



Gold Standard Achieved!

Northern Breezes has achieved the Gold Standard for safety. All our boats meet safety standards and are inspected by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary (all boats on Lake Superior and Lake Michigan). Either the U.S. Power Squadron or the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary inspects boats on our inland lake locations of Lake Minnetonka, White Bear Lake, Medicine Lake, Leech Lake and Pewaukee Lake.



Courtney Kraft lazing out on the Catamaran, *Abelene*. She knows how to put vacation in her trip. Michele Pufahl at the helm of 50 footer and Harris' Place on Jost Van Dyke.

Caribbean Gone Wild!

Last year was our biggest presence in the Caribbean ever! We saw more Catamaran sailors, more boats booked for graduates and more folks doing the Spanish Virgins offshore Advanced Coastal Cruising. We've decided not to repeat the Spanish Virgins due to large numbers of powerboats and jet skis. Unfortunately, that is a quick way to spoil a great destination.

So for 2007, we changed to a Tortola, St. Croix, St. Maarten, Tortola itinerary. This has been very popular. Before the first of December we added a fourth week on our Brand New 50.4 foot Beneteau Cyclades, *Pasaje*. We still have a few vacancies in the Caribbean. Call or check the website.

The Weather Window

Many of you have heard me and other sailing instructors repeat the obvious—"Everything is weather dependent." At the end of the season, we were planning to move *Aerie*, our Islander 36, to Spirit Lake Marina in Duluth. This cuts off an hour and a half each way for DIY (Do it yourself) projects. We are finishing a new paint job on the deck and cockpit and several other projects.

Anyway, we had been hammered by weather the first two weeks of October when we were available. I'm watching the weather on Thursday and thought I saw a narrow window on Friday and early Saturday. I picked-up the phone and called, Dave Peters, a bareboat graduate who had particularly impressed me

"Everything is weather dependent."

with his seamanship skills. Dave was available and left Oconto, Wisconsin almost immediately. We met at Spirit Lake and left a car before heading to Bayfield. We got to Pike's Bay about 2030 and proceeded to get the boat ready with jack lines, life raft, general securing for sea and also a thermos of chili and a thermos of coffee. It was 2355 when we backed *Aerie* out of the slip at Pike's Bay. As we cleared Sand Island, the waves kicked up and we had an uncomfortable couple of hours before we could snug up to the south shore of Lake Superior. We followed the 60 foot depth curve and had a great sail the rest of the way arriving at the Superior entrance at 1145. The rest of the trip was glorious with bright sunny weather, wind in our sails and an arrival at the marina at about 1345.

Two other boats were making the passage to Duluth from Bayfield. Neither boat left until Saturday morning. Neither was able to make the passage on Saturday. One boat arrived Monday after diverting to Two Harbors. The second boat arrived the next week after diverting to Cornucopia.

Certification Seals

In its efforts to upgrade systems, the American Sailing Association switched their manual certification system to an online database in May of 2006 when they and most of the ASA schools including Northern Breezes were really busy. The short version is that the new system had big time training and reliability issues which overwhelmed both systems. I was hoping this issue would be totally resolved and behind us before this newsletter went to press. Not quite! While most of our graduates have received their certification seals, some have not. This has been extraordinarily frustrating to us at Northern Breezes because we

The Northern Breezes Sailing School is certified by the American Sailing Association. Over 636,000 ASA certifications have been awarded. Principals are Captain Thom Burns, publisher of *Northern Breezes Sailing Magazine* and *Sailing Breezes Internet Magazine*. Thom and lead instructor Captain Steve Burns are Instructor Evaluators for American Sailing Association. Thom is also a US Sailing-certified instructor.

pay a lot of attention to ensuring your paperwork is submitted correctly and on time. Every submission to American Sailing Association is reviewed and signed by me! I don't take this responsibility lightly. I can also tell you that Alexis, who processes our certifications, is absolutely excellent. At this time, if you have not received a certification seal, please do call or email us. If you receive correspondence from ASA which has some incorrect address or other info on it, please bring that to our attention as well. We can fix most of the data entry mistakes ourselves for you.

New Location on Lake Michigan

Northern Breezes has expanded to a new location in Ludington, Michigan. All levels from Basic Keelboat through Bareboat Charter and Coastal Navigation will be offered in Ludington. The primary big boat is a Hunter 375. Basic Keelboat classes will be taught on a Capri 22. Captain Dale Fitch is the owner of both boats and runs the program in Ludington. Unique to this location is the opportunity of out of town Basic Keelboat students to stay on the boat during their class. The facility is great. The boats are first class. Welcome aboard Dale . . . who says retiring young isn't nice?



Cole Kraft leading the Conga dance around the Catamaran, *Matou*. Steve Burns is in red with Courtney Kraft in blue.

New Boat, Jolly Swagman joins the fleet!

Jolly Swagman, the subject of one of our stories in Northern Breezes this past summer, has now been purchased by Northern Breezes for use in the school. *Jolly Swagman* will be based out of Pike's Bay Marina, Bayfield, Wisconsin. *Jolly* is a Hunter 34 with great accommodations for families. It sailed well in chilly late October sea trials. Graduates will be able to charter *Jolly* from Superior Charters when the boat is not in school use. Check her out; the boat is very reasonable and very well equipped.

Superior Charters

We have enjoyed a great relationship with Superior Charters for the last two years. Whenever our Bareboat Graduates complete their courses, they receive a discount coupon for their first charter! Superior Charters will honor outdated coupons. If you didn't receive yours please contact the office, we'll get you one. Chartering after you complete your Bareboat Course is one of the best ways to cement your skills, and if you are thinking of buying a boat, most people can refine what they really like and dislike in a boat by chartering a few different ones. Suggestion—charter a boat and sail in Sailfest.

New Family Courses—We love 'em

We started doing "Family & Friends" courses on a more formal basis in 2006. The idea is that your family is your real bareboat charter crew, so why not have younger sailors certified as "crew" and ensure that everyone can perform well together? This was some of the most fun instruction we did all season. Picture the Bauman-Spooner blended family with twin 15 year old boys and a 15 year old girl. They were tremendous to work with and have aboard. Some of you bareboat skippers would envy their quick learning skills in docking *Aerie* by themselves! There were several wonderful couples and family groups from across the Midwest, Canada and Colorado.

New Radar Endorsement Course

ASA has just completed the new Radar Endorsement. They employed the best in the business, David Burch, PhD., from Starpath School of Navigation to put the package together. I reviewed his book, "Radar for Mariners," last year. It is a very well done book and comes with a DVD simulator for your PC. We have been carrying Starpath products for about five years. The course will be 8 or 9 hours depending on how it is scheduled. We will be offering Radar in the Spring in both the Twin Cities and at Pike's Bay Marina.

Company/Office Events

Northern Breezes Sailing School does corporate events. These may be team building or just fun. For groups up to twenty the Twin Cities work well at our Shorewood Yacht Club location on Lake Minnetonka. We hosted a couple of groups on Medicine Lake as well. For big boat experiences, the Apostle Island Bayfield location is outstanding. Let us help you with an outstanding, memorable sailing event!

Feedback Reports

We have called many of you regarding feedback on our classes and trips. This has been extremely valuable to us. We thank you for taking your time in this way. We have already changed our Caribbean Basic Cruising/Bareboat Charter class based on your feedback. You helped us identify and fix a couple of problems on our boats. We put together some better directions to one of our locations. We also appreciate the vast number of positives you sent our way. This helped us select our "Instructors of the Year."

Sailfest

This was a great year for our Sailfest teams. In July, Captain Steve Burns skippered *Aerie* with his Basic Cruising/Bareboat students as crew. They won the largest class, non-spinnaker. Congratulations to the crew: John and Jane Jarnis, Ralph and Dixie Imholte, and to Captain Steve Burns! Meanwhile drama played out in the small boat division, where Captain Thom Burns and Michele Pufahl were repeats as Class "C" champions, racing a WindRider 17 in 20 to 30 knots of wind. The first leg was downwind under spinnaker. We topped twelve knots as we sailed off the crests of waves! Hanging on for dear life and hiking on the high side four feet above the water, Michele asked at one point, "Burns is this boat under control?" "It is when I can see," I replied. I was taking so much spray that I couldn't see the boat half the time. We had a big lead on our competition so we de-powered on the upwind leg to the finish to keep the boat safer, prevent gear from breaking, and giving Michele's molars a break from rattling around in her head. That was the wildest ride I've ever had in a WindRider 17!

Northern Breezes Growth

The kid's camp was an absolute pleasure this year! The new Youth Camp Director, Frank Lardy, and his team of Kayla Fossen, Lisa King, Brent Chinnock and Terence Glommen-McCloskey were great. The young folks had fun, learned a lot about sailing and our numbers increased from 102 to 131 while doing four less weeks! Send your kids to sailing camp! We are also looking for camp counselors who we are happy to train.

The Small Boat program on Medicine Lake picked-up even more steam while all Basic Keelboat locations increased an overall 35 percent. Thank you instructors. This does not happen by accident!

The most astounding growth was in the Beautiful Apostles Islands where the Basic Cruising/Bareboat courses which included the new "Family & Friends" courses and the Offshore Advanced Coastal Cruising courses experienced one

hundred percent growth. Read that again, the number was one hundred percent! Wow, that was a scramble sometimes. It never would have been possible without the help of some invaluable people. Our senior instructors: Captain Gail Bowdish, Captain Steve Burns, Captain Tom Embertson, Captain Dale Fitch and Captain Donald Laukka. Equally critical to the success was the crew in our office headed by Alan Kretzschmar and Alexis Olson and the Pike's Bay Marina crew of Gordon Ringberg, Diane Brunelle and Mark (the mechanic) Lustig.

The Cruising Multihull and offshore Advanced Coastal Cruising can now be combined. This worked so well on Lake Superior that it is now an option in the Caribbean as well.

Instructor Clinics

This is a great way to sail more and refine your skills (yes, we pay you when you teach for us). When is the last time you sailed on someone else's nickel while increasing your own skills? This is typically what happens when you become an instructor—a new kind of challenge. Clinics are offered in May for regular instructors and in June for our Youth Sailing Camp Instructors. Sometimes we can slip an adult instructor in with the younger camp instructors.

Northern Breezes Instructor Published

Mike Bastin, one of our Australian instructors, who has taught a number of Basic Keelboat courses on Lake Minnetonka just published a very nice review of "How To Sail Around The World" by Hal Roth. You can find it in the Winter 2006 edition of "The Journal of the American Sailing Association." Mike says, "I still have the dream, but after reading Roth's book I think I'll start a little smaller, a little earlier and definitely a little smarter." Those dreams get you through the winters and onto the 'Round the World Trips.'



Single-handling the dinghy is very empowering for youngsters.

Instructor Steve Officiates

Captain Steve Burns has acquired new skills! He often accused me of giving him as sailing students all the ministers, who as it turned out were really nice people! Steve agreed to temporarily join their ranks as he officiated Thom Burns' and Michele Pufahl's wedding onboard *Aerie*, which was rafted to Steve's catamaran, *Calico*, and Captain Tom Embertson's boat, *Andiamo*. We are still happy and blissful. Thank you, Steve!

Instructors Of The Year!

Instructors can't be recognized enough! Here is what our graduates told us were the best instructors. Some categories will have more than one entry due to the closeness of the evaluations.

- Camp Counselor of the Year: **Frank Lardy**, Kayla Fossen, Brent Chinnock, Terence Glommen-McCloskey
- Small Boat Instructor of the Year: **Brent Chinnock**, Alexis Olson, Michele Pufahl
- Basic Keelboat Instructor of the Year: **Peter Larson**, David Shores, Kyle Flesness, Frank Lardy, Don Pitzer, Brent Chinnock, Tom Wakefield
- Basic Cruising/Bareboat Charter Instructor of the Year: **Captain Steve Burns**, Captain Gail Bowdish, Captain Tom Embertson
- Advanced Coastal Cruising Instructor of the Year: **Captain Thom Burns**, Captain Steve Burns, Captain Gail Bowdish
- Cruising Multihull Instructor of the Year: **Captain Steve Burns**
- Navigation Instructor of the Year: **Captain Thom Burns**

New Northern Breezes Online

Many of you are aware that we publish *Northern Breezes Sailing Magazine* which specializes in the Midwest and Midwest Sailors living their dreams around the world. Check out our new PDF version online at www.sailingbreezes.com and our new content managed version of Northern Breezes at www.northernbreezesmagazine.com. We are also about ready to open our new sight for Northern Breezes Sailing School, www.northernbreezesschool.com, which is also content managed. This site will allow us to do some very cool things such as offer a "controlled" crew and skippers' list. This should help our graduates put together bareboat charter groups, local crew for sailing and in general "meet" other sailors who you know at least something about their training. This site also has some very enhanced "resources" and a blog option.



Michele Pufahl, Kayla Fossen and Katie Crystal ducking the rain at Youth Camp at French Park, Medicine Lake.

Boat Shows.

Come see us this year at: Minneapolis - January 17-21, 2007; Rochester - January 26-28, 2007; Chicago Strictly Sail - February 1-4, 2007 and Grand Rapids, MI -February 14-18. It is always fun to see our graduates and hear about their adventures.

Challenging Certifications

Did you know that students can challenge any certification? Northern Breezes often offers the challenge option to Basic Cruising/Bareboat Charter candidates who have some experience. We have had three successful challenges at the Bareboat Charter level. Congratulations to Todd Andrews, Mark Edstrom and Jeff Goodwin who challenged Bareboat Charter and went directly to Advanced Coastal Cruising.

Charter Your Boat With Us—Save \$

Did you know that you can charter a boat in the Caribbean using Northern Breezes? We typically share what we know about boats, about the best companies, about provisioning and even who you might hire for a Captain or Cook. Then when it is all said and done we give you a credit on your charter for using Northern Breezes. We have assisted many of our graduates over the years. Since most of you are through taking courses, it is a great way for us to stay in touch and hear your sailing stories.



Catamarans, *Abelene & Matou* and the monohull, *Milina* off Little Harbor on Peter Island. This is one of our favorite spots.

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