



Aerie Goes to Sea!

Northern Breezes Sailing School took a giant step forward this spring with the purchase of *Aerie*, our “new” Islander 36. We took delivery of *Aerie* in Muskegon, Michigan on June 10th. We immediately commenced a short sea trial from Muskegon to Grand Haven, Michigan where we really worked hard to get ready for the trip back to Pike’s Bay Marina, “our” new marina, located just south of Bayfield, Wisconsin. The crew for the delivery back to Bayfield were all sailing school graduates: Ray Boyd, Dave Ersland, Tony Sanders (whoops this is BVI chef Deb’s mate), Mickey Trent and Captains Thom and Steve Burns. The entire delivery only took five days!

“I have a rather long history with *Aerie*. My friend, Captain Brad Theis, owned the boat before he sold it to another friend, Dr. Gail Bowdish. I helped coach the first all women’s Trans-Superior team aboard *Aerie* in 1995. The following year, a friend in the business, Joe Bingham, Bingham Boatworks, did extensive upgrades and repairs to *Aerie*. Prior to commissioning *Aerie*, I had a new 35 hp diesel installed complete with a new shaft and three bladed prop,” noted Captain Burns. “I wanted a boat that sailed well, handled well under power and was affordable based on our limited sailing season.”

This year Northern Breezes Sailing School added two sections for a total of seven Basic Cruising/Bareboat Charter Vacation classes and two sections of Advanced Coastal Cruising all aboard *Aerie*. And, we still found time to race!

Aerie Wins Class In The Trans-Superior!

You gotta believe this was exciting! One week before the the delivery to Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario for the start of the race, the new UK mainsail arrived. It’s a great sail.



David Shapley driving to windward with Thom Burns looking at boat traffic.
Photo by Bill Hooper

Out of a crew of seven. Only one, Captain Thom Burns, had ever raced offshore. Only one other, Captain Steve Burns had any significant offshore experience. Only one other, Ray Boyd, had even raced more than a couple of times. “I loved the way the crew came together,” said Thom. Steve took one section, I took the other and we took the chef, Deb Sanders, off the watchbill. Deb still did alot of sailing, but she also kept us well fed. She fixed one of the best stews I’ve ever had for dinner ‘on the rail’ on the last leg to the finish in Duluth. We only flew the spinnaker about 8 or 9 hours the entire race. After the first night of rain, followed by pea soup fog with light winds, the weather was pretty good.

Trans-Superior Crew: Jerry Bedman, Ray Boyd, Steve Burns, Thom Burns, Stu Larson, Peter Pappas and Deb Sanders.

Next year we intend to race the International Triangle since the Trans-Superior is a biannual event. Stay tuned if you’re interested.

The Northern Breezes Sailing School board is advised by U.S. Olympic Head Coach, Gordy Bowers, and is certified by the American Sailing Association. Over 275,000 students have graduated from ASA’s programs. 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.

Winter Escapes

The British Virgin Islands

The best news is that we have instituted a discount program for repeat customers and for folks who do more than one week. If you have gone to the Caribbean with us before on our boats, you'll receive a \$100 discount. If you do a second week, you'll receive another \$100. So if you are a repeat customer and do two weeks your total discount is \$300. How's that for fuzzy math?



We are doing four weeks in the British Virgin starting February 21, 2004. The first two weeks are Basic Cruising / Bareboat Chartering courses. We have changed bases to the more homey base at Tortola Marine Management.



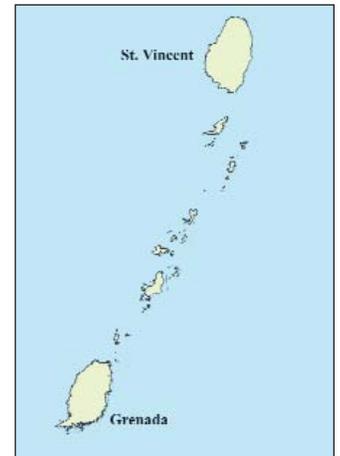
The third week, commencing March 6th, 2004 is Cruising Multihull aboard a 42' Cruising Catamaran. These are wonderful sailing vessels with three significant advantages: they don't heel; people are spread out over a 23' wide platform for "your" space; and, they can anchor in much shallower water.



Week four, March 13 - 20, is our traditional "Flotilla / Sail & Dive week" where we have large catamarans. Many of our graduates charter their own boats and either sail with us as a group or sail off and meet us at various locations. We usually host a gathering or two aboard the "cats." If you are aboard one of our boats, it is a great opportunity to lay back and enjoy while sailing and learning without a set schedule or agenda.

The Windwards

Our Caribbean Adventure Advanced Coastal Cruising Class starts on March 20th from St. Vincent in the Windwards to Grenada and back. This is challenging with an almost guaranteed 6 - 8 foot seastate with a long overnight sail. While the sailing is more challenging (I know I said it twice), it is a great way to see if you're cut out for longer distance cruises. The weather is great and the people are very friendly. The amenities are there with cooks aboard and wonderful new locations to explore! Second time around Advanced Coastal Cruising folks are welcome!



Small Boat Classes

This season we have had a fifty percent increase in students taking Basic Small Boat classes. One big change this year is we have decreased the class size from three students to two. We have gotten great feedback on this course from students and instructors who like teaching it on the brand new WindRider 17's located on Medicine Lake.

Navigation Classes

You can still sign up for navigation class. The next class starts November 1st. The Advanced Cruising Techniques taught in the class add a lot to your Bareboat Charter experience and is a must for Advanced Coastal Cruising offshore. We have started offering correspondence navigation class to our out of town students. This is not for everyone but it helps fill the gap from long distance.

Charter Agents

We are charter agents for several Caribbean companies. We can usually get you the right boat at the right price. The caveat is that we are not bottom feeders for the simple reason that your vacation and our reputation is too important to save a couple of hundred bucks and end up with a bad boat and bad memories. We want you to be dreaming about your next vacation even before you get off your current one!

Gift Certificates

We do a lot of gift certificates for classes. If you buy them for the holiday, you'll receive our Boat Show discounts! We also do partials which can be applied to any class.

What else to we do?

The most frequently asked question or comment received is: "Oh, I didn't know you did that too!" Northern Breezes and its associated businesses:

- Publish Northern Breezes Sailing Magazine
- Publish Sailing Breezes Internet Magazine
- Mfg. Representative for WindRider Trimarans
- Represent Wilderness Systems Kayaks
- West Marine/Port Supply Dealer
- Weems & Plath Dealers
- Charter Agents for Caribbean Charters
- Operate Northern Breezes Sailing School

15 Years and Counting

It is hard to believe that *Northern Breezes Sailing Magazine* started fifteen years ago this winter! It was the original brain child of Brad Theis, Ashland, Wisconsin and Brad Nevins, Stillwater, Minnesota. Thom Burns came aboard on the third issue as the Editor. Thom owns the publication now. Northern Breezes has grown from 6,000 circulation to over 20,000 and its page counts have doubled. Thom attributes the loyalty to the publication to the core group of talented freelance writers who continue to supply quality editorial.

October Harvest Party

Invitations went out for the Harvest Fest Party at Chef Deb Sanders. All BVI graduates were invited. The idea is to have fun and help students network so you feel comfortable sailing with one another wherever that may be. If you would like an invite, or misplaced yours, email or call the office.

Barter Bucks

We often need help on special projects such as Boat Shows. This year we are bringing *Aerie* from Bayfield to Hooper's Yachts in the cities. We are having some professional work done, but we also have a rather long list of other projects which we will need some help on. We are routinely impressed by the skills and experience of some of our students. Folks can earn barter bucks by working on the boat, a specific project for which you have the skill level, and we will pay you barter bucks for use on any of our trips or classes. Don't be intimidated by the projects, several of them are just cleaning, polishing or painting. Email or call for the list or to discuss further.

Instructor Profile:

Valerie Petite is from France. She has been teaching for Northern Breezes since 1999. As a young woman Valerie lived on a boat with her parents both of whom are school teachers in Marseille on the south coast of France. She started racing at the Wayzata Yacht Club on Thom Burns' Ranger 22. One broken mast later, neither Thom nor Valerie were on the boat, she moved on to *Loose Screw*, a Capri 25 at WYC. Since then Valerie has sailed across the Atlantic aboard *Hinzite*, a Frers 45. She has cruised and raced aboard *Hinzite* in Europe and most recently raced aboard *Dunluce*, a Shock 35 in the Trans-Superior and in the Apostle Islands.



Valerie has received some of the best student evaluations. She has also personally recruited many of her students for racing as crew aboard WYC boats. When you take a Basic Keelboat course from Valerie you're getting a wealth of knowledge to go along with her enthusiasm and cheerful attitude. It's a pleasure having Valerie aboard. (She's also on the cover of *Northern Breezes* Sep/Oct 2003 issue.)

Inside:

There was a 25-knot breeze blowing down the Sir Francis Drake Channel as we tweaked and trimmed trying to overtake the Belize 43 before they could reach Leverick Bay in Gorda Sound, our exotic location for the night. I was real happy. The crew had come together, they were in for a great evening of camaraderie and tomorrow's trip to the Baths over the mountains would be a memory creator. This is the British Virgin Islands. Put yourself on the yacht, head the dinghy to shore, snorkel, hike, stick your feet in the sands of this wonderful sailing mecca. Tomorrow will bring another great sail!



It was Friday, the last day of the six-day charter, it's a time of great anticipation for one more evening in Paradise. Yet . . . there's a little remorse that it can't go on longer. The people of the WindWard Islands from St. Vincent to Grenada have been so very friendly. The locales have been so exotic. To an old time charterer, it's a lot like the British Virgin Islands were 25 years ago: fewer boats, friendlier people, beautiful islands and reefs. It's more challenging sailing but the rewards are great!

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