Side Lights

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November 2026 Volume 65 Number 9

View from the Bridge:

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Bidding a loyal Beneteau goodbye before it travels off to Arizona.

Saying goodbye to an old sailing friend

By P/C Marvin Chaney Jr. SN

Old adages – “Join for the Education – Stay for the Friends” and “The best days in a boat owner’s life – the day you buy it and the day you sell it.” Mary and I lived them in October.

We have owned a Beneteau First 235 Sailboat since 1988; it is a 1987 model and we have been the only owners. When I retired in 2018, the plan was to fix the boat up and address several old boat issues so I could sail it again. It started out fine with me taking things off the boat, refinishing them and getting the engine repaired. But after a while, other activities took precedent. We began to travel a lot, plus where we kept the boat on Lake Wylie was not the same for sailing as Lake Norman, where we started our sailing life. The boat became a “dock queen.”

So, this summer, we made the tough decision to donate the boat to BoatAngel. After three different postings on the “eBay for Boats” site that they use to sell donated boats, a person who is a multi-boat owner won the auction. We don’t get any money, the charity that BoatAngel represents does, but we do get a tax deduction.

Without going into all the gory details, we received multiple calls and emails from our marina that we had “violated our slip agreement” because we had sold the boat. This was all a misunderstanding of the actual terms of the sale. It isn’t considered sold until the new owner physically picks it up and titles are transferred, but this didn’t seem to matter. We were given 24 hours to remove the boat. What to do?

We took pictures of the boat out of the water, but the new owner advised us not to see the boat go driving away, so we left prior to that happening.

Squadron member Scott Spivey heard of our plight, volunteered to tow our boat (the engine was once again not running) to his house and let us temporarily store our boat at his dock. P/C Brevard Myers SN-ACN and P/C Ken Elkins JN volunteered to help us the very next day to get the boat out of the slip. So, on a calm and sunny day, we backed the boat out of the slip, towed it to Scott’s house and tied her down for hopefully a short stay. Then we promptly left on our trip to Canada to see polar bears for a week, where we would have no cell or internet service for a few days.

Once back in “civilization,” we were able to find a day for the new owner to traverse the U.S. (The new owner lives in Arizona.) We met at Niven’s Creek Landing to exchange all kinds of gear that went with the boat. Then off to Scott’s house with a 2-horsepower engine to bring the boat to the ramp.

Once again, Scott came to the rescue. Instead of requiring the owner to motor for 10 miles using a tiny engine on what turned out to be a very windy day, Scott towed us and the boat back to the landing. Scott, Mary and I plus the new owner then retrieved the boat, stepped the mast and prepared her for transport.

The new owner had to buy new tires for the trailer. One had shredded on the trip here. Ensuing issues caused one of the bunks to break, so we had to install and carpet-cover new “boards.” Once repaired, it turned out the trailer was a perfect fit for the boat, supporting the wing keel just fine. I’ll tell you taking the boat apart, stepping the mast, etc. was quite the job with all the unexpected work. It took us from 9:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to get this all accomplished.

We took pictures of the boat out of the water, but the new owner advised us not to see the boat go driving away, so we left prior to that happening.

What a long story to say that it was a bittersweet moment but the right thing to do to let the boat go. And Mary and I could not have done this without the help of Ken, Brevard and especially Scott. So now

my only boats are an inflatable kayak and an RC model sailboat.

Boating friends are the best!

Marvin Chaney Jr. is secretary and webmaster for America's Boating Club-Charlotte.



Before the mast is stepped down, the sailboat is almost ready for its cross-country trip.



Will Granger covered and ready for the dam-to-dam trip on the Catawba River

Dam-to-dam jet ski trip reveals lots of history

By P/C Will Granger P-IN

As the old saying goes, “Some days are better than others.” But any day on The River is a good day. October 1, 2026, was one of those bright, sparkling good days when it was in the 70’s and the sun was shining. A good day to take the jet ski out and ride from dam to dam.

The launch point for me was Nivens Creek Landing on the lower end of the river next to the Lake Wylie Dam. D/C Charles “Bo” Ibach SN-ACN, who accompanied me on the dam-to-dam ride, informed me that it was built in 1904 and reconstructed and widened in 1924-1925 after washing away in the 1916 flood.

Exiting Nivens Creek, the river widens and the Catawba Nuclear Station is on the port side as I head northward. Steam from the plant reflects on the water to make for a horseshoe shape, as evidence of good luck.

Cruising along at 27 knots, the wind in my face feels good. I make a starboard turn at Windjammer Point and head into “Ibach Cove” to get the Commander saddled up on his new Yamaha jet ski to ride the length of the lake with me. We did this a couple of years ago and it was a good trip then.

So, two jet skis now cruising upriver to Mountain Island Dam, rooster tails streaming. The water is glassy and the only slight roughness is wind ripples and a few bass fishermen in small boats making wakes. The

water appeared to be diamonds as we cut through it like a dull knife through hot butter. Boyd Cove to the starboard.

Under the Buster Boyd Bridge, no swallow nests visible. On we go at a rather easy speed. I have a tank of E10 including some left over from the winter. The engine was misfiring a good bit; I'm glad I filled up with "extra" on the way to Nivens Creek Landing. From now on, I'll use ethanol-free gas in my jet ski. I'll save that E10 gasoline for four o'clock weeds next to my porch.

Mill Creek on the port side and the sandbar on starboard. Only one craft anchored at the sandbar today. An occasional turtle would break the surface and dive down or maybe it was a bass looking for a turtle to swallow. On we go past the large South Fork branch of the Catawba River to the port side and Withers Cove to starboard, then quickly passing by the mostly hidden entrance to Brown's Cove just past the big condo project known as Emerald Point.

> **From there on upriver it's mostly trees and riverbank. Rounding the last curve, we spied the Mountain Island Dam.**

Just ahead on the port is the old Allen Plant Steam Station electric generation plant, a coal-fired behemoth now being dismantled. The three smokestacks used to produce a lot of ash back in the day, but electrostatic precipitators fixed a lot of that in later years.

We ride on past the Allen Plant to the Belmont waterfront at U.S. Highway 74 and Interstate 85 bridges. The swallow mud houses were abundant on the undersides of those bridges. There is not a lot of activity on the shore or water there, but lots of traffic overhead. Spray painted arrows on the bridge show where the middle of the waterway is located.

We buzz on past the Whitewater Center and Mount Holly on the port and under the old N.C. Highway 27 bridge. Nearby there still stands the old Seaboard Railroad bridge with big stone pediments supporting the old rusty trestle. Bo says that there is a steam locomotive under the bridge that was washed into the river during the 1916 flood.

From there on upriver it's mostly trees and riverbank. Rounding the last curve, we spied the Mountain Island Dam. The water gets a bit shallow near the dam, so we kept a respectable distance to avoid the rocks.

The ride back down was just as smooth as the ride upriver. We stopped by P/C Brevard Myers SN-ACN's river cabin on the way back to survey his dock and gazebo that had collapsed. It was good to stand on his float and stretch for about 10 minutes while he gave us the 411 about it. We arrived at the 1925 Lake Wylie Dam in about an hour from the turn around. Bo drove right up to the ancient structure and gave it pat like it was a kindred spirit.

We parted ways having acknowledged it was a good therapy trip. He headed back to Ibach Cove and I to Nivens Creek landing. My Garmin told me we had covered 55 miles and total time on the water was about three hours. Certainly, that's a good ride on the first day of October.

Will Granger is a long-time member of America's Boating Club-Charlotte, where he serves as 2026 Member-At-Large.



Respecting shallow waters, the travelers stopped short of the Mountain Island Dam.



Bo Ibach was Will Granger’s loyal companion for the dam-to-dam trip.



Gwen Davis and Tom Frederick on the bow of Sentimental Journey

Gwen's First Sailing Experience

By Gwen Davis and Lt Tom Frederick

While I have enjoyed a wide variety of water activities over the course of my life, I have never been exposed to sailing. Recently, after meeting Tom Frederick, I became intrigued by his suggestion that we might enjoy sailing together on his Hunter 23.5-foot sailboat, Sentimental Journey.

When I expressed that I would love to try sailing, little did I know the adventure would involve six workdays helping him prepare the boat after it has been on a trailer for 11 years. Nor did I realize how much I had to learn as Tom patiently described the many nautical terms associated with sailing and schooled me on things my inexperienced self might be able to assist with.

The effort proved to be quite worthwhile. Our first outing, September 29-30, 2026, turned out beautifully! We enjoyed perfect temperatures under sunny skies, a clean and well-provisioned boat, a reliable outboard, a delicious and romantic onboard dinner, a moonrise on the water, a great facility (Merit Mark Point) at which to tie up for the night, and a healthy swim from the dock the next morning. Unfortunately, the weather failed to provide us with a complementary wind, but we fully expect that will come on our next sailing date.

In retrospect, the six days was a cheap price to pay for a glorious first adventure and I look forward to many more! Although we only first met two months ago, crewing the boat together has rapidly accelerated the formation of our new partnership. So far, everything has been the epitome of “smooth sailing.” Let’s face it, folks, at this age we don’t have that much time left to dillydally.

PS: We have made two trips since this was written. On the second we caught great wind and sailed under sunny, warm October skies at a brisk 5 miles an hour while we close-hauled. Thanks to the Charlotte Power Squadron for the great facilities at Merit Mark Point!

Gwen Stansbury Davis is a frequent guest of Tom Frederick, member-at-large of America’s Boating Club-Charlotte.



Greetings from the cabin



Gwen Davis shows off the shipboard dinner she prepared.

Order your Christmas card

Cards will be published in the December issue of Side Lights, and proceeds, as always, support the Squadron. We're going to have a bumper crop so order yours today. Here's how:

1. Pick your card using the letters A-G.

2. Email your choice along with your signature line such as "The Smith Family," "The Smiths" or "Harry and Sally." Email both to publications@charlotteboating.org.

3. Send $10 per card to Treasurer P/Lt/C Mary Chaney SN, 2014 Links View Drive, Fort Mill, SC 29707 or through you favorite payment service.

Don't Delay

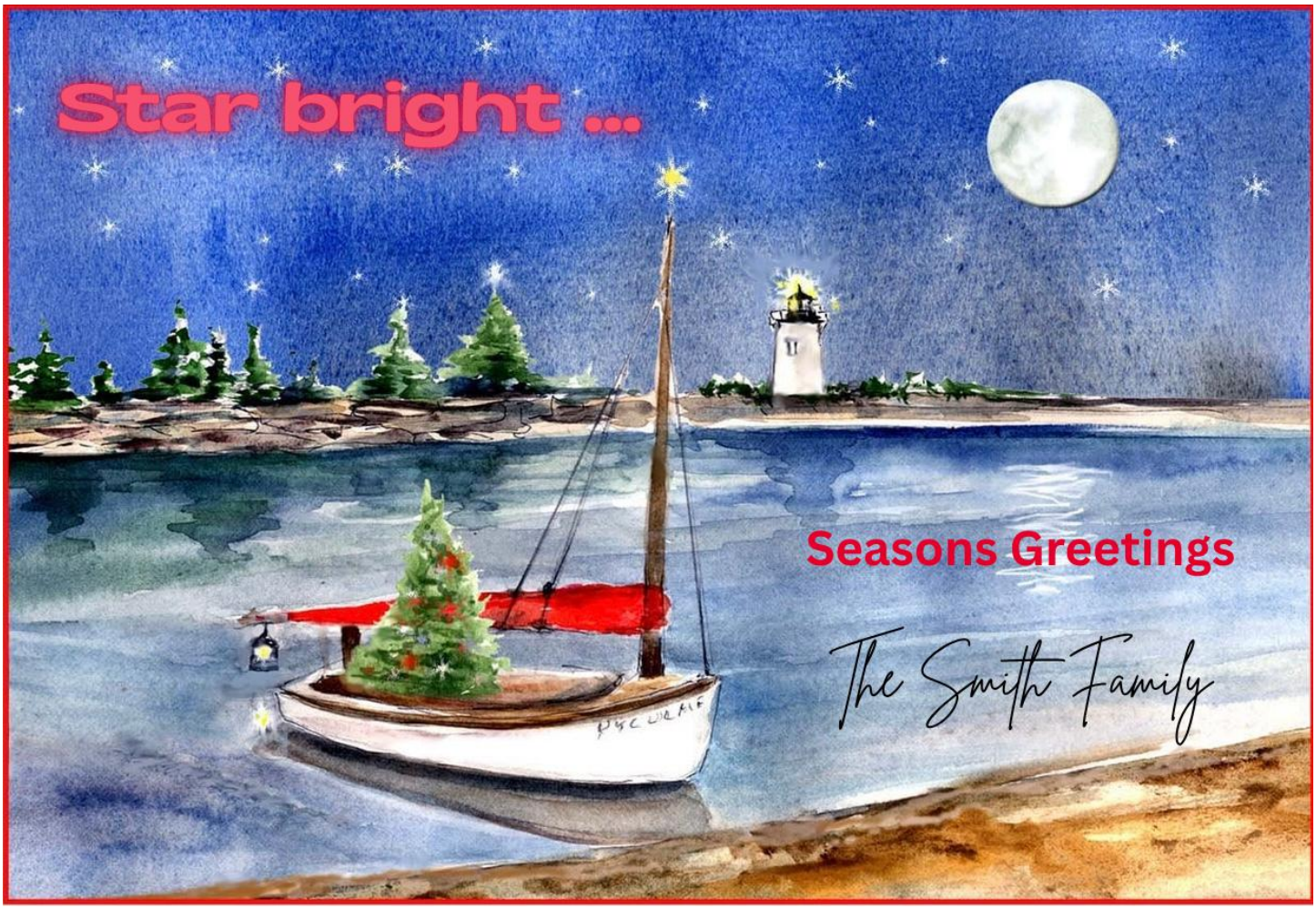
Receipt Deadline: November 20

4. Sit back and wait for your colorful season's greetings to be published in the next newsletter.

A


Fair winds and following seas
Wishing you Happy Holidays and a prosperous New Year
The Smith family

B



C

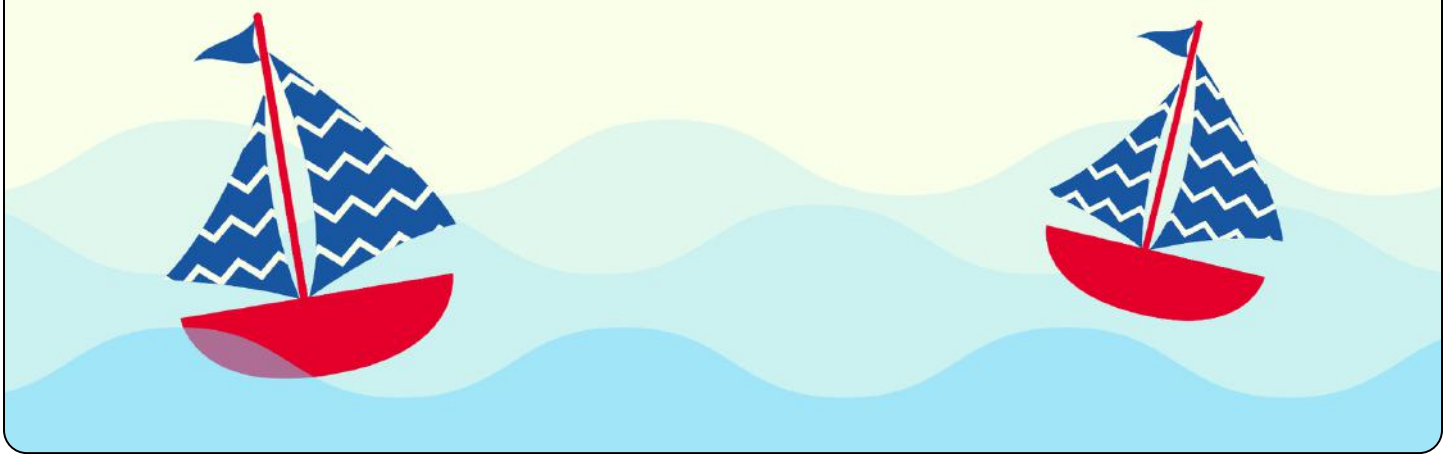


D

America's Boating Club-Charlotte

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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E



F

Ship Shape Holidays



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G



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Calendar of Events

November/December 2026

Date	Event	Time	Location/Details
November 2026			
11/3	General Membership Meeting	1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.	AmberJack
11/10	Wylie Gator Rowing Club	8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.	Pat Hakanson's home
November 11: Veterans Day Holiday			
11/16	ABC-Charlotte Executive Committee Meeting	5 p.m.-7 p.m.	Jocks & Jills
11/17	Wylie Gator Rowing Club	8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.	Pat Hakanson's home
11/20	View from the Bridge article due	Educational Officer	To Side Lights editor
11/20	Christmas Card orders due		To Treasurer Mary Chaney and publications@charlotteboating.org
11/24	Wylie Gator Rowing Club Makeup Day	8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.	Pat Hakanson's home
November 26: Thanksgiving Day Holiday			
December 2026			
No General Membership Meeting in December			
12/1	Side Lights publishes with Christmas Cards & Christmas Party Invitation		
12/12	Christmas Party & ExCom Meeting	4 p.m.-7 p.m.	Reflection Pointe
12/18	View from the Bridge article due	Incoming Commander	To Side Lights editor
December 25: Christmas Day Holiday			

Locations:

AmberJack Seafood and Steaks – 4253 South New Hope Road, Gastonia 28056

Pat Hakanson's house – 6812 Old Ridge Road, Waxhaw

Jocks & Jills – 4109 South Stream Boulevard, Charlotte

Reflection Pointe Clubhouse – 1305 Reflection Pointe Boulevard, Belmont 28012



November

Mary Chaney, Will Granger, Susan Ruth Hochstetler, Jack Moore, Don Osmond and Jacqualine Simpson

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John and Connie King on the water *Drawing by the late Carl Foesch*

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America's Boating Club-Charlotte is fortunate to have the following sustaining sponsors:

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Side Lights Staff

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Side Lights is published 10 times a year for the members of America's Boating Club-Charlotte, also known as Charlotte Power Squadron. The opinions expressed in the articles are those of the writers and not necessarily those of America's Boating Club-Charlotte.