



# GEECHEE SAILING CLUB RHUMB LINE

Great Circle 3150 NM



## COMMODORE, Linda Howard

It looks like we have jumped into 2023 “with both feet.” Just in February we had a fantastic oyster roast with 36 people attending, including several guests!

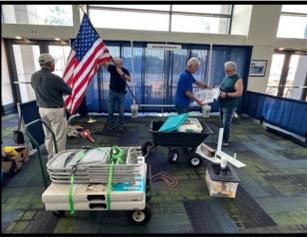
On top of that, we had a speaker who entertained us as well as educated us. Catherine Edwards was quite a hit!

At the time of this writing, we are working in the Savannah Boat Show at the Convention Center. Tommy and I went over the day before and set things up for the next 3 days. We are split into four 3-hour shifts and two 4-hour shifts with two members per shift.

The booth where we will be working is at the entrance to the show and

across from bathrooms...so we will have a lot of traffic. We should get some new prospects from this. And one of the perks is that the Tybee Light Power Squadron is letting us share their booth for free! I’ll report next month on how it went!

While we were there, I took some “before” pictures so the volunteers could get a glimpse of what to expect. On the table we have *Rhumb Lines*, our new brochures, mugs and bottles, a laptop showing about 400 photos of Geechee functions, and.....CANDY.



**MEETINGS:**  
Every second Monday of the month at Carey Hilliard’s,  
3316 Skidaway Rd.  
Order dinner at 6:00;  
meeting at 7:00.

**WEBSITE:**  
www.geecheesailingclub.org  
**EMAIL ADDRESS:**  
geecheesailingclub@hotmail.com  
**FACEBOOK:**  
Geechee Sailing Club

### GEECHEE SAILING CLUB'S UPCOMING PARTIES & CRUISES

**Socials:**

April 1 - Chili Cook-off at Marsh Harbor Clubhouse

(Emails will follow later)

**Cruises:**

April 15-16 - Daufuskie

May 27-28 - Wassaw Island (south end)

June 17-18 - Hilton Head

July 14-16 - St. Catherine’s

August 12-13 - Elba Island-shark tooth hunting (12:46 pm = low tide)

Sept. 2-4 - Labor Day - Beaufort

Oct. 20-22 - Bluffton Seafood & Art Festival

## THE SPEAKER FOR THIS MONTH (MARCH 13)

**CHIEF WAYNE IFILL AND  
CREW OF THE  
CHATHAM CO. MARINE FIRE  
AND RESCUE SQUADRON**

**(Read more about them on p. 2)**



## COMMODORE, Linda Howard (continued)



## VICE COMMODORE, Tom Howard

Our speaker for February was Catherine Edwards, Associate Professor at the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography. I can't say enough about her and her underwater glider. Besides being very personable, she is extremely knowledgeable. She talked, showed a presentation on screen, and answered questions until 8:45!



### OUR SPEAKER FOR MARCH

Chief Wayne Ifill of the Savannah Fire Battalion (and his crew) will be speaking at our meeting this month. As quoted on the 2018 Savannah Business Journal website: "Chief Ifill represents the best qualities of a Savannah Fire Chief Officer. He



is hard working, focused, and quickly grasps issues and works them through to successful conclusions. It is a pleasure to present him as the 2018 Chief Officer of the Year," said Savannah Fire Chief Charles G. Middleton.

We look forward to hearing stories of his marine fire rescues.



Always warm your hands before milking your cow.

## TREASURER, Dawson Long

As your Treasurer, I want to report to you that the finances have been audited. They are found to be sound by a qualified auditor and member of the club, Audrey Debien. She and Dave are newer members of the club, and they have produced four new members. They are on the Board of the club and they have also participated in several cruises over the last year.

As members of the club, I encourage you to invigorate other potential members to take the Geechee plunge. Do not worry, because there is neither a secret handshake nor potion you have to drink. Please ask a friend to join the fellowship of sailors that we are. I had some practice meeting oth-

ers at the Boat Show. It is not nearly as scary as I thought it would be.

Fellowship by gathering in the club is important, as it is in life. It was identified in Rick Warren's *The Purpose Driven Life* as one of five purposes that we have on earth. As I mentioned in an earlier article, there is nothing like fellowship on the water. On a cruise, we are already creating memories together. When you tie up in a creek to another boat, the magic begins.

Perhaps I...I mean you...have been the benefactor of a seasoned mechanic jumping aboard to help you repair your engine, or witnessed the

multiplier effect of two coolers being more abundant and enjoyable than one.

The opportunity for increased fellowship in our community and beyond begins with an invitation to come and see the fun we have. You could invite someone to the St. Patrick's Regatta awards dinner or a regular meeting. Geechees do not simply sit around. We get up and go. As my sailboat's name commands, *Andiamo*, which means "Let's go."



## CRUISE CHAIR, Larry Sprague

The Spring cruises will be to Daufuskie Island April 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, and then our Memorial Day cruise will be May 27<sup>th</sup> to May 30<sup>th</sup> to the south end of Wassaw Island.

I retired from practicing law as of the end of December this past year, although we will be working on transferring my practice to another attorney and vacating the office by April 1<sup>st</sup>. In my current state of semi-retirement, I have come to realize that I am moving from a sedentary desk job to manual work. Unpaid manual work! All those projects which I put off, such as cleaning and organizing the garage, have now moved into the realm of reality.

Spring also means preparing the boat for the sailing season. Now that Sail Harbor no longer hauls out boats for maintenance work, I have had to find a new place to go. This year I will be having my hull painted and waxed at the Palmetto Bay Marina. They do not allow the owner to do his own work,

so for the first time I am going to have someone do this for me. The cost will be about triple what it would be if I did it myself, but at least it will be done and I can turn my attention to the list of items that need to be checked or repaired. I need to install a new fresh water pump for the sinks and a bilge pump, replace the anchor windless motor, have the refrigerator repaired, and trouble-shoot the air conditioning system. The dinghy has a slow leak and the outboard needs to be taken in for maintenance. The oven never has worked. Oh, and the sea water cooling system does not keep the engine adequately cool when running at high RPMs....Then I will be able to have fun.

I worked the Boat Show with Dawson for the Geechee Sailing Club. I did not intend to buy anything, but I ended up buying a course to obtain my Coast Guard captain's license (six-pack). There will be six days of classes in Savannah spread over two

consecutive weekends at the end of April and beginning of May. The salesman was also recruiting Captains for the Boy Scout's High Adventure program at Sea Base in Islamorada. They go out on a 40-foot sailboat for a week with six Scouts and two leaders. Once I have passed the exam, I can participate as a Captain, which I would love to do.



**Impress her with something expensive...**



## COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR, Linda Howard

At the end of January, I saw an article in the paper about the Port of Savannah. It was mostly facts and figures, but it made me do some research. I knew that we had an outstanding and important port, but I didn't realize it had so many facets. My plan is to share these with you over the next couple of months.

Basic facts are: Savannah's two terminals (Garden City and Ocean Terminal) and Brunswick's two terminals (Mayor's Point and Colonel's Island) belong to the Georgia Ports Authority; our terminal was purchased in 1948. We are the second largest port on the East Coast and the third busiest in the United States! We handled 5.7 million containers in 2022 and are expanding to 9.5 million in the next 3 years, with a growth rate of 16.5% annually compared to the average of 9.7%. We have 6 container terminals with a container capacity of 250,000.

To break it down, I thought I'd start with:

### TRAFFIC:

The Port of Savannah's world-wide carrier network, superior location, and faster-to-market service record provide vital links to international markets.

Besides its closeness to Atlanta, the Port of Savannah has great connections via road and rail. Interstates 95 and 16

converge at a point approximately five miles from the port. No other port on the U.S. East Coast offers such direct interstate connections. What's more, because the riverside port is actually located west of the city of Savannah, trucks are not encumbered by city traffic.

What's more, the state opened the Jimmy Deloach Connector in 2016, providing direct truck access between the Port of Savannah and I-95. The connector carries 5,000 trucks per day and cuts 11 minutes from the drive time between the port and the interstate.

Yes, we do have a LOT of truck traffic, but Georgia's freight mobility plan will deliver the Brampton Road Connector, linking Garden City Terminal to I-516. They will also extend the Jimmy Deloach Parkway again, this time from I-95 to I-16. This will form a complete cargo beltway for motor carriers between the port and the interstate network.

As for train traffic, the Port of Savannah's Garden City Terminal is already the South Atlantic region's busiest intermodal gateway, handling 38 trains per week of import and export cargo. The Mason Mega Rail project will deliver the largest intermodal rail facility for a port authority in North America.

The Port of Savannah is closest and fastest by rail to the major population centers of Atlanta, Birmingham, Charlotte, Memphis, and Orlando. Two Class I on-terminal rail facilities mean more choices for reaching other inland markets.

Other GPA terminals, including Ocean Terminal in Savannah as well as the Brunswick terminals of Mayor's Point and Colonel's Island also provide direct rail service. The Colonel's Island Auto Port offers two Class I rail roads to destinations in the Midwest, Gulf states, and across the country - all the way to California. The CSX Transportation and the Norfolk Southern connect to the Myd Harris Rail Yard on Colonel's Island via the Golden Isles Terminal Rail Road, which provides all rail switching services on Colonel's Island.

We have 36 cranes with 1,990 ships coming in annually on average! I'll talk about that next month.



**I will be bringing some of each to our meetings. If you want to give me an idea in advance of how many, you can call or text me (Linda Howard, 912/658-7398). Everyone loves them, so you won't be disappointed. The bottles are \$10/each and the mugs are \$12.**



## SECRETARY - Audrey Debien

### SAINT CATHERINE'S ISLAND

Last summer Dave and I took our boat out to explore Jones Creek behind our home. We are fortunate to have our little boat on a lift right in our backyard! We want to make the best use of it! The boat is a 19-foot Procraft with a 175 HP Mariner motor.

We immediately learned that the bridge to the east is too low for us to pass under during high tide. Further explorations revealed other ways to get out to the east side of I-95. Once there, we are in the East Channel Medway River that opens into the Saint Catherine's Sound. As we near the Sound, we pass the Sunbury Crab Company Restaurant. During our first outing, that is where we turned around.

In early June, I determined that I wanted to go to Saint Catherine's Island. Sadly, the island caught on fire and burned for several days! The fires were caused by lightning strikes on June 10th. Almost 1,000 acres burned on the 14,000-acre island.

Eventually, the fires were extinguished, and my interest was renewed. One day we set out on our boat timing our trip so that we could get under that bridge. We made it out into Saint Catherine's Sound in about an hour. The weather was very windy and the water was rough. After 20 minutes of being pounded by the waves, I asked Dave to turn around and head home. It was too rough for me!

We then started watching the weather as well as the tides. Eventually, we got a perfect clear, calm day! I told Dave that this was it! While he prepared the boat, I prepared a picnic lunch. We packed chairs, umbrellas, bug spray, and extra gasoline in the boat and headed out for the day! It was a perfect boating day! The water was like glass! We easily flew through the river to Saint Catherine's Sound. Along the way we enjoyed the dolphins and birds. No other boats were on the water as we headed towards Saint Catherine's Island in the distance.

Once the boat was secured on the sandy beach, we relaxed and enjoyed lunch. There was evidence of the fire, but new growth was rapidly moving in. We saw fish jumping around the boat and comical crabs popping up out of the sand to check us out. Pelicans sailed overhead. It was quiet and beautiful. I look forward to another trip, perhaps we can beach at Ossabaw Island next time!



## SOCIAL CHAIR, Mary Ellen Sprague

Thank you to all who helped make the Oyster Roast and Mardi Gras Party such a success! Special thanks to Tommy Howard who cleaned the clubhouse, set up the tables and chairs, set up the oyster tables....and then cooked the oysters. Thank you to Dawson Long for procuring the oysters and helping out. Thank you to Linda Howard for advertising the party and cleaning up. Many thanks to my husband, Larry, for cooking the beans, and helping set up and break down. Thank you to Neal Tutor and Tim Grissette for jumping in and cooking the hotdogs and hamburgers. And a final thank-you to those who stayed after to clean up and brought

extra food and drink. I counted **36** partiers, a nice number for the clubhouse!! (See photos on pg. 6)

Looking to the future, we have a Chili Cook-off on Saturday, April 1st, at Marsh Harbor Clubhouse starting at 5:30 pm. Last year we had 8 participants with Audrey Debien winning the coveted title of "Best Chili" and a gift card. Can anyone oust her? Come and find out.

Also, with April 1st being April Fool's Day, bring a written favorite tale or 3 silly facts about yourself. We will put them all in a hat and then each will be picked out and read. A small prize will go to whoever

can guess the writer. For instance, I could write: I once was questioned by Border Patrol for bringing in 6 children to the U.S., I am afraid of heights, and I love to dance when no one is looking. Who am I? Spouses are not allowed to guess. The funnier the facts, the better, and nautical tales are especially appreciated!

Please, please, please RSVP to [mary-ellen31406@gmail.com](mailto:mary-ellen31406@gmail.com), text 912-659-0103, or sign up at the next meeting. Numbers really help with planning!



# SOCIAL CHAIR, Mary Ellen Sprague (continued)



## MEMBERSHIP CHAIR, Nick Robertson

With the welcome arrival of spring-time in Savannah — and its accompanying strong breezes — the Geechee Sailing Club is once again blooming into action while organizing its marquee sailing race this month, the St. Patrick's Day Regatta, overseen by the ever-energetic leadership of Racing Chair Angela Margolit.

I overwhelmingly owe my own involvement with the Geechees to Angela — when she was organizing this race in March of 2020, she called the *Savannah Morning News* in hopes of drumming up some regatta coverage, and as I was then working as a *Morning News* reporter, I happened to pick up the phone and receive her friendly (and fateful) request.

Before happily connecting Angela with the *Morning News* sports desk, I first learned about the Geechees during our conversation; a year later I was invited to join the St. Patrick's Day Regatta race committee aboard Tim and Judy Grissette's prized *Wait For Me* pleasure boat, and now I'm proudly serving as Geechee Membership Chair.

While my own Geechee membership can be traced to a serendipitous phone call at work, since my current role includes growing our club's membership, I recognize that this goal cannot be effectively achieved by depending on this type of fortunate coincidence. So, looking ahead I have developed a strategy of simple (but hopefully fruitful) actions to help spread the word about the benefits of Geechee membership.

• **Targeted Brochure Distribution:** Following the recent printing of updated Geechee Sailing Club brochures, I plan to contact numerous locales around Savannah that are frequented by area boaters (marinas, boat-supply stores, dockside restaurants, etc.) to ask if we can place a short stack of brochures in a prominent place, and after receiving ap-

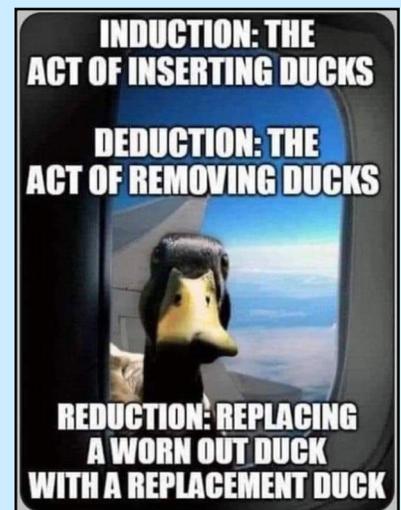
proval from management, visit these sites to distribute — and later, restock — our brochures there.

• **Presentations at Neighborhood Association Meetings:** The Savannah area has many neighborhoods where numerous homeowners are blessed with private docks, and it's safe to assume that many of them are boaters. After researching which communities have the most private docks, I plan to contact their neighborhood associations to ask if I could possibly provide a short presentation about the Geechees at their general meetings, providing my contact information for interested boaters to learn more later, and welcoming them to attend our next monthly meeting at Carey Hilliard's.

• **Cooperation with Other Boating-Related Organizations:** While I daresay that the Geechee Club is Savannah's premier organization bringing boaters together, we are not the only one, and I believe that encouraging friendly ties with fellow groups of sailors and motor-boaters will not only enhance camaraderie on the waters, but also help increase awareness about the Geechees and what we have to offer. This concept isn't limited to clubs — for example, from my aforementioned days working at the *Morning News*, I retain a good connection with the Chatham County Police Department, and I'm planning to request that when the CCPD's Marine Patrol provides their free boater-safety courses, they could mention Geechee membership as a way for new boaters to enhance their local knowledge of area waterways.

These are just a few ideas that have been percolating in my mind since becoming the 2023 Geechee Membership Chair, and I certainly welcome any *Rhumb Line* readers to offer feedback or other suggestions for growing our membership numbers; feel free to drop me a line anytime at [n.h.robertson@gmail.com](mailto:n.h.robertson@gmail.com). And mean-

while, I encourage all of you to follow Angela's example and extol the virtues of Geechee membership by the tried-and-true method of 'word of mouth' — it certainly worked to bring me aboard!



I followed this Chinese balloon for almost 200 miles only to realize it was bird poop on my windshield!



# RACE CHAIR - Angela Margolit



It's almost here! Our 44<sup>th</sup> Annual St. Patrick's Regatta will be held March 25-26 on the Wilmington River!

Can you please donate an item for the **Tricky Tray Raffle** to be held Saturday evening, March 25th? Please bring it to the March general meeting. If you cannot make it, just call me and I'll come to you (973/296-8011).

For this year's St. Patrick's Regatta, I've had the most sponsors ever! They are:

- Boat US / Tow Boat Savannah - Dana & Esther Rutland
- Cay Insurance Services - Christopher Cay (Dawson's Brother)
- Celebritees - Chris Ramsey
- Chelsea at Five Points Realty (Apartments) - Dawson Long
- Encompass Health - Laura Dover
- Hinckley Yacht Services - Dustin Hartley
- Hogan's Marina - Bubba Strickland
- Landings Harbor Marina - Larry Sincoskie & Jen Sabo
- MarineMax Hall Marine - Jim Lynes
- Molly McGuire's - Melissa McCurry & Katie Murphy
- Rentgrata - Ben Margolit
- Savannah Master Calendar - Marianne Ganem-Poppell
- Thunderbolt Marine- Ernie D'alto
- Town of Thunderbolt - Dana Williams (Mayor) & Katina Spaulding
- Yates Astro Termite & Pest Control - Mark Willman

The Competitors' meeting will take place via Zoom at 7pm on Friday night. The Fleet races will take place on Saturday for **five** classes: Spinnaker, Non-Spinnaker, Cruisers, J/24s, Rhodes 19s. Then on Sunday we'll have the Pursuit Race, where start times are based on PHRF ratings. Races on both days start at 11:30am. High tide is early in the afternoon.

Similar to last year, we are again having a social gathering on the Oyster Deck of Molly McGuire's on Wilmington Island from **4:30 to 7pm**. Admission for skippers and their crews is included with their registration fee. All other guests (including Geechee members) only have to pay \$10. There will be a light buffet and free beer! **If you can volunteer to help me sell raffle and dinner tickets, let me know. I'll also be asking at our March general meeting.**



The Grissettes will again be providing the RC Boat, and one of my fellow Power Squadron members, Carl Ericsson, is providing the Mark Boat. He will be assisted by Al Stiles from the Landings Sailing Club. This is truly a joint effort - and so nice to see all the clubs working together!

If you have someone who would like to participate in our 44<sup>th</sup> regatta, please have them register on the Regatta Network: <https://www.regattanetwork.com/event/25518>



## FLOTSAM AND JETSAM

Unscramble each word, then take the letters that are underlined and unscramble them to come up with the last name of one of our members:

Y E T N I N                    \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

C V I E N O I

L Q A U Y T I

F K E N I

Answer to November's Scramble:    A L L E N

NEED

TALLER

BOARD

ALIEN

## SUPPORT FOR OUR MEMBERS

This column is for club members to support other members "in need" (phone calls, visits, prayers, meals, etc.). Let me know of anyone you want to add. I won't go into a lot of detail on each here, but you can call them. I will also get approval before entering any names into this column. Please text me at 912/658-7398.

## 2023 OFFICERS

Commodore .....Linda Howard  
Vice Commodore..... Tommy Howard  
Secretary ..... Audrey Debien  
Treasurer..... Dawson Long  
Past Commodore.....Larry Sprague  
Social Chair ..... Mary Ellen Sprague  
Cruise Chair ..... Larry Sprague  
Race Chair..... Angela Margolit  
Membership Chair.....Nick Robertson  
Communications Chair/Editor.....Linda Howard  
Member-At-Large.....David Debien

For questions or comments, contact Linda Howard, Editor (912/658-7398)