



The **Masthead**

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2026 SUMMER CRUISING ADVENTURES

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A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMODORE

Spring is here, and with it comes the start of another boating season.

This time of year always feels like things are coming back to life. People are getting their boats ready to be back on the water, and we start seeing each other again more often.

We have already had a good start to the season. Our cruise meeting in early March laid out a full schedule of cruising activities for the year. The Spring Brunch on March 21 featured a great turnout, and it was nice to see the Ship's Store there with new items. Our Membership team is working on printed rosters, and our Race Captain and Vice Commodore are already planning what should be a great Masthead Race in mid-August.

For us, the club is really about the people. Whether it is out on the water or at our land events, that is what makes MCYC what it is. On that note, I would like to extend a warm welcome to our new members. And to those starting the season with a new-to-them boat, congratulations. There is nothing quite like that first spring on the water, and we are glad to be sharing it with you.

As we get going, I encourage everyone to come out when they can, join in on events, and stay connected. The more we show up, the better the club is for everyone. Our next official event is the Boatyard BBQ on May 3rd.

Finally, I want to take a moment to congratulate George Link on his election as Commodore of the Greater Huntington Boating Council (GHBC). Please join me in supporting George at the Meet the Commodores Night on May 14th at Northport Yacht Club, when the GHBC officers will be installed.

We have a good season ahead. I am looking forward to seeing you all out there.

JP Nel



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MCYC SUMMER 2026 CRUISING: SAILING ADVENTURES!

By James Robinson (*Genesis*), Fleet Cruise Captain

This season marks an exciting new chapter for our cruising club – one rooted in camaraderie, adventure and an intentional commitment to welcoming our newest members into the fold!

Over the years, we've built more than just a sailing calendar; we've built lasting friendships. We've shared countless sunsets, weathered unexpected squalls (SoNo), "zesty" seas and heavy fog (Newport to MV!), and created stories that are still retold at winter gatherings.

Now, as we look ahead, we do so with fresh energy (No More Snow!) and a renewed focus on ensuring that every new member feels immediately connected, supported and inspired to join in the adventure that defines our club.

This year's cruising schedule is especially meaningful because it was shaped directly by you! Through our recent member survey, you told us what you loved most, what you wanted more of, and where you hoped to explore next. The result is a calendar that blends our most cherished traditions with new destinations and experiences designed to spark curiosity and connection. From relaxed raft-ups and dockside socials to longer-destination cruises that invite exploration and discovery, every stop reflects the collective voice of our membership.



For our newest members, this season is designed as both an invitation and a launch point. Whether it's your first season cruising with us or your first time at the helm of your own boat, you'll find mentors, crew opportunities, piloting insight, shared provisioning tips, and plenty of all-encompassing, friendly guidance – as, and only if – you need it along the way. Our events intentionally create space for “meet and greet” moments, boat-to-boat visits, and informal dock walks – because the best part of cruising has always been the people alongside you! The spirit of support and shared adventure remains our compass, marked by a burgee we all share!

As we cast off into another remarkable season celebrating our country's 250th birthday, we do so confident that a little adventure still lives in all of us – in the early-morning departures, the spontaneous course changes, the laughter echoing across an anchorage, and the collective pride of making landfall together.

This year's destinations reflect our shared vision, and the journey ahead promises new memories as well as the continuation of a legacy built over many incredible seasons. Here's to welcoming new shipmates, honoring old traditions created by those before us, and maximizing every mile, and every second of the voyage ahead! Cheers!



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OF SAILS



The Cunninghams – And Andiamo – Join MCYC

By Karla Marrero (*Optimistic*),
Membership Chair

We're delighted to wish a warm "Welcome Aboard" to Masthead's newest members, Nina and Rich Cunningham. They own a 33-foot Beneteau named *Andiamo*, having traded up from a Marshall Sanderling Catboat that they kept in Amityville. The Cunninghams live in Dix Hills and keep their boat on a mooring at Gold Star.



You'll often find them out day-sailing during the week or racing around the buoys as part of the crew on *Trifecta*. They look forward to cruising with MCYC and seeing where the wind moves them. We, too, look forward to sharing good times, on land and on the water, with Nina and Rich!



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MCYC Kicks Off the Season with Our Annual Spring Brunch – In a Very “Caring” Way

By Stephen O’Reilly (Water Music), Vice Commodore

More than 40 MCYC members emerged from their winter hibernation to celebrate the start of the sailing season at our Annual Spring Brunch at Centerport Yacht Club on March 21.

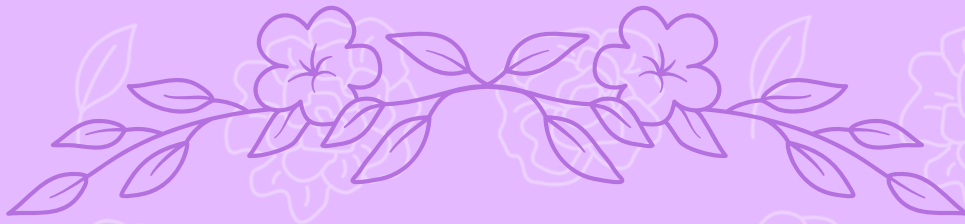


Like crocuses welcoming early spring, MCYC members gathered eagerly, looking forward to sunshine, warmer weather and days spent sailing. It was great to catch up with old friends and welcome new ones who share our love of sailing.



Centerport Yacht Club is a lovely place for sailors. The grounds are beautiful and the view of the harbor is spectacular. The staff could not have been nicer, and the food was excellent.





This Spring Brunch served as a kick-off to our sailing season, as well as the start of MCYC's efforts to raise money for Long Island Cares, the Harry Chapin Regional Food Bank. Our speaker at the Brunch was Kaylin Wasilchuk, Corporate Philanthropy Manager at Long Island Cares.



Kaylin explained that the organization is on a mission to feed more than 300,000 Long Islanders facing food insecurity. She mentioned that a mere \$10 donation to Long Island Cares would cover the cost of six meals! MCYC member generosity can make a real difference for our community in need.



Fundraising for Long Island Cares will be a Masthead focus throughout the season and will culminate with the Annual Masthead Race event on Sunday, August 16. Please consider making a donation (or two!) to this worthy cause. All MCYC contributions will be tallied through the summer.



Let's break some records!

MCYC Link to Long Island Cares:





My First Around Long Island Race

(Part 1 of 2)

By Dave Schwartz (*Endymion*), Past Commodore, Associate Member

It's something I had wanted to do for years. Somehow the schedule never seemed to work out. But that year, 1997, was different. We had initially planned to participate in the Nonsuch Regatta that was being hosted by the Royal Canadian Yacht Club in Toronto.

My nephew (along with friends) was going to sail the boat up the Hudson. We would have the mast pulled at Catskill and then motor into Lake Ontario via the Erie Canal, where the mast would be re-stepped and then a two-day sail to Toronto.

Vicki and I would drive up and partake in the racing and social events, and our son, with some assistance, would bring the boat back. Very convenient for us, but the plans fell through when my nephew couldn't get any help to bring the boat up, and my son was fully occupied with a summer job interning for the Nassau County Attorney.

Both of them, however, could arrange a long weekend to do the Around Long Island Race, and we had that block of open time. The entry fee and application followed. Now the planning began.

This race requires a great deal of preparation and organization. I contacted several other Nonsuch owners who had participated in prior ALIRs, gathering as much advice as possible. One, who had done the race the year before, damaged his boat when he collided in the middle of the night with a huge mooring buoy off Moriches that was placed to assist in the TWA flight 800 wreckage recovery. He advised stripping the boat down to its bare essentials, removing the anchor from the bow, and even rationing water to one quart per day per person to keep the boat as light as possible.

This was not the way I was going to race. I decided that we were going to be as comfortable as possible. We would have gourmet meals cooked aboard, comfortable accommodations and hot showers (if anyone wanted them). As we were not likely to ever need more than two of us standing watch at any time, I decided to limit the crew to a total of four. This would provide excellent sleeping accommodations for the off-watch in the two extra-wide quarter berths, while keeping the forward area open for dining and lounging, should the weather require that we spend time below.

Nick, who crewed with me for the Wednesday Night races, had signed on for the club cruise and was unavailable for this race, so in addition to the two Steves (son and nephew) I rounded out our foursome with Bud Clarity.

Bud was a very experienced open-water Nonsuch sailor, having single-handed his boat to Bermuda twice, and has made the journey to the Bahamas and the Caribbean. He is also experienced in abandoning ship. Caught out in a storm some 300 miles off the New Jersey coast on his way to Bermuda, Bud was knocked over by a wave in 30-foot seas and ended up with two feet of water below when the flooding sea entered through the unsecured companion-way hatch and the cockpit lockers. Having previously lost his sail overboard while lowering it, and finding his engine flooded and the boat foundering, he deployed his life raft, notified the Coast Guard and said adios to his vessel. Bud and his crew were rescued the next morning by a freighter diverted to his location by the Coast Guard.



So, we had our crew and I was working on my provisioning lists. I made lots of lists. I shored up my safety equipment with extra inflatable life vests, harnesses and tethers. I purchased long-distance flares and smoke. I rented a life raft. I reviewed all my spare parts, ensuring that I had spare bulbs for my running lights, a spare halyard, extra hose clamps, etc. I bought red sleeves for the fluorescent bulbs in the main cabin so as not to destroy the watch's night vision.

I prepared our watch schedule. We would spend four-on and four-off, changing one new crewmember every two hours. This way there would be an overlap in the cockpit, and we wouldn't have a totally new watch unaware of the situation. I did the meal planning and made several meals in advance. I sent the crew a list of what they should bring aboard: Their own sleeping bag, a hat and gloves. It can get cold standing watch in the ocean at 4 AM, even in July.

To be continued in our next issue...



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YOUR 2026 MCYC BOARD!

You've seen them at the marinas, boatyards, mooring fields and land events. And this illustrious group also meets monthly, in addition to through ongoing email communications, to help further the goals of making MCYC the amazing club we are!



Left to Right, front row, are: Margaret Ward (*Sophia*), Director; Mona Hecht (*Lion*), Director; Marilyn Gerber (*Late Harvest*), Editor, The Masthead; Kevin Merola (*Gratitude*), Treasurer; Kat Lee (*Risky Sunsets*), Secretary; JP Nel (*Nels' Belle*), Commodore; George Link (*Escape Plan*), Past Commodore; Stephen O'Reilly (*Water Music*), Vice Commodore; Vivian O'Reilly (*Water Music*), Rear Commodore; Ed Dicken (*Hat Trick*), Fleet Race Captain; Karla Marrero (*Optimistic*), Membership Chair; Karen Gatto (*Smiling Tiger*), Director. Back row: Mark Richter (*Sail La Vie*), Director; Curt Lee (*Risky Sunsets*), Director. Not pictured: James Robinson (*Genesis*), Fleet Cruise Captain; Russell Dunn (*Ripple and Half Step*), Director.

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By Barbara Dicken (*Hat Trick*), Sunshine Columnist

Ahoy, MCYC sailors! Welcome to my first column, where I'm pleased to be bringing you great news about fellow members, while we also rally around others with our support during challenging times.



Did someone say New Boat?!

Big congratulations to:

- Lois & Russell Dunn (*Ripple*) on their new, additional boat, *Half Step*, a Catalina 275 Sport.
- Mary & James Robinson (*Balance*) on *Genesis*, their new Jeanneau 54.
- Stephanie & John West (*Legacy*) on their new boat, *So Good, So Good*, a Catalina 35.



Also congrats and all the best to

Kevin Merola (*Gratitude*) on his new home in Florida!



Sending wishes for fair winds and following seas to:

- Dan Martin (*Whirlaway*)
- Harvey Stern (*Daddio*)
- Dave Tuck (*Glory*)

Thank you to those of you who have let us know what's going on. We love to celebrate and support our members, so we want to hear your happy and not-so-happy news, as well as what you've learned about others. (Note: If you want to share news about someone else, I'll check with them before publishing anything.) Please send your updates to sunshine@mastheadcoveyc.org.



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