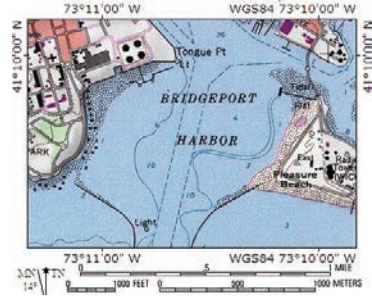




BRIDGEPORT HARBOR COMMISSION



Volume 1, Issue 1

Newsletter

Summer 2016

Message from the Harbormaster

Recreational boating continues to flourish across the nation. It is a pastime that offers pleasure, sport, fun, and relaxation. Few places anywhere offer the tranquility or the peaceful atmosphere that exists on Black Rock Harbor.

In our ongoing quest to provide an exceptional recreational opportunity for our boaters and follow the Bridgeport Harbor Commission's "Harbor Management Plan", we are very pleased that we are able to continually make boating a wonderful experience in Bridgeport.

Providing a pump out service (VHF Channel 9) in both Black Rock Harbor, Johnson's Creek and the Bridgeport Harbor area goes a long way toward our goal of establishing and maintaining an eco-friendly environment that all of us on our waters can be proud of.

In Black Rock Harbor, there are almost 1000 vessels in marinas, yacht clubs, moorings, including guest vessels. A large amount of these vessel owners are from outside of Bridgeport.

There are commercial tug and barge activities going on constantly. We have our Aquaculture Research Vessel making daily trips. Launch boats working all day long. We also have the famous Middlebank II Deep Sea Party Fishing Boat making trips daily along with Captain's Cove Scenic Cruises.

With all this action going on, I am going to make a good effort to have a noticeable presence of enforcement vessels patrolling this area. The Harbor Division of the Police Department is charged with the responsibility to ensure compliance with safe boating "rules-of-the-road" while enforcing existing statutes and by-laws, all for the safety of those using the harbor.

For our visitors, our channel is a narrow channel. In some areas we barely have enough room for 2 way traffic. As you get deeper into the harbor the first building on your left is called Port Five. At this point the channel gets even narrower.

This message is for all boaters. The gasoline pump at Fayerweather Yacht Club is usually filling up boats all day long. The next large marina is Captain's Cove. These two areas are a "NO WAKE" area. Remember, you are responsible for your wake. I have seen gasoline shoot up out of a vessel's gas tank spout and splash all over the dock and inside the vessel being gassed. This is because of a boater not abiding by the no wake law. Guess who paid for the damages?



As we all know, every Captain should have a boat safety card. What is amazing is how much people forget from the class. Every season we see many children still sitting on a vessel's bow dangling their feet while under way. We actually stopped several personal watercrafts while underway because children were sitting on the front hood. There are still children walking the docks without a PFD. There are always PFDs still in plastic, brand new, stored down below in cubbies instead of being fitted to each person and being easily accessible. There are many captains that never look back to see how large of a wake they are making and not realizing the havoc they are creating to other vessels.

Communication – I would like you to email me of anyone you see breaking the law in our harbors. I will need the make and model of the vessel and the CT Numbers. I will pass it along to the Marine Police.

Please visit the Harbormaster's web page for a huge amount of information.

Good luck to all captains on a safe and pleasant 2016 boating season,

Tony Palumbo
harbor.master@bridgeportct.gov

What's the CHMA?

Peter Holecz - Bridgeport Harbor Commission Chairman

The Connecticut Harbor Management Association (CHMA) is an advocate organization that was formed in 1995 to serve as a vehicle for recommending and working to bring about changes to processes and statutes on behalf of the harbor and waterfront communities along Connecticut's shorelines. The association is comprised of representatives from cities and towns within our state that have approved harbor management plans, as well as individual associate members generally possessing a water-related or shoreline interest. CHMA's board of directors consists of seven members and two alternate members with membership spread out among the municipalities of the CHMA. Its officers are a chairman, vice-chairman, treasurer and secretary. An annual agenda of priority issues is formulated by the board, put into a package, and presented to State leadership for consideration by the executive and representative branches of Connecticut. Generally items identified are those of commonality within the membership, but not always exclusively. Among issues proposed in the past were funding for harbor management, local harbor commission approval of certificate of permissions, requirements of notification by applicants for OLISP permits to the local harbor commissions, and local recommendations be binding upon State officials when making regulatory decisions. Changes were also recommended by the CHMA in the dredge application process in support of all dredging projects in the state. The CHMA has also been a staunch proponent of changes to Connecticut State General Statutes as they relate to harbormasters and for the establishment of an updated harbormasters training program to include necessary funding to provide the classes. This effort is continuing this year with an existing house bill under consideration. The CHMA homepage ctharbormanagement.org contains a wealth of information regarding contact information for its membership as well as links to state statutes, harbor masters, boating laws and Department of Energy and Environmental Protection information and application forms. Links to the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Corps of Engineers, and other maritime and environmental groups are also contained within.



Frostbite Series Sailing

Carrie Picardi - Bridgeport Harbor Commission

What do our avid sailors do in the winter? If your answer is, they wish for summer to arrive while working on building a ship in a bottle, you would be really off-course! The answer is, they participate in winter sail racing, otherwise known as Frostbite Series Sailing!

The frostbite racing season runs from approximately December/January through April, leading right into the regular spring/summer racing season. The races take place on Sunday afternoons, so if you are in the vicinity of Black Rock Harbor at this time, you will probably catch a glimpse of brave Frostbiters defying the cold and icy conditions in competition. During each racing afternoon, there may be anywhere from 3-6 races that vary in length from 1/8 of a mile to a mile. Courses are either windward/leeward or triangle, depending on wind speed and conditions; they are basically the same as the summer race courses but on a smaller scale. As with the regular racing season, there is always a chase boat and a race committee boat monitoring the course conditions, boat performance, and safety.

How did the Frostbite Series get started?

This racing series originated in 1966, with the Fayerweather dinks. These one-person sailboats can still be seen racing on any given Sunday afternoon, though they are not part of the official competitive lineup and haven't scored since 2003. The sailors remain close to Fayerweather Yacht Club and are out there for fun and friendly competition. Terry Roach is one of the original dinks sailors, and Ed Rickard and Bob Kubis continue to participate, with Bob as the head of Fayerweather dinks. The dinks have a jib and a main, but no spinnaker, and are not self-tacking. Historically the dinks did not venture far from the FYC area, as the sailors wore regular clothes (often jeans) to race in our frigid New England winter conditions.

Following the use of the dinks to race, the series expanded in the 1990's to include Lasers in addition to the dinks. Because the sailors on the Lasers almost inevitably would find themselves in the water, wetsuits were required. As with the dinks, these one-person sailboats do not have a spinnaker; they just have a main, similar to a Sunfish. While the Laser racing is no longer part of the Frostbite Series lineup, several sailors were instrumental in its start-up and success, including Pat Strang, Ed Rickard, Tim Anto, and Lincoln Schoenberger. The Lasers were taken a bit further out than the dinks, outside the immediate FYC area. However, there was no official race committee boat; a hut would be towed out about a quarter-mile or so to keep the race committee warm and house supplies.

Today, Ideal 18's are used for the main scorekeeping lineup for the Frostbite Series and were implemented in the mid-2000's, through the efforts of Mike Andre, Philip Gavey, and Mike Rourke. The Ideal 18 fleet is owned by the Black Rock Yacht Club, and was originally used in the summer only, before the idea of a winter racing partnership between BRYC and FYC was initiated. The Ideal 18's are two-person sailboats, have a jib, main, and spinnaker, and are self-tacking. Spinnaker use is optional, depending on weather conditions. Wetsuits are not required because the Ideal 18's are quite stable and the odds of falling in the water are remote, though life jackets are required for every sailor. During the course of racing on the Ideals, the sailors will switch positions for each race, giving both the opportunity to drive. With scoring, the race committee records the times of the teams that were racing that day and best overall are ranked. The teams are eliminated as the series progresses, and the top five teams participate in the championships in April.

Speaking from experience, the Frostbite Series is challenging and sometimes terrifying(!), but also exhilarating and fun. It gives recreational and competitive sailors (and non-boat owners like me) the chance to get out on the water in the season typically billed as "off-season".

Frostbite Series Sailing

photos by David Henry and Keith Bently



BRYC/FYC Ideal 18 Fleet racing off of Fayerweather Light House, Seaside Park, Bridgeport, CT.

Black Rock Harbor Mooring Set-Up Guide

Mike Andre - Bridgeport Harbor Commission

When set up properly, the Black Rock Harbor anchorage is as safe as a dockside slip, and often less wearing on the boat. In fact, in a storm, moorings should be preferable. A mooring is generally used where few slips exist either because of availability or because of large tidal changes.

There is more than one way to set a mooring right, and an infinite number of ways to do it wrong. It is a permanent installation that has to withstand high winds, tidal surges and shifting currents day after day. Although there is a lot of new mooring technology, let's stick with a traditional setup that serves so many boaters in Black Rock Harbor. In most places along Long Island Sound, due to mainly flat sea bottoms in our harbors, single mushroom anchors are recommended.

The goal is simple, to keep your boat where it is moored safely. The 'mushroom' sinks into the mud or sand and acts like a huge suction cup. It tilts sideways on the harbor bed, attached by its stem-like shank to a chain, and then to a buoy at the surface of the water. At the surface, the mooring setup consists of a mooring line (usually called a mooring pendant or mooring pennant) which goes from a strong bow deck cleat to your mooring buoy which will have a shackled attachment point. This line should have a professionally spliced eye to attach to the cleat, mandatory chafe gear secured to the line where it goes through the chock at the bow of the boat, and a hot dipped galvanized or stainless steel thimble, again professionally spliced to attach to the chain at the mooring buoy. A short length of chain which goes through a center hole in the mooring buoy is shackled to the mooring line at the top end, and shackled to a swivel at the bottom end.

The mooring buoy used must have enough buoyancy to hold the ground tackle (the chain below it in the water which leads to the mooring anchor) up and still float reliably and visibly at the surface of the water. The swivel should be the strongest link in the chain assembly, and is a very important element to the mooring 'set-up'. Although some boaters don't see the need for them, I have seen enough tangled or damaged mooring lines to know they should be a necessity. Shackled to the swivel is the chain which should be equal in length to the depth of the water at the mooring site at high tide. Shackled to this chain is the heavy chain, which of course should be shackled to the 'mushroom' mooring anchor.

Weight: The rule of thumb for mooring anchor weight is 10 to 20 lbs. for every 100 lbs. of boat weight. Unless your boat is frequently exposed to rough conditions at your mooring, 10 lbs. of anchor per 100 lbs. of boat should prove to secure your vessel well.

Scope: The Coast Guard recommends that a boat carry enough scope (anchor line) to fit local conditions. The standard ratio is: the length of chain should be at least three times the depth of average high water where the boat is moored. If a boat sits in 20 feet of water, the scope from anchor to boat should be at least 60 feet. Depending on tidal surges or location, additional chain is recommended.

Remember, this is meant as a guide - varied conditions (depth, sea state, etc.) demand different needs. The mooring setup described here is not the only way to fashion a safe anchorage for your boat. Seek professional help if you have any questions. Inspect your mooring at least twice a year, especially in the spring. If there are severe storm warnings, put another pendant on your anchor line and add additional chafing gear.