



## Commodore's Cockpit

### Being Thankful and Looking Ahead

By Donna Schlachman, Commodore

Snow is on the ground and while we count the days til Spring and plan spring projects, we can also look forward to our MHSAs winter and spring gatherings. This is the beauty of our association: we enjoy one another on land as well as on the water. This year we will continue our tradition of sailing events, social gatherings, educational seminars, field trips, and boat shows. Check out the calendar of events at the bottom of this page. Let the off-season fun continue!

At our Annual Meeting in November 2009, Jerry Homer stepped down as Commodore. Although the standard term for the MHSAs officers is two years, Jerry had served three. (We were fortunate to have Jerry begin a second term at my request last year, giving me extra time to gear up to fill the big shoes of our previous Commodores!) We could not have been in better hands. Jerry's organizational abilities, attention to detail, steady leadership, and sense of humor ensured smooth sailing throughout his tenure. I suspect that hardly a day passed in three years that Jerry was not thinking about MHSAs, and we were a better club for it. He was on top of every aspect of the Association, knew what needed to be done, and managed his team well. A simple "Thank You" barely covers my sense of gratitude. Fortunately for all of us, Jerry has agreed to serve as our Treasurer. I am confident that when his arm recovers from being twisted he will be keeping our books balanced.

Jerry's enthusiasm and dedication to MHSAs is matched by his "first mate" Jane who has also done much for us over the years. Along with being an able sailor and amazing anchor-hauler, she shares Jerry's attention to detail and has a quiet way of simply getting things done. Jane sets a high bar for the role of "helpmate" and we have all benefited from her caring (not to mention her feeding.) While Jerry and Jane move from Odyssey to a daysailer to spend more time teaching

*(Continued on page 2)*



Our New Commodore!

### Inside this issue:

A Dark and Stormy Night	1
A Message from the Aft -Steering Compartment	2
A Collision in Newport Harbor	3
Upcoming Activities in March & April	3
<i>Esprit de Mer's</i> Southern Journey	4
Update on Ethanol in our Fuel Tanks	7
The November 2009 Annual Meeting	7

### Upcoming Events

- **Cabin Fever Brunch**  
February 13th, 2010
- **Educational Seminar**  
March 20th, 2010
- **Cultural Field Trip**  
April 24th, 2010
- **Summer Sailstice Event**  
June 19th, 2010
- **Snow Island Lobster Bake**  
July 17th, 2010
- **2010 Flotilla**  
Penobscot Bay  
August 7th - 21st, 2010

## A Dark and Stormy Night

By Jule Dupre, s/v Syzygy

It was a dark and stormy night. All day it was a dark and stormy night. No problem. We had our full foulies on and we were determined to spend the day at the Newport boat show and then go out with friends for dinner afterwards. Besides, everybody who is anybody knows that it always rains for the Newport boat show. You just have to be prepared. So we

bundled up snug, pulled tight all the water tight straps on our foulies, put all our necessary and rain-sensitive equipment, such as my cell phone and car keys, into my proudly newly-purchased waterproof bag made from top-notch sail cloth, slugged it over my shoulder for extra security, and then we got into the

*(Continued on page 5)*



An ice-coated piling

## ... Looking Ahead

*(Continued from page 1)*

their grandchildren to sail, they are not moving out of the MHSA. This is not a goodbye, just a small tribute.

As I look forward to my tenure as Commodore, I will be counting on each of you to step up and assist with our calendar of activities and events. Keeping MHSA the active and enriching organization you know it to be depends upon the participation of its members.

By the time you read this winter issue of *WaterWays* we will be gearing up for our Cabin Fever Event and beginning to plan our winter seminar and spring field trip (see ideas on page 3).

These activities occur when folks volunteer to take on the responsibility for their planning and execution. I look forward to working with many of you – you are never too old or too new a member to jump aboard and lend a hand. I can be reached via the contact information on our website and look forward to receiving your ideas and signing you up to help.

## Notes from the Aft-steering Compartment

By Jerry Homer, s/v *Odyssey*

I wish all of you could have attended the annual meeting in November at Joseph's by the Sea in Old Orchard Beach. It was a high energy, fun gathering to do the club's business and we were wonderfully entertained by the music of Rob Becker and Peter Poulin. It was also the setting for the passing of the gavel. I give Donna and Chuck my best wishes for much success as they take the helm. I know we are in good hands. Please give them and the other officers and committee chairmen your active support.

Because of Paul Akers' illness we have not had a newsletter for awhile so I did not have the opportunity to write a final message from "the Cockpit". I'd like to take this opportunity after the fact.

**... thanks to the membership...  
for the opportunity to serve...  
and for your support...**

First of all, thanks to you, the membership, for giving me the opportunity to serve as Commodore, and thanks to those of you who have been active and given me your support over the past three years.

As I announced in August, Jane and I have decided that it is time to make room for some other things in our lives. We have often looked back thankfully that we had and took the opportunity twelve years ago to buy our boat while we were at an age and stage to use and enjoy it. It was one of those "carpe diem" kind of things. Now it seems to be time to seize the new day and do some postponed travel. (If you know of an interested buyer, *Odyssey* is available through Stew Hart at Great Island Boat Yard in Harpswell.)

I do want to thank the officers and committee chairs who served with me. All of them have done good work – Donna, Clayton, Sue Hitchcox, Chuck, Paul Akers, Peter, and Alan. It was through their efforts that we achieved success.

I especially want to thank Clayton and Scott Burns for organizing and hosting our 2009 flotilla cruise to Mount Desert Island. Scott, in particular, put his heart and soul into planning and hosting us at his boyhood home. If you have any doubt about how well-served we were, do a web search on "Scott Burns' cruising guide" and you will be directed to Scott's *Cruising Guide to Mount Desert Island*.

I also want to thank Paul Akers for doing yeoman's work as our secretary and editor. Paul was one of the original

"Founding Fathers" of the club, and this *Waterways* newsletter has been his passion since the club's inception. Past issues are available on the club's web-

site, and hold a wonderful collection of news and useful information. I believe I speak for the entire membership in wishing Paul and Colleen well.

For those of you who missed the annual meeting, Roger Francoeur led us to acknowledge the "heroism" of Scott and Kathy Reynolds for their rescue of Bittersweet. If you missed it, that story will be recounted in a future issue of this newsletter. I'd like to think that any of us, under similar circumstances, would attempt to do the same thing. But the skill and daring with which Scott and Kathy pulled off the successful rescue under pretty extreme conditions was a breath-taking display of seamanship... that alone was well-worth our recognition and applause. Their added effort of going back at o'dark thirty in the morning at low tide to retrieve Bittersweet's anchor was way above and beyond.

*(Continued on page 4)*

## A Collision in Newport Harbor

By Carl Dupre, s/v Syzygy

For all owners and operators of boats, be it sail or power, collision avoidance and a working knowledge of the "Rules of the Road" are an everyday responsibility. When operating in a busy harbor this means constant diligence. Newport Harbor in Rhode Island is an extremely busy harbor, with a good deal of commercial traffic and a large, highly competitive racing community.

This is a photo of a collision in Newport Harbor on July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Conditions were moderate: wind was about 10 knots out of the Southwest, waves less than 1 foot, weather was clear, visibility excellent.

Two boats were involved:

*Blue Jay*, a C&C sloop, about 26 feet in length, was under the command of her owner, with his 7 year-old son on board; she was close hauled, on a port tack, westbound at about 4-5 knots.

*Nefertiti*, a 12-meter class sloop, about 65 feet in length, was under the command of a professional captain with two professional crew, and a charter group on board. *Nefertiti* was close hauled, on a starboard tack, southbound at about 6-7 knots.

This photograph was taken by a passenger on a Newport Harbor tour boat. The amazing thing is that nobody was injured or killed and both boats survived afloat.

This incident might serve as a valuable "lessons learned" case study for discussion at an upcoming MHSA event. What should each vessel have done differently in this situation?

The Rules of the Road are clear. *Blue Jay* was on port tack, *Nefertiti* was on starboard tack, *Blue Jay* should have stayed clear (Nav Rule 12). *Nefertiti* was also obligated to take action to avoid a collision (Nav Rule 17), but clearly did not.

Perhaps the best lesson here is the need for diligence at all times: collisions happen, even in broad daylight on a clear summer day!

*Editor's Note: Check out the full article on the website, with more photos:*



[Click Here!](#)

## March Educational Seminar

We have a list, we've checked it twice, now it is your turn to register your preferences and/or ideas... AND to volunteer to help. To view the list of ideas we've collected for seminar topics, click on this link:

Email the Commodore to let her know what your interests are and how you can pitch in to help!

[Click Here!](#)



## April Field Trip Destination

Last year our cultural excursion was a private tour of Gulf of Maine Research Institute in Portland. For a look at the great possibilities we have to consider for 2010, click on this link NOW...

Email the Commodore to let her know which of these ideas excite you the most!

[Click Here!](#)



## Esprit de Mer's Southern Journey

By Peter Stoupas, s/v Esprit de Mer

A few busy summers without much sailing and a few cold (and boring) winters got us thinking about taking *Esprit de Mer* south to Florida and the Bahamas. We had considered setting out for points south in the fall of 2010, giving us plenty of time to get the boat ready and plan the trip. But, an October phone call from our son Jason changed our plans. "Hi Dad, it turns out I have some free time this fall..."

Though only a few weeks away from hauling her out for the winter, I thought, what the heck, I'm not getting any younger. Let's do it! After making a rather lengthy list of things to be done, I realized I'd be lucky to leave by November 1. A little late for comfort, but we forged ahead, nonetheless.

### Planning the Trip and Getting the Boat Ready

The usual things, oil change, bottom cleaned, charts, research, etc. were easily accomplished. But several other projects took far more time and money than expected. The starter motor, of course, was almost impossible to reach which, as you know, translates to lots of time and money. The life raft I've been carrying around for years apparently had a leak in the seam rendering it worthless and in need of replacement. And despite assurances from the manufacturer regarding "immediate shipment", rather than provisioning and resting on the afternoon before departure we found ourselves drilling holes for the just delivered dinghy davits!

Jason and I decided to do the trip in two phases. The first leg would be from Salem MA to as far as we could get in two weeks... which hopefully would be Norfolk, VA (Mile 0 of the Intercoastal Waterway). After flying home for Thanksgiving, the next leg would take us into northern Florida where we would leave the boat and return home for Christmas. In January, Jana and I would re-join *Esprit* for some winter relief and fun cruising.

### The First Leg - October, 30<sup>th</sup> thru November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Jana had stayed with us aboard *Esprit de Mer* the night before and as we left, seeing her at the dock waving goodbye, I felt a strong emotion. I know this was not as big a journey as many sailors past have gone on, but nonetheless I felt a bond with them as I watched Jana wave goodbye at the dock. Her choice was to stay behind and "woman" the homefront while our son and I bonded over a month-long sea passage.

Our first stop was Sandwich, MA, where we picked up our third crewmember to help us through to Norfolk. Despite an early start the next morning, and favorable current through the Cape Cod Canal, our plans to get to the CT/RI border were changed by the wind and waves on our nose, and we landed in Cuttyhunk. It was my first time there and they had closed down for the season. No moorings were out and no one was at the docks. We tied up for the night and had a nice walk around the island.



*(Continued on page 6)*

## Notes from the Aft-steering Compartment (continued)

*(Continued from page 2)*

Lastly, I want to again encourage each of you to get involved with the club and its activities. It is more than a little frustrating to watch our membership roll growing, but for the most part, seeing only the same folks involved over and over. This is certainly one of those examples where you get out of it what you put in. Donna and I have had some conversations about the direction of the club. It was my idea to "reduce the overhead" and

"keep simple" the operations of the club. It is not necessary for us to maintain all of the trappings of a big organization just for a group of sailing friends to get together to sail and socialize three or four times a year. On the other hand, some of our best successes in the past were "big events" that took a lot of planning and organization.

You will need to decide what you want out of the club and how much you are willing to contribute to its success. It is

neither fair nor reasonable to sit back and expect the handful of officers and committee chairmen to plan and organize every event. Thanks go to Kim Francoeur, Jackie Laxon and Pam & Bruce Foshay for accepting our call to service in the coming year.

My parting line is: "Step up and serve. At least, participate."

Bon voyage.

## A Dark and Stormy Night (continued)

*(Continued from page 1)*

dinghy and motored over to the dock. We successfully braved the elements and had a fun day.

By the time we got back to the dock, we were happy and relaxed. Maybe a little wee bit too happy and relaxed. Maybe a little drunk. Just a little wee bit. We judged that we were singing with beautiful voices but we may have miscalculated a wee bit with that assessment.

No matter. We were dry because we were tightly bundled and strapped and hooked. So Carl got into the dinghy to start the motor while I sat on the dock with my feet hanging over and grabbing the inflatable pontoons. Through the years we had developed this as a safety precaution after we once drifted away from the dock when the motor decided not to start. We always have our oars ready also. We are very safety conscious. Even when singing a wee bit off key .

So Carl starts the noisy motor, while I am sitting on the dock holding the painter in my hands and the dinghy with my legs. I have very strong legs. Lots of things I have learned to doubt in my life, but I have never doubted the strength of my legs. Not one wee little bit! So it came as a surprise to me. (Did I mention that water-proof foulies are very slippery? Well, they are!)

So, imagine this: Carl, with his back to me, noisy motor blasting; me, sitting on the dock in my slippery foulies, holding dinghy with my legs. I never lost hold of the dingy with my legs for one second. No, I kept holding tightly onto it all the time that I kept saying to myself: "This can't be happening. This has never happened before." It all happened in a nano-

second, it was all done quietly. I didn't even make a splash.

Eventually Carl turns around to look at me, as the dinghy is floating away from the dock . He sees... Nothing! Eventually he sees this little mouth sticking up out of the water, saying: "Oh, oh."

Did I mention that it was a dark and stormy night AND that the current was strong? And that being gone all day, the current was going in the opposite direction from when we first came into the dock? I may have forgotten that fact a wee bit. I know I mentioned how dry we were in our foulies with all the pulls and ties and hooks. No water could get in. Except at the top of the neck if someone went under water. And now once the water got in, due to all the good pulls and ties and hooks the water cannot get out again. So I was wrapped in a balloon which was very quickly filling up with water. Water is very heavy. And my over-the-shoulder secure water tight bag... well it has a zipper on top. Naturally water seeped through the zipper. Lots of water. Heavy water.

So Carl, bless his heart, quickly jumps back on the dock while it is still in reach, shuts the motor off, secures the dinghy and proceeds to try and pull me from the water. Did I mention the dock did not have a ladder? Did I mention how heavy water is? Did I mention that we are not getting any younger and that I thought he was going to have a heart attack trying to pull me and my foulies — full of heavy water — out of the strong current? Looking on the bright side, I figured that the good news was that we were going to die together.

That's when I calmed down and said to both of us: "Calm down". I'm thinking

logically here. What can be the real problem? I'm hanging onto a floating inflatable by a dock not far from shore. Did I mention that it was a dark and stormy night? That the currents were very strong? That water is very heavy? That we were at the end of a long and tiring day. That we had had a wee bit to drink? And that we did not have a rope ladder in the dinghy. I mean, really, we are sailors. We follow all the 'safe-things-to-do' when we are sailing way out in the ocean. So what's to worry about in a little dinghy close to shore?

Well, we survived, end of story.

Lessons learned:

Always have a **rope ladder** in the dinghy. [We ended up using the painter.]

**Practice** getting into the dinghy from the water. It is especially difficult for people with a low center of gravity....aka big hips [although this also means more stability in a rocking boat!] Mainers may prefer to practice on a lake. The need to get back into the boat quickly is even more vital in colder waters. This should also be practiced on the swimming platforms.

Although we have heard it many times, we now have definite proof that a person in the water wearing heavy clothing is very **VERY** difficult to pull out of the water. In the case of a disabled person, a mechanical advantage lifting device will be required. Crew-overboard drills tend to emphasize getting the boat to the person rather than getting the person back onto the boat. And drills are seldom held on dark and stormy nights with a strong current and people feeling a wee bit too relaxed.

As potentially dangerous and scary as this situation was, it was no where near as scary as when I went and tried to get my cell phone replaced. The one that was in my water proof bag with the top zipper. Did you know that if a cell phone is two years old then it is out of date. I find that fact to be scary. Very scary!



## Esprit de Mer's Southern Journey (continued)

*(Continued from page 4)*

From Cuttyhunk we went to Old Saybrook, from there to Glen Cove, NY, the day after that through Hell Gate and down the East River past NYC. It is true what they say about the nasty currents and swirls at Hell Gate. It is also quite true that seeing the Manhattan skyline, the Brooklyn Bridge, and the Statue of Liberty from the River is an incredibly memorable sight. As we passed under the Verrazano Bridge later that day, with predictions of fair winds, a clear sky and a full moon, we made the decision to continue on overnight to Cape May NJ.



Our first overnight was as good as it gets, a radiant sunset followed by a luminous moonrise over the water. The full moon's brightness on my mainsail was extraordinary. The lights from Atlantic City were visible for most of the night, and hot coffee helped us tolerate the cold air. At dawn we were off Cape May. The weather continued to be good so we decided to continue on past the Delaware and Maryland coasts straight to Norfolk, arriving in Norfolk at 2:00 a.m. after 42 hours of nonstop motorsailing.



Our third crewmember went home leaving Jason and I to manage the rest of the trip. Day 9 / November 7<sup>th</sup> was the start of the ICW portion of the trip. Eight bridges (all of which needed to open for passage) within the first 10-15 miles, and then a lock. We timed leaving the marina to arrive for the first bridge opening at 9:00 a.m. and found a parade of other boats doing the same. Even in November, there are still a surprising number of boats headed south. That night we tied up at Coinjock, VA (ICW Mile 50).

We quickly found out the best way to navigate the ICW is by depth. You can't trust the maps, and some of the navigation marks were so far from deep water that you would go aground if you came too close to them. If we found that the depth was getting shallow, we would steer towards the center of the channel and we would be OK. So the rule we followed was STAY IN THE CENTER. For the most part, this kept us out of trouble.

The infamous Wilkerson Bridge at mile 125 is 64 feet, with no tides on this portion of the ICW. My strategy to clear this bridge, with my 63 foot mast (64+ feet with wind instruments and antenna) was to take advantage of my weight and get out to the side of the boat as far as possible on the bosons chair, thereby tilting the boat enough to get under the bridge. After some discussion, Jason talked me down by diplomatically suggesting that it might require a little bit more athletic ability than I possessed. So he won the honor of going out the end of the boom and it worked. We even had a foot to spare.

The Intercoastal waterway is really beautiful. People are friendly and there are a lot of boats going south. With one more stop at Bellhaven, we ended up in New Bern NC, where we had decided to leave the boat as we came home for Thanksgiving. We made our flight arrangements and reflected on our journey. Our first leg was over; we got further than we had anticipated, we had a fantastic overnight sail along the NJ coast, and the ICW was a breeze.



### **DON'T IGNORE YOUR DUES!**

**Don't Get Left Out of the Member's Only Website!**

**Please send your MHSAs Annual Dues to Jerry Homer today!**

**Thank you to those who have already paid.**

*Editor's Note: This article was abridged for publication. Read the full account of Esprit de Mer's Southern Journey on the website:*

[Click Here!](#)

## The 2009 MHSА Annual Meeting

by Kim Francoeur, s/v Lillian Gray

The 2009 MHSА Annual Meeting was held November 7<sup>th</sup> over a fine dinner at Joseph's By the Sea in Old Orchard Beach, Maine.

After dinner, the first order of business was a review of the Executive Committee meetings and corresponding reports. All reports were accepted. Highlights:

A total of 38 members are currently in the club. Four new members were heartily welcomed:

Mike and Carol Dumont  
s/v Footprints  
Rockland

Nancy and Ken Lageroos  
s/v Morpheus  
Maine Yacht Center

Claudette and Bruce Freeman  
s/v Summer Wind  
Great Island Boatyard

John Bowen and Rick Ring  
s/v Sarah-Violet  
Handy Boat

The Chandlery is under review; some prices will be lowered and ideas for new items to carry are welcome from the club.

Pam & Bruce Foshay will be taking over the newsletter, relieving Paul Akers who has taken care of the newsletter and club brochures since the beginning. Many thanks go to Paul and Colleen for their many years of service.

The next club event will be the Cabin Fever Brunch on Feb 13<sup>th</sup>, hosted by Dale and Ross Ketchum.

Ideas for cultural trips and educational events are needed from club members.

The Little Snow Island Lobster Bake event will be in July this coming year rather than later in the year.

The 2010 Flotilla will be timed to coincide with the Rockland Boat Show.

A solicitation for everyone's 'Best Of's' was included in the meeting packet. It is

requested that club members send their answers to the Webmaster and feel free to add any other categories to the proposed list.

There are some club members interested in a Caribbean trip. It is requested that any members with a like interest contact an Executive Committee Member.

New Business was covered as follows:

A bylaw amendment was passed to reverse an earlier amendment (passed by one vote at last year's Annual Meeting) to authorize the club to make charitable contributions. The purpose of the reversal is to ensure no hard feelings within the club regarding choices of donations. Members are encouraged to donate to organizations of their choice outside of the club.

The budget for 2010 was approved.

Jerry Homer's resignation from the position of Commodore was formally received and accepted by the club. Jerry's commitment to MSA while he held this office is very much appreciated by all.

The new Executive Committee elected at this meeting is listed on the back page, as are the Committees.

Additional highlights of the evening included a warm welcome to Chris and Gene Johnson, who were visiting as guests of Donna Schlachman and Rob Becker.

Roger Francoeur told the story of the rescue of s/v Bittersweet by the Reynolds during the 2009 Flotilla at Bar Harbor, focusing on the community benefit and overall values that the club cherishes, and a gift was presented to them. An article in *Waterways* in the near future will tell the story for those who weren't at the meeting.

The evening concluded with an excellent performance of classic folk tunes, with vocals and acoustic guitar by Rob Becker and Peter Poulin.

## Ethanol Update

by Donna Schlachman, s/v Kinship

Three or four years ago, when the additive MTBE was found to be associated with ground water pollution, it was replaced with an ethanol-blend to "oxygenate" gasoline and reduce emissions. Ethanol has a low impact on the environment, but is a known factor contributing to gunked up engines and fuel tank problems. Fuels with ethanol absorb water at a rate of 50 times more than gas without alcohol, leading to problems with contamination from water absorbed through vents. Ethanol also acts as a solvent and has been linked to major engine repairs and failures. It can degrade the walls of fiberglass fuel tanks, and will loosen corrosion and other stuff that may be lurking in the fuel system.

The recent EPA proposal to increase the percentage of ethanol from 10% to 15% is raising considerable concern in boating circles. BoatUS has gone on record challenging the ethanol industry, demanding that more "science and unbiased testing" take place before E15 is used for marine engines.

A proposed amendment to the *Maritime Safety Act of 2009* includes a study of the use of blended fuels in marine applications. This bill (H.R. 2652, section 23) was sponsored by Rep. Oberstar of Minnesota. The House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has recommended that it be considered by the House. If the bill passes, E15 will not be offered in the marine market until testing shows that it is not harmful to boat engines.

Last spring, the ethanol industry sought an EPA waiver to allow it to roll out E15 or even E20 fuels. The EPA was set to decide upon this by December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 but has now pushed their decision to June 2010, in order to allow for more testing. This is pitting the Automakers Alliance against the Governors' Biofuel Coalition, with the latter pushing for higher ethanol products.

The bottom line for us boaters: keep using those fuel stabilizer products.

*Author's note: We have one for our Hunter diesel fuel and another for our dinghy gasoline!*

## Anyone can write for WaterWays!

By Pam & Bruce Foshay, s/v Charis (aka your Newsletter Editors)

The goal of this newsletter is to keep the membership informed and to promote club activities, as well as provide articles that are meant to entertain..., or impart knowledge..., or provide insight... or recount personal experiences.

If you have anything to share that fits any of those... or something else that you think other MHSA members might be interested in reading... don't hesitate! Send it to us in an email @ Newsletter@mainehuntersailing.com for inclusion in an upcoming issue!

The Spring Issue of WaterWays is coming in April. Share your ideas for Commissioning and other Spring projects.

**Contributions due: March 1st!**

*Editor's Note: If you're one of those people who think: "I can't write well enough for a newsletter..." don't let that stop you! Let us know if you'd like us to "polish up your piece" and we're happy to help. Conversely, if you don't want us to take any editorial license with your writing, tell us that too, and we'll keep our red pens in our pockets! Send us what you've got to share with other members!*

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## MHSA is looking for new members...

Most of our members are current or past Hunter owners... but some are people who are just interested in the Hunter brand.

For more information, email Membership@mainehuntersailing.com or checkout the MHSA website at www.mainehuntersailing.com.

### Other Hunter links of interest:

[www.huntermarine.com](http://www.huntermarine.com)

[www.hunterowners.com](http://www.hunterowners.com)



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