

# The Bullship Log

Newsletter of the Rockford Yacht Club



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Meeting Location: Harlem Township Hall  
819 Melbourne Ave.  
Machesney Park, IL

## No meeting at the Township Hall this month



### **Social Event: Halloween Costume Party**

**When: Friday Oct. 31st - 7:00**

**Where: Walker residence - 4719 Manheim Rd.  
Rockford (SE of State & Alpine)**

**Phone: 815-226-0488**

**No elaborate costume needed - just a mask is fine. This will also be Shirley "Sam" Walker's retirement celebration.**

**Bring: something good to eat, perhaps a treat  
RYC will provide the drinks.**

"A sailor is an artist whose medium is the wind; a writer an artist whose medium is words. I am both of those." -Webb Chiles from *Storm Passage: Alone around Cape Horn*

What a great quote! I found it in my research for my parent's boat article. Webb Chiles set the singlehand solo record on that same model boat in 1976 [an Ericson 37 cutter]. If you go to his website, you can download the .pdf of the book for free. [www.inthepresentsea.com](http://www.inthepresentsea.com). It will be my next read -- it's pretty much a log, but he's an interesting writer and it's more about the experience than just a dry log. -M

"M" is Mark Swart, a Master Sergeant serving in Afghanistan whom I've been corresponding with. He has been sailing at Kentucky Lake since being stationed at nearby Ft. Campbell. Mark is looking forward to sailing his recently acquired Hunter 34 that he's yet to see in person. Due back in early June. We wish him well. - Allen

## Commodore's Corner

Hello All! The first full week of October has been really warm and it is just our luck that we took the boat out of the water on October 4th. Our sail down from Kenosha to Waukegan was very leisurely. The winds were SE at 5-10 with 1ft seas from the northeast which made for slow but very nice sailing. Ann and Preston Aylesworth helped us out, we sailed from Kenosha to Northpoint but had to motorsail the rest of the way to make it into harbor before dark. We had a very pleasant end of season sail, and are making plans for next year. This month is one of our social events months with a Halloween party at our home on the 31st. I hope everyone will wear a costume or mask. We are planning some tricks and treats - we look forward to see you all!

Evans Walker  
Commodore

Please note there are two pages of color sailing photos that accompany the email/online version of The Bullship Log.

## Adopt A Road Report

A road clean-up was held September 6th. In attendance were: Scott Foster, Harley Johnson, Eric Mueller, Joy and Dave Tarrant, Sam and Evans Walker, Ann and Preston Aylesworth. Joy was the recipient of the free breakfast that Sam gives away at the Main Rite after each road clean-up. We appreciate people taking (or making) the time to help on this task. We only had left six bags of trash after consolidating it. We had about a comparable number of bags of recyclables. We hope to get a fourth and final road clean-up scheduled before cold weather arrives. THANKS to all who participated.

Ann Aylesworth

## **RYC - ROCKFORD YACHT CLUB LAKE GENEVA / FONTANA 2008 SEPT.**

The last RYC / NWSA combined sail of the year was scheduled for Saturday, September 20, 2008 on Lake Geneva in Wisconsin. The weather forecast was for ideal temperature with a clear sky and light sailing winds. That said it all.

Trailing their boats to Fontana launch ramp were: RYC : Dick Spears MacGregor 25 ; Harley Johnson O' Day 23 ; Dick Sykora Windrider 17 ; Len DiCicco Rebel 16 : NWSA Joe Rittner MacGregor 25; Mark Holdwick Windrider 17; Leroy Dana Spindrift 24 : Paul Del Monaco Hobie 16 . There was a total of 8 boats and about 31 sailors. The rigging went smoothly, with assistance of willing crew members, with no major problems other than one missing tiller, which was rectified with a jury rigged tiller.

Crew joined the captains on the various boats which left the Fontana dock between 9:30 and 10:30 AM

The winds were very low and the sailing was slow with some motoring required to reach our Williams Bay destination at a reasonable time. Most of the boats rendezvoused at the Williams Bay dock for a pleasant lunch with good conversation, good lakefront scenery, and a refreshing onshore breeze. Five boats were rafted at the Williams Bay pier. Shelly Kohl NWSA joined us for lunch. After a pleasant lunch with good conversation at the picnic area along the waterfront, we set out for an afternoon sail. The wind picked up later which resulted in improved sailing. Some had to motor part of the way back to Fontana. On the way back to Fontana we met Jim and Shelly Kohl on their American 18. Shelly Kohl had her trusty water cannon, which had a 15 foot range, but the MacGregor 25 was 30 feet away and they could get no closer. Most of the boats docked back at Fontana at about 4:00PM others came in later. After the boats were unrigged with the help of many crewmembers, approximately 26 of us went to Gordy's restaurant for an early dinner with sea tales and general camaraderie. We were joined for dinner by NWSA Asayo Horibe and Conrad Bazylewski.

Sailing with Dick Spears were: RYC John Reh, George and Valerie Kittner, NWSA Bruce and Debbie Streeter.

With Harley Johnson were: RYC Marty and Linda O'Connor, Loren Mnsess, Kim Carlson and Bob Hachmeister.

With Dick Sykora was NWSA Brad Tilsch

With Len DiCicco were RYC Rick Hamilton and Minnie; and NWSA Dave Beakey

With Joe Rittner were NWSA John and Cindy Heisler, Mike Saavedra and Marsha ?.

With Mark Holdwick were NWSA Laura Felliceitti and Phil Goodwin

With Leroy Dana was NWSA Ted Ball

With Paul Del Monaco were NWSA Barbera McAlister and Ty Liles

A special thanks to the captains who brought their boats and made it possible for so many to enjoy a great day of RYC / NWSA sailing on Lake Geneva.

DICK SPEARS: RYC "Geneva Frostbite 2008" cruise coordinator

# Shadowfax Engine Change

By Kyle Anderson

Scott and I had been concerned about the amount of blow-by coming from the crankcase vent tube of Shadowfax's atomic 4 engine for the past few years. A fog of crankcase blow-by filled the cabin whenever we were motoring. The concern started a few years ago, while on a trip to Saugatuck. We were motoring across the lake; it was the middle of the night; we were in the middle of the lake; the fan was running; the lights were on. Suddenly everything died, engine, fan, lights. The power draw of everything being on had exceeded the output of our alternator and we had drained both batteries, but that's another story. A year or so after that lesson the engine died a few times due to dirt in one of the carburetor jets. That was the final straw; we finally had enough. We began talking seriously about getting a spare engine; rebuilding it over a winter and swapping it with the existing engine on a calm day over at the Kenosha yacht club's small crane.

In the fall of 2007, I told my son Jeff (living in Foxboro Mass.) about my frustration of using the internet to find a rebuildable engine. He called back a few minutes later with a good lead on an engine not far from his house for \$550. It sounded like a perfect match. I called and learned that it was in pretty good shape but he had a few people scheduled to look at it the next weekend. When I mentioned this to my son he said, "Offer him \$600 on the spot and see what he will say". I did. He accepted the offer. We had an engine. Jeff coordinated with the seller on a pick up date and I coordinated with Fed Ex for shipment. Jeff built a stout little box around it, loaded it into his van (350 pounds), and delivered it to his local Fed Ex depot. In Rockford the Fed Ex fork lift dropped it into my pickup. I lowered it into my basement shop on my newly built elevator / cellar door (also another story) and uncrated it. It looked to be in really good shape. Looks can be deceiving. Remember, this engine came from the east coast: salt water, corrosion, bad things.

I completely disassembled the engine for inspection. Following is a list of parts that required replacement:

\*Water side plate. The plate had rusted through. I made a new one out of stainless that included a mounting bracket for attaching the alternator adjustment arm.

\*Thermostat housing. The seal surface within the housing was completely rusted away. The cooling system on the atomic 4 engine includes a by-pass cooling loop. It is designed so that the thermostat seals off engine by-pass water flow if the engine gets hot. This forces all water flow through the engine for maximum cooling. To repair the housing, I bored a hole in the top of the housing and welded in a pipe. Then finish machined the end of the pipe to provide the required seal surface.

\*Exhaust manifold. Two finger sized holes had rusted through between the exhaust passage and the water jacket. I tried to weld repair these holes by cutting a 2"x8" access window in the side of the manifold, welding the holes and then replacing the window with a stainless plate. I guess I need more practice welding cast iron because the repaired manifold leaked badly. We decided to go to plan B which was to use the exhaust manifold from our old engine (fresh water). However, I did run the engine, with the leaky manifold, long enough to adjust the valves and re-torque the head. During those runs the leakage was so bad that water would run off my hand when held in the exhaust.

\*Alternator. Just as a precaution I dropped off the alternator at Stare Line generator repair (NE of the old national lock clock). The internal regulator was bad.

After disassembly and inspection, the necessary rebuild parts were purchased. The engine was overhauled over the winter of 2007/2008. The following major parts were replaced: cam, lifters (face was reground), valve springs, rings, main bearings, rod bearings, a gaskets set, freeze plugs, and miscellaneous fasteners.

The rebuilt engine was installed in the boat 7/1/08. Scott and I had to swap the speed reducer gear box from the old engine to the rebuilt engine on the side of the dock once we had both engines next to each other. We used a special 'C' shaped lifting device to clear the deck while lifting the engine. After everything was bolted up and before installation, we ran the rebuilt engine to check for leaks. Once we were satisfied we slid the rebuilt engine into place (with old manifold and speed reducer). Quite a bit of adjustment was needed on the motor mounts to get the prop shaft to line up.

After Scott and I finished with the engine swap it was late and Scott wanted to go to the club for dinner. Since I had brought my dinner with me, I suggested that I deliver the boat to our slip and eat my dinner there and Scott would drive his van over after his dinner and join me on the boat. I motored down the Kenosha channel and just before I got to the lake, the engine speed dropped from full speed to idle. I returned to the Yacht Club crane. I pulled the spark plugs. The first three plugs looked fine, but when I got to cylinder #4 it was very wet and when I glanced at the spark plug hole I saw water flowing up out of it. I found Scott and he suggested that either the head or the block

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were leaking and we agreed that it was easiest to change the head than the block. Scott pulled the old head off the old engine and I pulled the new head off of the rebuilt engine. As I was reinstalling the old head on the rebuilt engine, Scott noticed a hole, the size of a pea in the combustion chamber of No 4 cylinder. I hooked everything up, torqued down the head, and motored over to our slip.

Ah, but the trouble shooting saga had just begun:

The day after the engine swap I had scheduled a Boy Scout outing. It was a shake down sailing day to prepare us for a week long trip up the Wisconsin side of Lake Michigan. The new engine died three times that day. The first time it died, I was trouble shooting the electric circuit and thought that I detected an open circuit in the ballast resistor. I replaced it while on the water. The engine started and ran fine but died again a little while later. The electrical circuit seemed to be in good shape. I suspected that the coil was the culprit. Occasionally coil windings will open up when they get hot. I decided that if we sailed to the inlet of the harbor the coil would be cool enough to motor the short distance from there to our slip. The engine seemed to run well for about five minutes before dying. As luck would have it, the wind died about a mile from the inlet of the harbor. Although the distance to the harbor was farther than I had planned, I decided to motor in anyway. Sure enough, the engine died right outside the harbor. We were in a bit of a bad spot; approx. 50 feet from the harbor's stone breakwater. Fortunately, there wasn't any wind and the waves were minimal. As a safety precaution, we brought the anchor up on deck. I called the Boats US towing service. We have unlimited towing. The tow boat arrived in about 15 minutes. The operator was very helpful and cooperative.

On that first outing the engine oil looked milky (sign of water in the oil) and, once the engine warmed up, there was excessive steam coming from the exhaust. These two issues made me think that there may be more internal leaks. As it turned out the milky oil was a result of the water that had leaked past the #4 piston and into the sump during the leaking head episode. After changing the oil, it stayed clear. The fresh oil also solved the exhaust steaming problem.

A couple of days later (07/18/08) my wife, Colette, and I went out to the boat to continue trouble shooting the engine dying problem. I changed the coil and motored in the slip for a while. The engine died, and when it did Colette noticed that the engine didn't just shut off, as it would with an electrical failure, but kind of tailed off as it would if it were starved for fuel. I checked all possible sources for fuel blockage. Everything looked good. We went out and bought a new fuel pump (The new engine uses an electric fuel pump). That seemed to do the trick. So we went out on the lake and motored for about an hour. We were in the Kenosha channel when it died again. I called for a tow and was told that the tow boats were all busy and it would take a while. While waiting for the tow to arrive, I was able to get the engine running by sucking on the fuel pump outlet. I figured that some dirt had gotten into the pump's check valve and maybe it was flushed out. Once we got the boat back to the slip, and after I called to cancel the Boat US tow, I decided to change the fuel. Scott and I had been suspicious of our fuel. We never ran the tank very low and the resulting fuel has been in there for several years. At least with new fuel we would be eliminating a possible failure mode.

Ever since the engine swap, the bilge water had been getting oily. Upon studying the running engine, I found a little oil coming from the lower, water pump attach bolt. The oil was leaking past the bolt and through the split in the lock washer. I removed the lock washer and added a little permatex to the under-side of the bolt head. The leak stopped. Only time will tell if that was the only leak. At that point, I was confident that the boat was in good running order, ready for our scout outing.

During our scout outing, the engine ran fine, when called upon. We mostly sailed up to Racine, then Milwaukee and finally Port Washington. On our way home there wasn't much wind and so we were doing quite a bit of motoring. Sure enough, the engine died outside of Port Washington on 7/26/08. The lake was very calm and we had no where to go so I began to look for fuel blockage. I concluded that it had to be the big Racor filter / water separator. I was going to by pass the filter but decided to remove it for closer inspection. While taking it apart, blockage was discovered in one of the fuel ports. Once cleaned, reassembled, and installed, the engine started and has run fine ever since.

So the engine failures were not caused by: ballast resistor, ignition coil, fuel pump, dirt in the fuel pump, or old fuel, but dirt (paint chips) in the filter port.



<<< George “Turtle” Kittner, mate Valerie, and Heidi on their first Lake Mendota sail with their O’Day Daysailor 9.27.08

Leo and Judy Wehner about to set sail on a beautiful October afternoon at Lake Mendota on their Montego 20 “Free Wind.” >>>>



<<< Bill & Marty Siegworth’s O’Day 26 “Martha J” in the boat camping at Mendota County Park and below sailing near the Madison lake front.





A pretty sunrise from Marshall Park on Lake Mendota



<<< Geoff Soebring brings his Laser in close astern to Thebote to enjoy the smooth ride in our wake.

Right: For several hours on Saturday 10.11 - boats were flying through the air as 10 or 12 keel boats had their masts unstepped and then the boats themselves slung out of the water by a large crane and placed on their trailers. It all went fairly quickly and orderly. Downside, because of this coordinated effort, the entire ramp except one lane was taken by sailboats derigging getting ready for the pull. Glad we'd rigged and launched the night before. This apparently happens a couple times this time of year around Madison as boaters share the cost of having the crane come out. Most moored boats were out or coming out this weekend. But it was an awesome weekend to be sailing. Fall colors, upper 70 degrees, wind a plenty!

