



School of the Year



Captain Thom Burns and Michele Pufahl

Northern Breezes was named "School of the Year." "This was a significant accomplishment in competition with over 250 schools nationwide," noted Charlie Nobles director of American Sailing Association. "This is a great honor," said Captain Thom Burns. "I feel humble because our instructor team is ultimately responsible. Our selection is a great morale builder. I realize the next big challenge is staying among the elite schools in the country," added Burns.

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While awards are good, Northern Breezes has been experiencing pretty serious growth this past year. In addition to the youth camp which served over 100 young people, (See the youth camp on page 2), growth came in the Small Boat course which was up 15 percent, Basic Keelboat in which we added Medicine Lake as a location was up 22 percent, Basic Cruising/Bareboat Charter (Vacation Course) was up 10 percent, Advanced Coastal Cruising (Offshore) was up 50 percent and (Advanced) Coastal Navigation was up 35 percent. With this kind of growth, we feel challenged some days. Our enthusiasm for

sailing lifts us up with the sunrise and rewards us with a sunset on most good days.

Every now and then either we or American Sailing make a mistake on some of your paperwork. This will improve as systems get better so that paper is touched once or twice instead of over five times. Meanwhile, if you are missing stickers for your Log Books, completion certificates from Northern Breezes or anything else you've been promised, now is the best time to call or email.

Athena 38 Delivery

Captain Steve and Pat Burns purchased an Athena 38 Catamaran, *Calico*, in Melbourne, Florida. They moved their boat 2,600 nautical miles in 26 days. This included a 3 day weather stop in North Carolina because of gale force winds and the mandatory stops to lower and raise the mast at the beginning and end of the Erie Canal. This was truly a Northern Breezes delivery with all but two of the delivery crew being either instructors, graduates or family.

Captain Steve divided the trip into six legs. He and Pat flew down and finalized the deal after a favorable survey and sea trials. Tony Sanders, who sailed on the last two Caribbean Advanced Coastal Cruising adventures, flew to Florida to join Steve and Pat. The trio sailed the first two legs from Florida all the way to New York city. There Captain John Corsaut, a friend and ASA Instructor Evaluator, moved *Calico* up the tricky Hudson River to the entry to the Erie Canal. There John and his friend lowered the mast, stowed it on deck which was no easy trick and proceeded about a third of the way across New York state in the Erie Canal. There Dave Ersland, an Advanced Coastal Cruising graduate of both Lake Superior and the Caribbean, along with his son, Mike, who sailed with us in the Caribbean finished the transit of the last two thirds of the canal to Buffalo, New York.

Captain Steve rejoined *Calico* in Buffalo, New York with nephew and sailing instructor, Jon Burns and, Advanced Coastal Cruising Graduate and Sailing Instructor,

The Northern Breezes Sailing School board 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.



Athena 38

Jerry Bedman. This group raised the mast, installed a new radar and chart plotter and crossed part of Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, the

Detroit River and Lake St. Clair. They turned the boat over to Captain Thom Burns five miles south of Lake Huron.

Captain Thom Burns assembled a crew of three of his Spring Navigation students: Tom Bordenave, Dave Hoff and Paul Turso. They were joined by retired Navy Captain Pat Kittler who is interested in buying a large cruising catamaran. Paul, Dave and Tom were able to apply their recently acquired navigation principals in May prior to taking Basic Cruising/Bareboat Charter in the Apostles in June. This crew crossed Lake Huron south to north. Then they entered the St. Mary's river at Detour, Michigan and proceeded to Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan arriving about nine P.M. The transit of this leg was less than 47 hours.

Deb and Tony Sanders drove to Sault Ste. Marie with Captain Steve for the final leg through the locks and across Lake Superior to Pike's Bay Marina in the Apostle Islands. This transit took just over 46 hours. Deb Sanders was motoring through the Houghton-Hancock ship canal and didn't even have to slow down or stop for the bridge which the operator opened as they approached.

When a boat is moved this fast from Florida to its new home at Pike's Bay Marina three things at least are in play. Skippers who know how to take advantage of weather windows, a well found boat and a little luck with the weather.

Thanks to all the Northern Breezes graduates, instructors and friends who did a great job and picked-up invaluable experience a long the way. Steve, Pat and I enjoyed having you aboard!

Instructor News

Captain Gail Bowdish crewed on the winning Atlantic Rally for Cruisers boat to the Caribbean. *Aerie* wins the Trans-Superior and places 3rd overall with Captains Thom & Steve Burns, Michele Pufahl, Tony Sanders, Dave Shores and Steve Mundt. *Shanti* finishes second to *Aerie* by about 2 hours in the Trans-Superior with Captain Gail Bowdish. Captains Steve Burns and Gail Bowdish completed their one hundred mile/24 hour qualifiers on Lake Superior for the Great Lakes Single-handed society. *Aerie* finished second in the non-spin-

naker class in Sailfest with Captain Steve Burns and a student class crew of: Captain Thom Burns and Instructor Michele Pufahl won the small boat class aboard the WindRider 17 trimaran, *Shell*.

Student News

Mark Miner is the proud new owner of a Hunter 36, *Almost*. The boat is in charter with Superior Charters. Tim and Colleen Netzell also bought a new Hunter 36, *Meander* which is not in charter. David Gaines is new owner of Beneteau 393 in the Moorings fleet.

Don't forget to look at our online store.

We have completely redone our online store. We are trying to make it more homey in the sense that we are mostly stocking items which we handle because of our classes as well as a few products from these suppliers, and items which we either use or have reviewed. We are very confident that the products are high quality and priced very competitively. Take a look and let us know what we can do to improve it and meet your sailing needs.

Instructors Needed

Every year, we have a need for more instructors. Instructors move, buy their own boats, job and family commitments take out 20 percent of the instructor pool every year. For a growing school this is a critical need. We would need more instructors even if all returned to instruct every year! We run an Instructor Clinic every May and do advanced Instructor certifications in the Caribbean as well as on Lake Superior. If you have an interest, please call Thom at the office.

Wanted: Graduates Who Want to Race

As you can tell from this and other newsletters, many of our instructors also race or own race boats. There are opportunities on Lake Minnetonka on a hot, 21' keelboat and on Medicine Lake on either a Flying Scot or WindRider 17. There may also be some offshore opportunities on Lake Superior. On Minnetonka, Thom is looking for a skipper as well as some crew. This is a busy racing schedule which needs to be divided. The skipper opportunity is not free. Crew members are expected to share some minimal costs such as snacks and purchase a crew membership. Skippers normally divide up the racing costs, slip fees, insurance and contribute to a sail "kitty." The primary requirement is that as skipper you know where the wind is, what tack you are on and thou shall not crash into other boats.

On Lake Superior, there may be opportunities to race offshore aboard *Aerie*, *Shanti* or *Calico*. Call Thom at the office if you are interested in any of the above.

Crew List

How about a crew list? We are developing a crew list which hopefully will get you out on the water with your sailing friends or new sailing friends while maintaining appropriate privacy and security. In this day and age of spammers and phishers, this is not an automatic.

However, the internet is getting more and more user friendly and a lot of the big providers are helping with the tough issues. We used to have a lot of success with the crew list in Northern Breezes Magazine. We are leaning towards limiting it to sailing school graduates and controlling access. What do you think?

New Web Sites in the Works

Soon if you peruse the internet you will find a new design for www.sailingbreezes.com which will become our national and international portal for sailing news; www.northernbreezesmagazine.com will become our regional sailing publication and www.northernbreezesschool.com will be the school. The amount of content available online from these three sites might surprise you. Your feedback is welcome.

Boat Club on Medicine Lake

At press time it is too early to give you all the details, but we are partnering with another organization to offer a sailboat club on Medicine Lake. The benefit is that you can keep sailing and having fun without owning a sailboat, paying for slip fees, insurance and maintenance. We think this is an opportunity with great value. The most common question for the past fifteen years is how can I sail without owning a boat? This and chartering are two great options.

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 our first successful challenge at the Bareboat Charter level. Bravo to Mark Miner who challenged Bareboat Charter and went directly to Advanced Coastal Cruising.

International Certificates Available

Did you know that as a Bareboat Charter graduate you have already earned your International Sailing Certificate? It looks almost like a visa and is typically what the charter companies in the Mediterranean and Europe look for because it is easy to evaluate. Speaking of evaluating international candidates from places such as Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. American Sailing does that and issues the equivalent American Sailing Association certification. There is an evaluation

fee which varies but it is generally very reasonable. This is a method of certifying without retesting or retaking courses. If you would like to obtain your International Skipper's Certificate or you know of someone who may be interested in being evaluated for certification, call Thom at the office.



Youth Camp Help Needed

So you think you want to work with kids? In approximately six months, Northern Breezes added a Youth Day Camp for sailing at French Park on Medicine Lake. This included everything from designing and installing docks, ordering and assembling twelve new boats, adapting and developing programming to hiring and training staff.

This was quite a challenge! We had over a hundred campers which doesn't truly represent the numbers because many of the young folks stayed for multiple weeks. The kids were fun which was the major focus of the sailing camp. Part of the challenge is dealing with inclement weather. Its too windy. There is no wind. Its raining sideways. Fortunately, the nine and eleven foot Walker Bay monohulls could be reefed so that they have a wider wind range on the high wind days and they are excellent row boats for no wind days. The WindRider 17s were really excellent for getting campers out on the water when nothing else was allowed out. Safety is always the number one concern. All of the camp boats were chosen because of their stability first and fun factor second.

Some players who need to be recognized include: Camp Director, Don Barbee whose musical and dramatic assets were unexpected but appreciated; Head Sailing Instructor, Dan Fisher whose great attitude and mellow disposition calmed the most challenging moments; Michele Pufahl who helped put the curriculum together with Thom Burns; Lisa King who became far more than a WindRider Sailor; Kayla Fossen who totally excelled as a senior in high school; Katie Crystal who already had a great rapport with kids and learned to sail besides; Scott Rasmussen who moved, rigged and fixed boats whenever asked in a very professional manner; and, the office staff of Alan Kretzschmar whose two kids attended camp and Alexis Olson who filled in as a sailing instructor while managing boxes of materials.

If you are interested in working with the Youth Camp or know someone who might be, please put them in touch with Thom at the office.

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.

New Navigation Classroom

We have always struggled some with a reasonable Navigation classroom. Mostly, it has been an issue of either starting or finishing the classes when the marinas are full of boats. This means that there is little to no snow removal and very marginal parking. We have been looking for a place which is not too far from the office and basically centrally located to the metro area. This fall we rented space from Spirit of Hope Church in Golden Valley. The classroom is very nice, the facility is new and beautiful, and the coffee pot is right outside the door!

New Classes: Radar, Weather, Celestial Navigation

Starpath Navigation and in particular, PhD David Burch, have teamed-up with Northern Breezes Sailing School to offer these three courses as both in classroom and as correspondence courses. Check the web site for dates, descriptions and pricing.

Youth Camp Boats for Sail

Northern Breezes and Northern Breezes Sailing School are not in the business of selling boats. The only exceptions are used boats which we may want to sell or new Walker Bay boats which we will sell to Youth Camp families or to graduates to use as tenders. You may recall that Northern Breezes, Inc. Was the manufacturers representative for WindRider Sailboats.

WindRider was sold to a Minnesota company. Northern Breezes, Inc. No longer represents or sells sailboats as a dealer. The local dealer for WindRider is High Water Marks owned by Scott Rasmussen. Now, with all that said, we have a couple of Walker Bay Breezes (9'), a couple of Walker Bay 10s and one WindRider 17 we would like to sell. There is nothing wrong with any of these boats we just own too many.



photo by Jim Splitt
Splitt-Image Photography

Aerie at Pikes Bay Marina

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Northern Breezes