



Hard-a-Lee

Occasional Newsletter Of the Wichita Falls Sailing Club

(Find us online at wfsail.org)

August 10, 2022

Commodore's Corner

By Debra Halter, 2022 Commodore

Did you know that 2022 marks the 49th year of the Club at Lake Arrowhead? The Club moved from Lake Wichita to the new larger lake in 1973. Why did we move? Low water levels. Being built in 1901, old Wichita had silted in and was too shallow for most of the members' boats. Sound a little familiar, doesn't it? While Arrowhead has filled in some our main problem is lack of rainfall. The City of Wichita Falls has been pumping waste water into the lake for a while now, but it doesn't compensate for evaporation or the amount of water being taken out of it. As of August 8th, Arrowhead was at 73.7% of capacity. That's a long way from the 26.8% it got down to in 2014.

Because of the low water, there have been some issues. The dinghy dock is high and dry, standing precariously over the lake. Work is currently underway to extend it so that it will still be usable. Some of the fingers on the slips are bound up, too. Mike Gillis says that there is 6' of water under the shallowest slip. You might think that is plenty, but unless we get a drought-busting rainfall event soon, that is a problem. Strong winds will whip the water around and the resulting waves will pound your keel into the sand, possibly breaking something. Mike suggest you make sure your trailer is ready to roll in case your boat needs to be removed quickly.

Some of boats with deeper keels can't get out now anyway. There isn't enough water at the boat ramp to get a trailer out to them. Several have tried and were unsuccessful. If you're thinking of putting your boat in dry dock, now is the time to consider doing so.

Even with low lake levels, we still have plenty of racing left in the year. Don't forget about the Harvest Winds Regatta on October 15th. John Kidwell is planning a fish fry that afternoon, after the race. He also has plans for a Chili Cookoff for the General Meeting in November.

That means elections are coming up. If you would like to add your input on what would benefit the Club, consider throwing your hat into the ring. Or volunteer for one of the board positions. Past Boards have enacted some great improvements for the Club: the pavilion, improvements to the slips, adding the dinghy dock, to clearing sand off of the boat ramp to make it more accessible for everyone. If you would like to serve your club, please contact Steve Priester.

Debra Halter, Commodore

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**The next WFYC board meeting is
scheduled for September 1 at 7 p.m.
at the Clubhouse.**

Water Level

921.39

Level is 4.61 feet below full pool of 926.00 as of August 12, 2022

2022 Board of Directors

Commodore	Debra Halter	940/632-8557
Vice Cmdr	Glenn Tole	940/182-1814
Rear Cmdr	John Kidwell	940/781-1310
Treasurer	Matt Baker	940/923-7387
Secretary	Jim Loudermilk	817/600-5148
Past Cmdr	Steve Colley	940/733-0847
Harbormaster	Mike Gillis	940/867-3753
Grounds chair	Paul Spilman	940/782-3277
House chair	Bink Davidson	940/782-6147
Racing Chair	Steve Priester	940/781-7016

Texas 200

The Texas 200 is an annual race from Port Mansfield to Magnolia beach approximately 200 miles. This year there were close to 90 boats registered and two boats along with 4 sailors were from Wichita falls. Patrick Simmons and his mom Loren sailed the race on a Hobie 16. Also, Brad Mick and Mike Gillis took part on a Strike 18. Here are their stories.

Brad and Mike

Day #1

We readied ourselves for the adventure, lots of boat work and lots of preparations. We left Port Mansfield Monday morning at the crack of noon, sailed away waving good bye to loved ones at the dock. Everything was good!! Turned to starboard and entered the ICW. WOW!! The wind picked up to upper 20's gusting to 38 MPH waves in excess of 4 Ft. (USCG) Things got dicey! Skipper Brad was sailing, First Mate Mike was bailing. Waves coming over the stern soaking everything and everyone. First issue noticed jib sail was not cooperating, boat did not steer like it should, Observation, Jib halyard broke. As we attempted repairs underway, we were blown WAY off course. Repairs being impossible to make to Jib Halyard in wind and waves proceeded with only mainsail. Did I mention the USCG Helicopter made a pass and circled back around to check on us while Skipper Brad was on the bow of the boat fighting with the Jib Halyard? First item of business, get back on course in the ICW locate the narrow channel and sail the 5 miles up wind to Camp #1. No problem, we are still underway. Facing a head wind and many tacks in a narrow channel 5 miles to Camp #1 was a challenge. Oh, did I mention the barges? In pictures, barges look very large. When you are 100 yards from one, they look like Aircraft Carriers. They do not observe the rule "sailboats have the right of way". We decided to motor the rest of the way down the narrow channel to Camp #1 to avoid contact with wake or worse with barges. Made camp, dropped the mast, got the Jib Halyard repaired, raised the mast, ready to relax and have a couple of beers before all the ice melted. Christened the boat " Y Knot" with Sailor Jerry Rum along with a toast of Sailor Jerry to the boat. Had a good meal of MRE's that night and slept on trampolines of the Trimaran along with mosquitos.

Day#2

Woke up, wet, hot ready for coffee. Made coffee, squared away gear shoved off for the 5 mile trek back down the narrow channel to the ICW. Saw porpoise swim along side the boat, saw a Sting Ray floating along. Things were great. Passed a couple of sailboats along the way down the channel. Smooth sailing. Entered the ICW. WOW!! Back in the wind and the waves. 4 Ft. waves and winds gusting to 35 MPH. We were holding our own. We heard a loud POP, Skipper Brad looked at me as I looked at him. Then another loud POP. Skipper Brad looking at me said WHAT THE F\$%K WAS THAT!!!! As we watched the mast lean forward and then right itself (thank goodness) wondering what the heck was going on, again the mast leaned further forward and come back again. Skipper Brad made the executive decision THIS IS NOT SAFE. We have to get back to Port Mansfield. He did not get any argument from the First Mate Mike. Skipper Brad called the girls that we were on our way back to Port Mansfield and to come to the docks if we could make it back. We managed to limp the broken vessel back to Port Mansfield and back to the dock.

Two boats dismasted, one capsized and a couple had to be rescued by the USCG (boat left behind) in the first few days of the challenge. Only about half of the boats that started, completed the Texas 200.

We discovered the weak points on the vessel and will correct them. We are looking forward to next year with a new and improved Y Knot to conquer the Texas 200. We know what to expect and what we need to be prepare for. I would encourage any WFSC member that would like to get involved with the Texas 200 to do so. You will meet a lot of good people and see a wide variety of boats. It is exciting and fun, but should not be taken lightly.

Patrick and Loren

Hello fellow sailors! I wanted to make a post about our trip this year and share what made it special to me. After last year's 200 difficulties, we had a long year waiting and planning to make this year's successful. After seeing what Ellen did with her 200 adventure last year (100% more impressive than what I had set out to do), I think it made me realize what kind of challenge I could also undertake. I had always drawn inspiration from the 70's and 80's Worrel 1000, Hogs Breath, Havana Challenge, and the Rough Riders, and realized I could sail the Texas 200 as a sort of tribute challenge. I convinced my mom to sail with me and we were set.

When we started around 2 pm on Monday, reefed, I had really wanted to see everyone at the jetties before turning and burning. The weather and sea state gave me a gut feeling that we should white knuckled it downwind, and I try to trust my gut. We are pretty bummed to have missed the jetties, it looked like a great camp. When we turned downwind and began running, we weren't sure exactly where we would end up. I had hoped to make it to somewhere near the land cut, but with our average speed we soon found ourselves passing all the familiar marks of last year. The land cut flew by us, as did Baffin Bay and the Sand dunes, all camps from last year. Pretty soon we found ourselves at the Bird Sanctuary, and that would have to serve as our camp 1. With a top speed of 23.5 mph we were pretty spent. So we ate the tuna packets and snacks we brought, cannabilized the boat's running rigging and made a shelter with a tarp, tied my wrist to a ground stake (which managed to serve as a high tide warning, anchor drag warning, and alarm clock), and rested for the night.

After re-rigging the boat, we set off again in the morning white knuckled running to Port Aransas (by way of wrong turn, air boat shortcuts, and oyster beds). By the evening we had made our way to Rockport, my mom's childhood home. We spent time there enjoying the coast and the changes that had happened since her time there. We also got to sail into the beach where we had scattered my grandfather's ashes during last year's Texas 200.

While Rockport wasn't a pre-designated camp-site it meant a lot to us to stop and spend time there. This stop also allowed for some repairs that were getting pretty loud and demanding. The next morning we snuck the boat under an overpass to rig on the upwind side of a bridge and launched from the beach with our eyes set on Maggie beach.

With Aransas Bay and San Antonio Bay still to conquer, the reef would have to stay in. Our eyes were peeled for the turn back into the ICW as we sailed upwind into the swell. The sensation could be replicated if you had someone filling a five gallon bucket with salt water and hitting you every few seconds. Once we were finally in the channel again it was just a manner of trimming sails and staying focused. Before new knew it we were flying a hull, beam reaching into Maggie Beach to spend time with family and break the boat down for the long drive home

Play Baby debut on Texas Country Reporter on the weekend of September 24/25 followed by the National debut on RFD-TV on Friday September 30 at 8pm central time with an encore on that station on October 2 at 10:30am. In Wichita Falls it is channel 3 at 10:30 on Sunday the 25th