs participated in.



Above: Past Commodores Jerry Hendricks, Thurm Tingwald, John Merlo, Matt Andis and John Dziekan share a moment. Left: Dane Anderson poses by his boat.

Timeline

Compiled by Al Groth



Ships delivered coal, which were weighed at the Pugh Coal Co. weigh station – future home of HLYC.



1930 Our building was constructed. It was originally the W.H. Pugh Coal Company office. That structure was just the west half of our dining area and included the stairs to the front door. In front of the stairs was a scale used to measure the weight of coal delivered by ships. There was also a pay masters window.

1962 Jerry & friends purchase Pugh building.

1963 Our yacht club is founded by friends, Herlof “Dane” Andersen, Jerry Hendricks, Norm Nelson and Russ Von Wald.

1964 Harbor Lite becomes a chartered member of LMYA (Lake Michigan Yachting Association).

The “original” bar was located upstairs near the salad area.

Pictured: Bartender, Howard Cody and Kathryn Hendricks seated on the far right.



1969



1969 An addition is added – the west half of where our “present” bar is. Remember, the original bar was upstairs along the west wall.

1984 Our biggest addition is constructed. The entire east side of the dining room and east side of the bar is added, plus, a basement under those areas.

2008 Club’s interior is remodeled which included new carpeting, painting, lighting and redecorating.

2010 Exterior deck awning project begins.

2012 Women’s & Men’s rooms are renovated thanks to members Dottie Metz, Roger Keeran, Paul Curtin and Pete Walquist.

2013 Club’s interior walls have been repaired, painted & ceiling tiles are getting replaced. Next, with monies from the “Keep the Drive Alive” fundraising, we will spruce up our basement.



’84 renovation in progress.



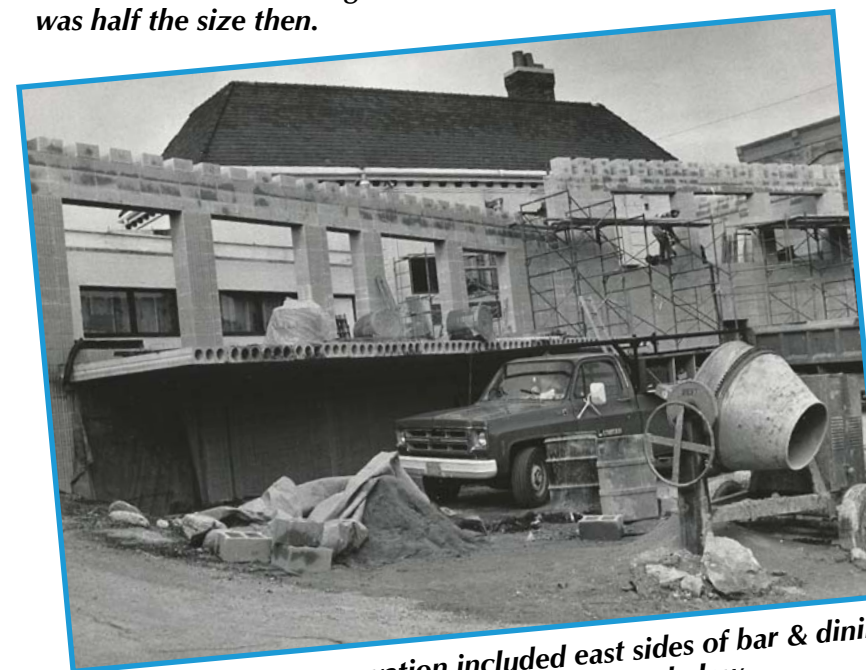
In 1969, a new “modern” bar was built.



Laurie Merlo & friend dressed for Western Nite. Our dining room was half the size then.



Burning of the Mortgage, in 1984.



1984 renovation included east sides of bar & dining room, bathrooms and basements below.



A *Burgee* is Born!

by Don Spaulding

As you know, Norm Nelson was one of the original founders of Harbor Lite. Norm was a Racine native who became well known as a very successful USAC (United States Auto Club) race car driver and owner.



Norm Nelson, race car driver

He started racing midget cars in the area, around 1940. In 1948 he switched to the full size late model stock car racing. This was when Milwaukee State Fair race track (The Milwaukee Mile) was a dirt track.

Norm always built his own race cars (modified production stock cars) and eventually became fully sponsored by Chrysler Corporation. He became quite famous for his Plymouth Winged Super Bird that dominated many Milwaukee Mile races.

Norm's pit crew of 6 or 7, were Norm's friends and volunteers that helped him build the cars and then pitted for him during the races.

Since Norm was involved in HLYC, the club became the gathering place for the crews after working in the race car shop, helping build (or modify) the cars, or practicing "pit stops." Norm's crew could do a "one minute" pit stop (fastest pit crew in USAC at that time). Today NASCAR pit stops are 15 seconds or less!

Car racing was a summer sport and around 1967, snowmobiling (a winter sport) was just getting started. Norm, Roger Tishendorf (owner of Kilbourn Gardens restaurant) and Jerry Hendricks (Volkswagen dealership), all HLYC members, started a snowmobile dealership and opened the "Sports Coral" on Hwy. 31 where they sold Artic Cat and Polaris snowmobiles. When that business closed, Norm took over the Artic Cat snowmobile dealership and moved it into the building on Eaton Lane that was also the race car shop. He continued this business, along with selling Suzuki motor bikes, until around 1980.

In 1967, the Racine Snowmobile Club was formed and Norm and family were charter members. Soon, most of the snowmobile club members and pit crew members were also HLYC members. So, naturally, the snowmobile club meetings and parties were held at Harbor Lite. The snowmobile club dissolved in 2007. Norm retired from racing in 1976 and passed away in 1988.

Norm was a quiet man and shied away from things like running for club commodore. But, he was very instrumental in the early years of Harbor Lite and helped lay the foundation for the club that we have today.

So, next time you look at the checkered flag burgee, think of Norm!



Norm with "Dutch" Herman standing in front of the original bar upstairs.



Sing-a-long with Dorrie and Muriel

As I was going through some of the old photos, I noticed an organ in the corner of the bar. There were always people huddled around it, singing. I went to Laurie Merlo for answers.

Back in the 70's & 80's the club would host Saturday "Steak Nite's" once a month. This also included sing-a-longs.

Laurie recalled, "My mom, Dorrie and Muriel Hendricks sang and played the organ. Sometimes Jerry Hendricks would join in with his "hand-can." June Spaulding had one too. They had lyric sheets for anyone wanting to join in, and lot's of 'em did, whether they knew the words or not! When no one was playing the organ, we would sing-a-long to the juke box – 2 songs for a quarter."

Harbor Lite's do love their music. Events like Karaoke, Martini-Martune-i, 2nd Fridays, St. Patty's, etc. continue to bring in members and friends who love music!

Social Events Remain a Harbor Lite *Tradition*

Editor's Note: Thank you to Rolfe Christensen, Laurie Merlo and Al Groth for their contributions.



"Team Danish" SKOOOAL to another successful breakfast.

Danish Breakfasts

Most Racinian's, by now, know about our rich Danish Heritage.

Rolfe Christensen recalled, "Back in the day, there was a bar on the river called, Waterfront Bar



(where Knight Barry is today) that served Torsk dinners to the Danish/Norwegian fleets when they would dock in the Racine Harbor. Also, volunteer members at the Danish Brotherhood would serve Danish Egg Breakfasts."

"Mary Ann Andersen somehow got the recipes from Diane Cheek who was a cook and caterer at Danish Brotherhood," said Rolfe.

Rolfe & Karen (his wife) and Niels & Mary Ann Andersen thought they would try out the recipes at the Harbor Lite and see if there was any interest. Well, the rest is history!

Rolfe added, "We started with one breakfast a year but it was so popular we now serve two breakfasts. One in the fall and the other in the spring." *SKOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOAL!*

It Started with "Open House"

Since the beginning, Harbor Lite has been a social club. One of our earliest parties was called "Open House." This event was sponsored by the LMYA (Lake Michigan Yacht Association). Racine Yacht Club, 5th St., Kenosha, So. Milwaukee and South Shore Yacht Clubs were invited to party and picnic with us for the day. Laurie Merlo recalled, "the LMYA awarded points to the yacht clubs, based on membership, amenities, events, slips, etc. We always got the most points for having the best parties and best food. We even had live lobster races on the bar!"

Eventually, Open House evolved into "Hawaiian Luau" in June and "Western Nite" in August. Later those events were switched because it was warmer in August for a Luau. Laurie and John Merlo hosted Western Nite for many years and just recently turned the hosting duties over to Ken Gall and Wanda Jacoby.

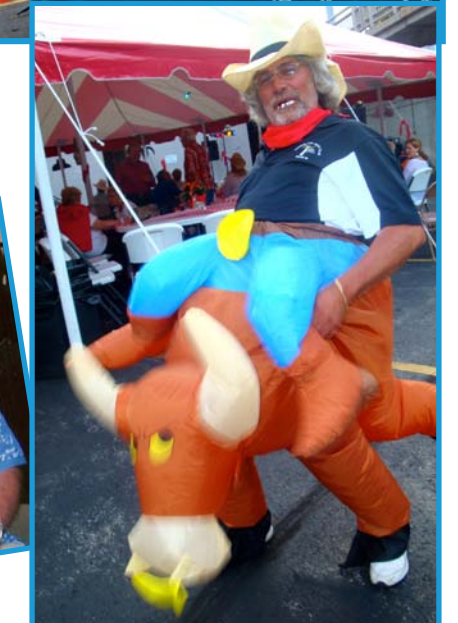


Early Western Nite

Below: John Merlo & Ken Gall grillin' up steaks.



Early Hawaiian Luau





Joan & Quin Hammes



Don't mess with Dottie!



Golden Memories

by Jim Andersen

I served as Commodore in 1998-1999. You might remember my power boat, NOJI.

Besides being a board member, I also served as Docks & Grounds Chairman, Membership Chairman, Treasurer and Vice Commodore. I ran Vegas Nite before Dick Anderson, who took it to a new level. Thank you Dick for all the many excellent years since then.

Other fond memories I have are:

* Pat Shovain cooking Sunday meals at the club for two single guys who needed potatoes and gravy once a week – me and Bill Nelsen.



Nancy, the "face" of HLYC

* Sunday morning "Boys Club" Breakfasts with Bill Nelsen. Thanks to Nancy for Rooster Gift Certificates.

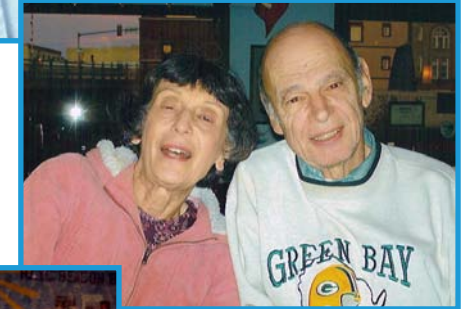
* The long friendships that are still friendships today! You know who you are – thank you all.

* Hiring Nancy as our Bar Manager and promoting her to Club Manager. It was the best personnel move the club ever made. Nancy is the "face" of HLYC. Thank you Nancy for all you continue to do!

* Favorite meal in the galley: Meat Loaf



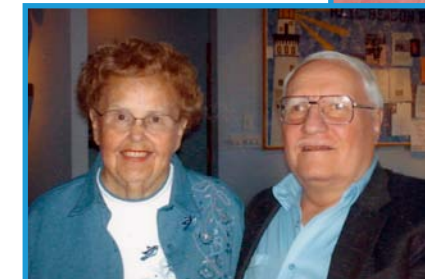
Women's Auxiliary Fashion Show in the 80's.



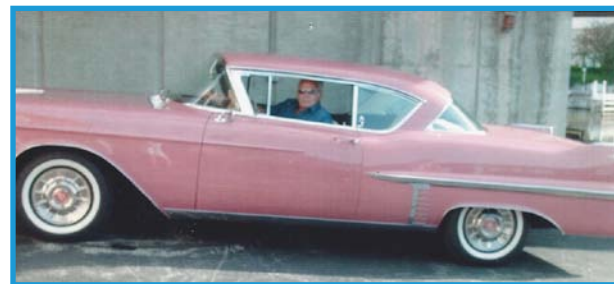
Above: Anna & Del Eisch



Left: Jackie & Norm Sill



Below: The Kerkman girls at LaVerne's 80th Birthday Party



Cribbage Winners



The "gang" on renovation day



Muriel Hendricks with Santa



MISSION STATEMENT:
Our primary purpose is to promote and encourage an interest in amateur yachting, cruising, and seamanship and to provide a facility for the pleasure and recreation of the membership and their families.



A Cast of Characters (our board) performed a Gilligan's Island skit at last years Hawaiian Luau.

We Salute

Harbor Lites Commodores

Russ Von Wald	1963-64	Clive Bidwell	1976	Ted Erickson	1992-93-94
Elmer Stauss		Tom Tryber Jr.	1977	Clay Baker	1995-96
Jerry Hendricks	1965-66	Jack Jerstad	1977	Dan Frost	1997-98
Walter Kehl	1967	Dick Anderson	1980	Jim Andersen	1998-99
Chuck Grimal	1968-69	Howard Cody	1981-82	John Dziekan	2000-01-02
Roger Tischendorf	1970	Dick Metz	1983	Bill Nelsen	2003-04-05
Matt Andis	1971	Roger Keeran	1984-85	Dwight Geisler	2006-07
Tom Cecchini	1972-73	John Merlo	1986-87	Sandra Keeran	2008-09
Thurm Tingwald	1974	Dick Christensen	1988-89	Scott Floyd	2010-
Hans Geyer	1975	Roger Keeran	1990-91		

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**WE LOOK FORWARD
 TO SEEING YOU
 SATURDAY, JULY 20
 OH! WHAT A NIGHT
 IT WILL BE!**



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 RESERVATIONS NOW!
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Members of the Year

2000	Richard Anderson
2001	Fredric Schmidt
2002	Maryann Andersen
2003-04	Dwight Geisler
2005	Rolfe Christensen
2006	William A. Nelsen
2007	Mark Hetland
2008	Ken Gall
2000	Bill Nelsen
2010	Sandy Keeran-Wangaard
2011	Sue Musurlian
2012	Riggs Jessen