



The Wayfarer **SKIMMER**

United States Wayfarer Association
Fall 2015-3

WIC REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS

The Rules, Race Rage and the Timeless

Civility of an English Butler

Richard Johnson W10873

My oldest daughter, Alyssa, who lives in California, called the other day, none too pleased with the state of our sport. She had participated in a national regatta in one of the “Other” 15 foot-ish two person dinghies. She was crewing, and she is capable crew, catlike and always in the right place. She and her skipper had been practicing for weeks. Alyssa had even gone to the extreme of re-gel coating the blades and fairing them. In other words she was invested in this event. The problem was this. She described everyone on the course as “Disgusting” and “abusive”. She said it was even worse because none of the nasty people were in contention, they were middle, to back of the pack which made them seem stupid and boorish. So it wasn't a regatta as much as a test of intimidation, bellowing, and disregarding the rules. She is now looking for a new class to sail with.

All in all this isn't a pretty picture but it is not that atypical. At every regatta there is some conflict. Typically it get's resolved on the water. A raised voice is not necessarily a bad thing. My wife, Michele, and I have to yell at each other on the boat so we can hear each other. And I do very much appreciate it when a starboard tacker gives me notice. It is a help, and the louder the better. So yelling can help but it is what is being yelled, and the context that matters. But there are some fleets where pushing rules to the limits, and or over the limit, becomes part of the competition. The thought process seems to be, “It's not wrong until I get protested.” I disagree with that.

Our sport is unique in that we must police ourselves and each other which are hard. You don't want to be a

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Wellesley Island Rally 2015

Completing the Cycle

John Cadman W3487

If the recipe for a great Wayfarer rally is sunny skies with temperatures in the mid-70s to low 80s, 10-15mph winds every day, a fleet of over twenty boats with the opportunity to sail in wide open waters or to tackle the challenges of sailing in narrow channels between picturesque islands, beautiful picnic spots to sail to, camping together on the water's edge facing into the setting sun, enjoying good and varied food in congenial company, relaxing with music and singing around camp fires, then Wellesley Island was a great rally because it had it all.



When I arrived on Saturday afternoon, the sun was out and the area around the docks was busy with the rigging and launching of boats. Brian Laux, who organized the event, had not only arranged for the participants to be housed in adjacent camp sites by the water's edge but also for a block of moorings for the fleet within easy walking distance: a great set-up. By 6 pm the boat was rigged and secured on the dock, my companion for the first half of the week, Charles Child, had arrived and our camp site was ready for occupation. I was particularly glad that Charles was able to come as we had been sailing together for about five years including two Wayfarer regattas at Tawas in Saginaw Bay but work commitments had prevented him attending a rally before. He would have to return

A publication of the United States Wayfarer Association NATIONAL OFFICERS		
Jim Heffernan Commodore	114 Village Lane Chapel Hill, NC 27514	919.942.6862
Chip Cunningham Vice Commodore	2833 E. Davison Lake Rd. Oxford, MI 48371	248-628-0670
Gary Hirsch Treasurer	1014 State Street St. Joseph, MI 49085	269.982.7030
Tony Krauss Measurer	429 Glen Park Drive Bay View, OH 44140	440.554.7820
Marc Bennett Race Cptn/WIC Rep	643 Cornell Ave E. Lansing, MI 48823	517-898-6617
Dick Harrington Cruising Secretary	101 East 196 th Street Euclid, OH 44119	216.280.2421
Linda Heffernan	Skimmer Editor	919-942-6862
AREA REPRESENTATIVES		
Mike Anspach Michigan Area	555 S. Old Woodward Ave Birmingham, MI 48009	248.283.8700 248.877.6242
Thomas Graefe Northeast Area	69 Simon Kill Road Norwell, MA 02061	781.659.2441
Tim Koontz Northwest Area	927 Wilson Street NE Olympia, WA 98506	360.753.5776
Richard Johnson Southeast/WIC Rep	6907 Valley Haven Dr Charlotte, NC 28211	704.910-3855
Mike Murto Florida Area	11404 Pheasant Trail Leesburg, FL 34778	352.357.8453
WEB SITE www.uswayfarer.org Robin Moseley, Webmaster		
USWA ANNUAL DUES		
Full membership	One year	\$20.00
Full membership	Three years	\$50.00
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Associate Membership is available to non-Wayfarer owners.		

to Michigan on Wednesday but would at least have three days sailing and get a flavor the event.

Sunday dawned sunny and bright with a forecast that was repeated with slight variations for most of the week of 10-15 mph winds from the west with the chance of showers and thunderstorms that generally failed to materialize. The first day of a rally is traditionally fairly gentle: launching the remaining boats and proving out those which had not been sailed in recent months. Those who sailed divided into two groups: one going the short distance downstream to lunch at Watterson Point State Park and the earlier starters who went upstream to Canoe Point. We chose the shorter route and with the wind behind us quickly

reached our lunch spot with three other boats. The wind built in the afternoon (a pattern repeated on the following day) and we all reefed the mains to make the beat back to base more relaxing. Once on shore we discovered a good swimming spot off the rocky shore by the campsite for a refreshing swim which became a daily ritual. Tom Goldsmith had organized what proved to be an excellent Hog roast for the evening at a newly constructed pavilion by the main marina. By the end of day one the rally was in full swing.

We made a slow start on Monday as, with help from Kit Wallace, we and Bill Haskins wanted to fit our new Aero Luffspars before we went out so we just went down to Canoe Point. The main fleet sailed on to Bluff Island where some stopped and others continued around back to the Point for a lazy lunch. By the time that we set off back to the marina the wind had risen towards 15 mph and gusting higher. The result was an exciting ride back with tales of planing and surfing the waves being recounted around the camp fires that evening.

Tuesday was the only time that we had any significant rain. At the morning skippers meeting it was clear that a front was coming through and that we would likely have some heavy rain so a number of people decided to do some sightseeing or go to Clayton for shopping. As this was Charles's last day at the rally, we were keen to get on the water so when the rain stopped around 11am we went straight out. The wind hadn't dropped much since the day before so we came back in around midday to see if we could find buddies to sail with. Soon after we had dropped the sails, we saw Lisa and David Nelson emerging from the main marina. We set back out to follow and, after playing hide and seek around the islands, caught up with them just east of Bingham Island in time to enjoy an energetic beat back with multiple short tacks through the channel south of the island to stop at Watterson Point for a brief lunch and to put a reef in for the rest of the journey back. The winds moderated a little and more boats were out in the late afternoon forming a pretty backdrop to the campsite as we cooked for the Black Tie Pot Luck that evening. As always there was an extraordinary variety of good food and some outrageous costumes and for the first time, but we hope not the last, a set from the Wayfarer Players (Henry Rose on electric bass guitar, Annelies Groen on acoustic guitar, Sean Ring on Jembe drum supported by the teenage percussion trio of Quinn Ring, Sean and Nathan Heffernan) backed by some enthusiastic singing with the highlight being a beautiful rendering of Moon River by the duet of Sarah Rose and her friend Selena. To round off the evening

Eric Laux penned and recited a second sailing poem to compliment the sestina that he had presented at Killbear.

With clear skies and steady winds, Wednesday was the perfect day for a longer cruise: a ten mile leg beating up river in the Canadian Middle Channel to sail around Camelot Island and back along the north coast of Grindstone Island to stop at Canoe Point followed by the, by now, familiar three mile run back to base. Almost the whole fleet set off together: a beautiful sight. Winds were steady around 10 mph for almost the whole way except in the Gananoque Narrows in the lee of Prince Regent Island where almost everyone resorted to muscle power to help them through. Dinner that night was at the Thousand Island Club looking out towards the large freighters travelling sedately down the St Lawrence Seaway.

The fleet divided on Thursday with the majority heading down river for the tricky circumnavigation of Ash Island and a smaller fleet opting to sail up river out past Leek Island and into Lake Ontario before turning south to complete a circumnavigation of Grindstone Island: over twenty miles in total. I joined the second fleet crewing for Alan Asselstine together with his grandson Julien. The winds were a little stronger than Wednesday particularly when we were out in Lake Ontario where some ominous black clouds seemed to follow us as we tacked south. They produced little rain but they were accompanied by some lively wind. When we got around to the lee of Grindstone we enjoyed a sunny stop over at the holiday cabin of Ian Coxhead's Wisconsin friends Jeremy and Erin Foltz, who were totally unfazed by being invaded by six Wayfarers and generously provided beer all round! On his first rally ten year old Julien competently took the helm on the way home to complete a very satisfying day's sail.

The winds were quieter on Friday and no major expeditions were planned. I needed to leave in the afternoon to travel to Coburg for the North American Championships the following day so Pat Kuntz, who was going to crew with me, and I decided to take advantage of the lighter winds to get in some much needed practice. Despite being fellow members of the Lake Eustis Sailing Club we had never raced together before and desperately need some spinnaker practice. After some initial difficulties, we had a few nice runs kindly captured for us on film by Sean and Quinn. By 5pm the boat was back on its trailer and I set off to Coburg thinking how amazingly lucky we had been to have had such a wonderful week.

Having now completed the three year cycle of Killbear 2013, Hermit Island 2014 and Wellesley Island 2015 I am acutely aware of the enormous debt that we, who have only recently joined, owe to those who found such lovely places to sail and developed the rally tradition: many, many thanks!



Glorious sailing doesn't end here. At the Friday skipper's meeting Dick Harrington and Uncle Al were extolling the pleasures of the early summer Chesapeake cruises and encouraging everyone to consider joining the international rally in the Netherlands in 2016. There was even talk of the Apostle Islands in Lake Superior some time soon. There is much to look forward to!

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