



GEECHEE SAILING CLUB

RHUMB LINE

Great Circle 3150 NM



COMMODORE, Linda Howard

Sorry to have missed the April 10 meeting! I heard it was great. Tommy and I were on a boat... a big one. We were on the *Regal Princess* (1,083 feet long, 217 feet high, 142,229 tons, 19 decks, 1,400 balconies, a glass-floor walkway extending 28 feet beyond the deck, 3,560 guests, 1,346 crew, and christened by the original *Love Boat* crew). All that to say, it was huge. However, we didn't like it as much as others we've been on. I wonder how many of our boat (*Obedience*) would fit in it!

First, we visited Pompano Beach Resort for two days, then we boarded the ship for 7 days, visiting Princess Cays; San Juan, Puerto Rico; Amber Cove, Dominican Republic; and Grand Turk. We had been to San Juan so many times that we didn't get

off. Didn't get off at Princess Cays either because of my back. I couldn't see me trudging through the sand to find a lounge chair under a palm tree. I did enjoy it in the past, though. And...a word to the wise, Amber Cove and Grand Turk were nothing to see except the beautiful water, although we took tours there. So...that's "Linda's Cruise Report." We did have another couple with us - Susan and Robert (Robin) Jolley - who had never been to those places and enjoyed them very much (although they'd visited many other places around the world) .

Next stop is May to Brunswick, Jacksonville, and points south on our boat, *Obedience*, with Tim and Judy in their boat, *Wait for Me*.



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.geechesailingclub.org
EMAIL ADDRESS:
geechesailingclub@hotmail.com
FACEBOOK:
 Geechee Sailing Club

GEECHEE SAILING CLUB'S
UPCOMING PARTIES
& CRUISES

Socials:

TBA

Cruises:

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

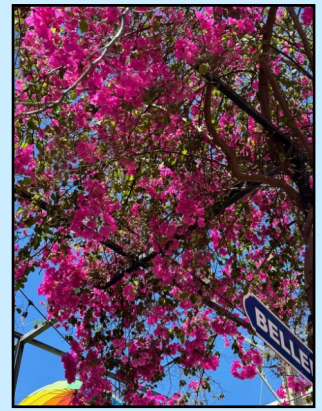
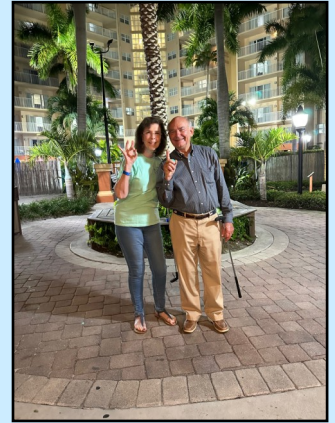
Oct. 20-22 - Bluffton Seafood & Art Festival

THE SPEAKER FOR THIS MONTH
(MONDAY, MAY 8)

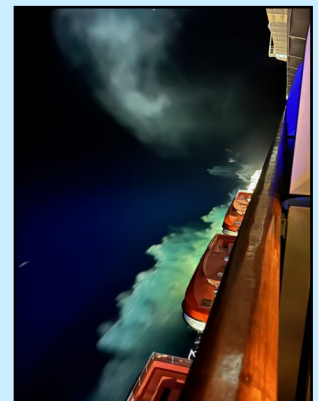
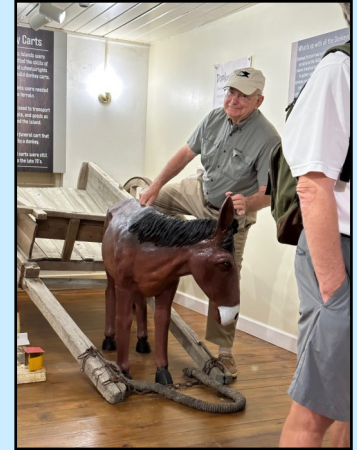


Dr. Clark Alexander, Director & Professor of the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography, will speak on earthquakes and tsunamis.

COMMODORE, Linda Howard (continued)



COMMODORE, Linda Howard (continued)



CRUISE CHAIR, Larry Sprague

The Memorial Day cruise will be May 27th to May 30th to the south end of Wassaw Island. We generally anchor near the DNR dock. Since it is a three-day weekend, many people arrive Saturday afternoon and leave Monday morning. Bring beach chairs and maybe a small table to be used for gatherings on the dock.

We had a very nice cruise to Daufuskie Island this month. My crew consisted of Audrey and David Debien. Ours was the only boat to make the trip overnight, although we did see Pam and Steve Allen in their motorboat as we chugged toward the Elba Island cut. Saturday was a clear, warm day, with the sun deceptively mild on the skin. Later that evening, we discovered that all of the spots that were not covered with clothing or sunscreen were a nice shade of red. When we arrived around 4:30 PM, there was a berth long enough to accommodate us, so we did not have to anchor out.

The following morning brought forth another beautiful spring day. We had breakfast and then found the golf cart that had been left for us. Both Audrey and I had been on Daufuskie before, but this was David's first time. The first stop was at the Iron Fish Gallery. The artist does various sea creatures

in iron which he then paints. It is an open air gallery, and if you see a work that you like, just take it home and leave your contact information in the book.



After several more stops around the island, we left in the mid-afternoon. Instead of returning to Savannah, we headed to Hilton Head's Palmetto Bay Marina where I was going to have my boat hauled out. As we swung northeast heading down the Cooper River, I raised the main and jib, shut off the engine, and began to let nature push us along.

By the time we reached Calibogue Sound, the wind was just forward of the beam at 10 to 15 knots. David had the helm. *Second Wind* heeled over. Audrey got nervous. This was her first time on a sailboat. I assured her that the weight of our keel would not allow the boat to turn over. As successive cat's paws of wind crept across the sound and hit us without turning us over, Audrey became more and more comfortable with the boat's natural heel. When we reached the far side of the sound, the sails were furled and once more the engine was brought to life to carry us the rest of the way to our destination.

Palmetto Bay Marina is a great place with lots of stores and restaurants within walking distance. While waiting on our ride, we had dinner and watched the end of the Heritage golf tournament which was decided in a playoff. Then back to Savannah as the sun set to end another wonderful weekend on the water.



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.



COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR, Linda Howard

I have a prelude to my article this month...I didn't write it. I know, shame on me. But I didn't feel like I could improve on this article by Josephine Johnson of the Savannah Morning News.

Ready for an easy-to-get-to, super affordable adventure practically in your own backyard? An excursion that's dog friendly, safe and great for kids? Skidaway Island State Park is a perfect one-day family get-away and an ideal destination for squeezing in some solo nature time within your day.

I know, long-time locals may be rolling their eyes because everyone knows about Skidaway Island State Park, right? Not necessarily. And here's how I know not everyone knows. When I'm not writing and adventuring, I'm a musician performing downtown. As demographics shift, I'm increasingly meeting people who've recently moved here and ask what I enjoy doing in Savannah. And I'm surprised by how few are familiar with the park.

So, grab your binoculars — water bottle, too — and put on your walking shoes because we're going to get reacquainted with a nearby natural treasure that's been in our backyard since 1975.

When I visit Skidaway I have a routine — park at the visitor's center and check in with the rangers to see what kinds of birds and wildlife they've seen on the trails. Interpretive ranger, Molly Canady, is my go-to. An all-around naturalist with a fondness for birds, she always has an eye on the feeders around the center as indication of what species are likely in the park.

“Right now I'm seeing a lot of yellow-rumped warblers, nuthatches and blue-

birds,” confirmed Canady. “The yellow-rumped warblers are interesting because they're only here during winter eating the wax myrtle berries. In a few weeks they'll head back north to their breeding grounds. Here's a fun fact: yellow-rumped warblers are the only warbler able to digest the wax around the myrtle berries.”

And with that, I head out the back doors of the park's new 6,200 sq. ft. facility, a much-needed renovation that was a long time coming. Completed in late 2021, the space is well lit from panels of large windows that provide great observation of the center's array of bird feeders. It has a spacious gift shop, event area and new reptile displays.

I start out on the Sandpiper Trail then hook into the Avian Loop. The terrain is flat and easy to walk — portions of these trails together are about a mile — and go through salt flats, tidal creeks and maritime forest. Because the sky is so open here, it's usually on this section where I see osprey and occasionally a pair of bald eagles.

Where the Avian Loop meets the Skidaway Narrows, there's a terrific cluster of live oaks and a picnic table by the water's edge. At low tide this spot is ideal for spotting fiddler crabs and shore birds like egrets, herons and ibises.

The Connector Trail links the Avian Loop to the Big Ferry Trail a mile away on the other side of the park. This trail section is mostly dense Chinese Tallow, an invasive that has run rough shod in this part of the park. It's a fast-growing tree that will completely change an ecosystem. Because it grows quickly and densely, this species alters light availability, choking out na-

tive plants and destroying food sources for animals. Park officials and rangers are working diligently to eradicate this invasive completely from the park.

At the junction of the Big Ferry Trail, I turn left and head towards the observation tower. I've always wondered about this wooden structure because it seems strangely disconnected from the natural landscape it's built on.

I asked Molly if it were once something else, or if it has always been just an observation platform.

“It's always been for observing,” intoned Canady. “The tower gives a different perspective of the landscape, so visitors can see the topography. An added 25-feet of elevation helps people understand how big the marsh is.”

My favorite part of the Big Ferry Trail is the shell midden where a cluster of cedar trees now grows. These middens fascinate me because they offer a glimpse into the lives of indigenous people who lived here as much as 4,000 years ago. In the Southeast U.S., archeologists are fairly certain people lived here year-round and migrated very little because the food sources were of such high quality. Researchers also assert these shell remains served as places integral to daily life as well as sacred ceremony.

I make my way around the Earthworks loop then head back to complete the three-mile Big Ferry Loop. By the time I return to the visitor's center, I've been on the trails about three hours and have walked just shy of six miles. And during that time, encountered fewer than 10 people.

COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR, Linda Howard

Molly greets me at the center and reminds me that the park offers lots of things to do for kids, families, seniors and people like me.

“You know, we have a variety of programs every month,” she said with a gleam in her eye. “We offer guided hikes, bird and nature walks, archery workshops, crafts and special community events throughout the year.”

It only costs \$5 per car per day or \$50 for an annual pass to visit Skidaway Island State Park. To learn more about their monthly programming, check out their website: <https://gastateparks.smugmug.com/Skidaway-Island-State-Park/>



VICE COMMODORE, Tom Howard

OUR SPEAKER FOR APRIL

Well, I missed the last meeting because we were on the *Regal Princess* voyage to the Caribbean. Sorry I missed hearing David Jones from the Pin Point museum, but I was told by a couple of members that he was well-received by a good attendance of members.



OUR SPEAKER FOR MAY

In our next meeting on May 8, we will hear from Dr. Clark Alexander, Director & Professor of the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography. He has a BA in Geology, a BS in Oceanography, an MS in Marine Geology, and a PhD in Marine Sedimentology. Last time he spoke with us about tides and barrier islands. He was so interesting that we wanted him to come back to speak on earthquakes and tsunamis.

This should be very interesting for our low-lying areas. We look forward to his coming.



SECRETARY, Audrey Debien

The Committee Boat!

Our good friends, Judy and Tim Grisette, invited us to join them on the Committee Boat for the St. Patrick's Day Regatta. We didn't know what to expect, but they assured us that it would be great fun and the BEST place to be for the Regatta!

Saturday morning we met at their boat, *Wait for Me*. She is a very comfortable Mainship cabin cruiser. New members, Pam and Steve Allen, were also on the committee boat team. The race officials, Joleen and Eric Rasmussen, were our leaders for the race.

Judy and Tim brought provisions for the weekend. There was hot coffee, snacks, sandwiches, cookies, soda, beer, and wine! Jolene and Eric brought an interesting variety of equipment, rule books, and flags! There were lots of flags!

When all was loaded on the boat, we set out for the starting location on the Wilmington River with steaming cups of coffee in hand! It was a beautiful warm morning. Another boat named *TugIt* joined us to help place a marker in the river for the start/finish line.

We anchored at the selected location, and then the sailboats started to arrive. Joleen showed us how to greet them and check them in. It was great fun to see our Geechee friends, Angela, Dawson, and Larry on their boats! There was an interesting variety of sailboats!

There were three classes of boats in three separate races. Each class had a separate start. Altogether there would be nine starts. For each start, everyone on the committee boat had an assignment. Specific flags had to be displayed at different times so that the racers knew when to prepare for their start. It was exciting to watch so many sailboats move around to position for the best start. This was

a new experience for Steve, Pam, Dave and me. Joleen and Eric did a great job of giving instructions. Judy and Tim have done this for many years. Their experience and guidance was terrific!

Once the racers were on their way for the first race of the day, it was lunch time! We settled down to relax, eat, and enjoy each other's company.

After lunch, we watched for the returning racers. They were a beautiful sight to see, under sail racing back to us! Pam and I recorded sail numbers and boat names as they came across the finish line.

When all had crossed the line, Joleen rallied us to send off the second race! Things got really exciting as all the boats moved around us and each other getting in the best possible position! I thought there would be a collision at one point! Some of the sailboats also came very close to the committee boat!

After the second race was off, the weather picked up with strong winds and dark clouds. We couldn't help but wonder how the sailors were doing out there! Two or three boats radioed to report that they were retiring from the race due to equipment issues. There must have been some excitement out on the water! We were safe and secure on the committee boat! The race finished and the first class of the third race started! Then someone checked the weather radar and possible thunderstorms were noted. A decision was quickly made to cancel the last two classes of the third race.

The day ended well with the racers speeding over the finish line! The weather held off and we all stayed dry and safe! Wine was poured as we headed back to the dock and then

to the awards party!

The next day, we learned about the pursuit race! This is a handicapped race with all the sailboats starting at different times depending on their speed rating. The slowest boats started first and the fastest boats started last. The weather was pleasant and we continued to enjoy the regatta and each other's company.

I learned a lot about sailing and racing! Most of all, I came to appreciate that the committee boat is a very important part of the regatta. It is also definitely the best place to observe the races! Thank you to Tim and Judy for inviting us!



RACE CHAIR, Angela Margolit

I still have a couple regatta shirts left over. If we don't sell them, we'll continue to give them to our monthly speakers!

The long-sleeve MEDIUM shirts sell for \$25 each.

Hats come in lime green, red, or blue, and are \$15. There isn't a year displayed on them.

Upcoming Area Regattas:

May 6-7: Windmill Harbour DDS & A Harbor 20, One Design fleets

DDS & A stands for Domenica De Sole & Associates. To register, please go to: [Windmill Harbour and DDS&A Cup : South Carolina Yacht Club \(regattanetwork.com\)](http://Windmill Harbour and DDS&A Cup : South Carolina Yacht Club (regattanetwork.com))

I cannot race that weekend as I'll be teaching an ASA 101 class here in Savannah, but I am helping transport the J/24s back to the Landings on

May 8th.

May 20-21: Wassaw Cup

This is the first PHRF regatta of the year sponsored by the Savannah Yacht Club.

Great schedule:

Saturday, May 20th, 2023

0800 – 0955 – On Site Registration available at SYC Dock House (coffee & donuts)

0955 – Registration closes,

1000 – Skipper's meeting

1200 – Scheduled Warning signal for first class

1730 – After-race Reception and Dinner

Sunday, May 21st, 2023

1030 – Warning signal first

class; other races to follow (No races to start after 1430)

Awards ceremony will be held in the SYC Dock House following the conclusion of all races.

To register, please go to: [2023 Wassaw Cup Regatta : Savannah Yacht Club \(regattanetwork.com\)](http://2023 Wassaw Cup Regatta : Savannah Yacht Club (regattanetwork.com))



TREASURER, Dawson Long

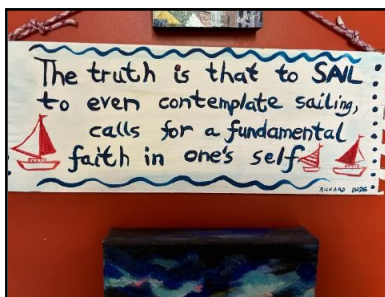
A local artist who is family to me painted a sailboat with the quote "it takes great faith to sail."

It caused me to ponder how our sailing approach is our life approach. Do we take the time to make the many adjustments to the shape of the sail? Do we make the adjustment once?

Do we respond the same way to life's challenges? Or do we study the boat and the wind? We are the vessel, and the Holy Spirit is the wind. If we are to be well purposed in life, we must tune the vessel which is our spirit. That gives us the opportunity to point high into the wind to get to our destination effectively. Then we may navigate through life as an effective vessel for our Maker.

Study the wind and Spirit, employ the wind, and embody the joy of pointing high into the wind to fulfill your God-given purpose. I like the words of a pastor quoted below:

"So when the winds of life begin to blow against you and try to force you off your course, steer yourself back on course by setting strong sails of an unwavering faith, a confident attitude, a thankful spirit, and a victorious mind set. Always remember, the direction of your life is not determined by the direction of the winds in your life. The direction of your life is determined by how you set your sails." *(The Rev. Jerome Barber is pastor of Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Temple in Hampton. He can be reached at jeromebarber@smzbt.org.)*



The Account balances are stable with \$4,111.69 in the checking. The Vanguard fund is at \$17,526.16.



Nobody told me that when you get a husband the ears are sold separately.

SOCIAL CHAIR, Mary Ellen Sprague

For the next two months I will be focusing on helping the Cruising Chairman. I will coordinate a party for our more landlubber folks in July or August. If you have any ideas or have a great venue, please let me know. Change of Watch will be November 11th at the Savannah Country Club. Please mark your calendars.

Some interesting terms from our nautical past:

Above Board: on or above the deck, in plain view, not hiding anything.

Abyss: that volume of ocean that is profoundly deep or lying below 300 fathoms (1 fathom = 6 feet).

Overwhelmed: capsized or foundering.

Jumbo: the larger of the headsails.

Know the Ropes: being familiar with the miles of cordage & ropes involved in running a ship.

Loose Cannon: An unsecured can-

non on a ship weighing thousands of pounds that could crush anyone & anything in its path, and possibly even break a hole in the hull, thus endangering the seaworthiness of a ship.

Never ever: a person who has never ever done something. A neophyte, rooky, etc.

Outward Bound: to leave the safety of port heading for the open sea.

Pipe down: A signal on the boson's pipe to signal the end of the day, requiring lights to be extinguished and silence from the crew.

Scuttlebutt: A barrel with a hole in the top end, used to hold fresh water that sailors would drink from - and the conversation and rumors heard around the scuttlebutt.



That tinfoil on Girl Scout cookies sure is loud at night.

When I was a kid, bedtime was 9 pm. I couldn't wait to be a grownup so I could go to bed anytime I wanted. Turns out that is 9 pm.

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR, Nick Robertson

Geechee Profile:



Pam and Steve Allen

Longtime local boaters Pam and Steve Allen aren't letting an outburst of nature's fury dissuade their plans to cruise toward new horizons together. After lightning struck their newly acquired Island Packet 37 last year, they decided to take on the arduous process of having it refitted from masthead to keel tip — and they joined the Geechee Sailing Club to

stay active in Savannah's nautical scene while their vessel undergoes extensive repairs in the boatyard.

Now married for 26 years, Pam and Steve live in a beautiful waterfront home they built with historic Low-Country style on Isle of Hope, where both of them grew up and first became acquainted as schoolchildren.

"Steve and I met in sixth grade at Isle of Hope Elementary School, and we went through junior high and high school together," Pam says, adding that they both took youth sailing lessons at the Savannah Yacht Club. "We might even have been in the same sailing class, but don't remember."

While they both were instilled with a love of sailing from a young age, Steve immersed himself in the pursuit of fair winds more fully, and well into adulthood.

"From the time I was 10 or 11 years old I was sailing on a Sunfish. All through high school I would take the Sunfish and sail it down the river," Steve says. In his 20s, he bought a Catalina 27 and later upgraded to a Hunter 30.

However, as his career required frequent travel to multiple locations inland, Steve gave up sailing to instead pilot small aircraft for some three decades. But in recent years, as he was flying less for business and more for pleasure, Steve felt it was time to get back into boating.

"I got to the point that I said, 'You know, I'm just not flying that much' to be, I felt, safe. So I decided to get out of flying, and said, 'Hmm, I'll go back to sailing,'" Steve says. At first he and Pam purchased another Sunfish to regain their sailing skills on that familiar tiny craft, but before long Steve decided to buy a sail-

boat capable of long-haul cruising — a 1996 37-foot Island Packet, which was a little intimidating for Pam.



“The Sunfish was the largest, the longest boat I’d ever sailed until Steve bought this one,” Pam says, though she was excited by the prospect of joining her husband on multi-day offshore voyages. After acquiring the Island Packet in early spring of 2022, the couple decided to prepare for their new adventures by going back to school together.

“Pam and I went up to the Maryland School of Sailing so I could knock some rust off of what I’d done, and so she could also be taught more advanced sailing. I did not want to be the one responsible for teaching her how to sail. I’ve heard some stories about couples, and how that went when the husband’s trying to teach the wife how to sail...” Steve says with a chuckle.

Thankfully, they both thoroughly enjoyed their lessons aboard the school’s 32-foot Island Packets amid Maryland’s storied coastal waters.

“I loved it. I really did. And the Chesapeake Bay is huge. ... You feel like you might be out on the ocean, it’s that big,” Pam says, recalling a time during their two weeks of lessons when the winds were blowing close to 20 knots. “One day in particular it was really windy and gusty and we had on foul-weather gear and we were going fast, and I just loved it.”

This was a huge relief for Steve, who longs to undertake extended blue-water

excursions with Pam through nature’s often-unpleasant conditions.

“It was misty, rainy, it was kind of chilly. And when we were coming back, I asked Pam what her favorite time was, and she said that was the day she really enjoyed the most, and I said, ‘All right!’ That’s what I wanted to hear,” Steve says.

And so the Allens returned to Isle of Hope, where they enjoyed a few practice outings aboard their new boat, before nature administered a different test of their dedication to sailing in the form of a lightning storm passing through last July.

“I was in the kitchen, and heard a huge, huge thunderclap, it was one of those rolling thunders that just kept rolling and rolling, and I said, ‘Wow, one of the neighbors’ trees really got hit,’” Steve says... but a trip to his dock revealed that it wasn’t a tree that was struck.

“I went down to the boat after the storm went by, and I usually had fans going in the boat to move the air around — the boat was silent. I looked at the LEDs on some of the instruments that were supposedly on; they weren’t lit. So I scratched my head, got up on deck, and found pieces and parts of the masthead lights laying on the foredeck,” Steve recalls, realizing at this moment that his mast had been hit by that fateful lightning bolt. “That’s one of those ‘Oh, shoots.’”

While the boat was spared any structural damage, all of its electrical equipment was fried, and the sails were also considered a total loss. However, although renovation work continues to this day, the vast majority of repairs have been paid for by the Allens’ insurance coverage, which the couple considers a blessing.

“We’ve gotten totally new instruments and wiring,” Pam says with a look on the bright side, and as

the overhaul carries on she and Steve enjoy planning sailing trips up and down the Eastern Seaboard after they finally get their boat back. They’ll also be renaming the vessel when it begins its new life, as *Sea LASS* — the same name Steve’s father had for his boat, with LASS being an acronym containing each of his children’s first initials.

In the meantime, a chance encounter that Pam had with former colleague (and current Geechee Commodore) Linda Howard led to the Allens joining the Geechees late in 2022, and already they’ve been active members in the months that followed, serving at the club’s booth during February’s Savannah Boat Show and volunteering aboard the Race Committee boat for the St. Patrick’s Day Regatta; see the Secretary’s column in this *Rhumb Line* edition for more details.

And while the Allens have repeatedly been told that the *Sea LASS* would be ready to sail again “in a week or two,” they remain optimistic that their vessel will at last be shipshape in time to join some of this summer’s Geechee group cruises to regional destinations like Daufuskie Island and Beaufort.

“They’ll have the boat ready for me for hurricane season,” Steve quips.



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:

R O D E C R _ _ _ _ _

S S D N R U E

R W H O T

G T H I F

Answer to April's Scramble: V A C H

CHILD

VANITY

HORSE

MARSH

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.

- (Me) Linda Howard. Cancelled back surgery for June 7. Working with the doctor to pinpoint specific cause of pain.

2023 OFFICERS

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