

THE NORDIC TUG OWNERS NEWSLETTER FALL 2011



Issue # 58

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Rendezvous Around the Country

Southeast Area: The 2012 SENTOA Rendezvous is tentatively planned to be held in beautiful St. Augustine, Florida. Watch the SENTOA website for additional information.

www.sentoa.org

Northeast Area: The twelfth annual NENTOA rendezvous is scheduled for **July 25 - 27, 2012** at **Essex Island Marina** on the beautiful Connecticut River. Following the Rendezvous will be a cruise to many great Northeast ports. This rendezvous is a jam-packed 3 days of camaraderie, learning and fun. For more information, contact **Dick Seymour**, NENTOA Commodore, at reelmagic@optimum.net Check out the NENTOA web site www.nentoa.org for the schedule of events and updates on the rendezvous

For information and/or suggestions for the 2012 **NENTOA Post Rendezvous Cruise** contact Herb Nickles at captain@allhandsandthecook.com

Great Lakes Area: The 2011 GLANTOA Rendezvous will be held in **St. Ignace, Michigan** on **June 23-25, 2011** (Plan on arriving Wednesday, PM - No Sunday programs). For more information, contact Dave Jones, 269-760-8869 or senojev@aol.com Check the group's website: www.glantoa.com/ for more details.

Southern California Area: The location and date of the 2012 SoCal NT Rendezvous have yet to be determined. Check out www.tuffythetug.com for the latest info.

Chesapeake Bay Area: Dates and place yet to be determined. For more info contact Annapolis Sail Yard at 410-269-4100 or E-mail jay@sailyard.com or cary@sailyard.com

San Francisco Bay Area: **May 17-20, 2012**, is the date for the SFBANTA Rendezvous to be held at **Pittsburgh Marina**, Pittsburgh, CA. www.pittsburghmarina.com Please check the SFBANTA website www.sfbanta.org for up to date information as it becomes available.

Pacific Northwest Area: The 2012 PaNNTOA Rendezvous will be held at the **Point Hudson Marina in Port Townsend, Washington, June 14-17, 2012**. Check www.portofpt.com/point_hudson.htm for details on the marina. Our meetings and gatherings will be held at the new Northwest Maritime Center adjacent to the marina www.nwmaritime.org For more info, check the PaNNTOA web site at www.panntoa.org or www.nordictugowners.com

A note from your editor

I apologize for the tardiness in the publication of this Newsletter (I started putting this edition together on 1 October). As many in the Pacific NW area already know, we lost our 16 year old yellow Lab, Bob, a constant companion on our tug, in early October. Then, in late October my dad had some medical problems which seemed to have been corrected; however, he passed away unexpectedly in early November, fifteen days shy of his 99th birthday. Then my mom (98) passed away thirteen days after my dad. They'd been married 74 years. Last minute flights to & from the east coast have been challenging. It's been a hectic couple of months.

Charlie Billings, Editor - NTON

IDEAS, ODDS & ENDS

The subject of **AIS (Automated Identification System)** has been discussed in previous newsletters. However, I would like to relate an experience I had this past summer. I was *given* an SR-162 AIS receiver by a friend who had just purchased an AIS transponder for his vessel from **MilTech Marine** www.miltechmarine.com

Since he needed the peripheral parts already installed on his vessel to ensure the operation of his new transponder, I purchased the necessary peripheral parts from **MilTech Marine**, installed same but could not get the receiver to work with my laptop and chart program. I E-mailed MilTech for advice and trouble shooting help. After several attempts to get the system up and running, it was obvious there was something out of the ordinary troubling the operation. I called MilTech's toll-free number to talk with their customer service folks. After a few minutes, the person on the phone asked where I was located. Unbeknownst to me (one can never tell on the web), MilTech is located right in my home town of Port Orchard, and I was talking with the owner of the company, **Doug Miller**.

Since we were about to depart on a two week cruise, he offered to meet me at the tug to see if he could find the problem. After a few minutes, he knew the problem was within the SR-162 receiver. He promptly broke out a brand new unit, replacing the problem unit. The system came to life with multiple vessels appearing on my laptop's screen.

Although I had not purchased the unit from MilTech (remember, it was a "used" gift), he sent me on my way with the new receiver installed, asking me to let him know when we returned, and he'd swap the "new" unit out for a "reconditioned" unit...all at no cost to me. Upon my return, he met me at the tug with the "reconditioned" unit as he'd promised. That's what I'd call superior customer service.
Charlie Billings, NOBSKA, 32-057
Bremerton YC, WA

Walter Moorhead, Sockeye (32-091) reports on a solution to a problem he had with his tug.

"The problem was that I kept seeing a very small amount of fresh water in the engine compartment, just alongside the fore and aft stringers on which the engine mounts...just a little, enough to puddle between the limber holes through the stringer. It was on the port side, but could happen on either side, as I later figured out.

"After trying to find a leak in the domestic water system or the water heater, I finally found that it was rainwater coming through the air vents on the side of the hull, which on our boat have those chrome grill-like vent covers. I discovered that these vents have a sort of half shell shroud on the inside of the hull, with the opening of the half shell facing up. The shroud is supposed to contain any water that comes through the vent, and let it drain back out at the bottom of the grill. This shroud is attached with adhesive to the inner surface of the hull, but no fasteners. Mine had come loose, and any water that got into the vent ran down inside the boat. You can understand how the adhesive would tend to eventually fail with all the vibrations and heat in the engine compartment.

"It did not help that my harbor slip has the prevailing winds coming astern, into the open aft facing slots of the grill over the vent, or that we get so much rain here in SE Alaska.

"The fix:

"I took the outer grill off and was able to reach in and remove the shroud through the hole, clean off the old adhesive and re-bond it in place with 3M5200. I clamped it overnight with two woodworking clamps with deep enough jaws to reach over and around the shroud. I replaced the grill the next day.

"No more water in the engine compartment!

"If I ever take out the water heater and diesel furnace, while I have access I might try to put some fasteners along the edges of the shroud from the inside, but otherwise we'll see how long the new adhesive holds."

For those tuggers with a Brooks mast & boom, **John Clark, Endeavour (NT 37-112)** reports:

My Brooks mast failed two years ago. Complete break in the weld at the base of the horizontal boom. Fortunately it occurred sometime during the winter. I inspected the boat one day and saw that the boom was "dangling" from the rigging. I was able to have a metal worker in Seward (AK) repair it, but it involved removing the boom from the boat. After fixing the base of the boom I needed to take it to another shop to have it powder coated. I don't know for sure, but I suspect my break occurred as a result of freezing water in a defective weld. I think it may be a design flaw in the Brooks mast since there is no drain hole at the base, thus small amounts of water can collect there. I have a drain hole now, and in the winter I make sure I keep the boom at about a 30 degree angle to assure no water or ice can collect inside the boom.

If one were launching the dinghy and the boom were to fail I could imagine serious harm or injury from a dropped dinghy, man knocked overboard, etc. It may be a good idea to inspect the welds on the Brooks mast, especially the one at the base of the boom where I think there is the potential for water/ice damage.

For those with aluminum water tanks, **Stephen Hill, Tug'n (37-199)** reports that Thetford makes a product called a water tank sanitizer that is sold in RV shops. Since the water tank is aluminum, he uses a "pre filter" at the dock to remove any chlorine from the water supply. This helps ensure you don't get aluminum oxide, that white tofu looking stuff that can clog your faucets. We also use a Seagull IV filter at our galley sink for all of our drinking water.

For those tuggers who own tugs with Western Metal Products windows built prior to 2000 when Nordic Tugs switched to Diamond Sea-Glaze windows, our "main man with all of the answers" at Nordic Tugs, **Bob Shamek**, reports

You can find replacement clips at Prime-Line Products website:

www.prime-line-products.com Their **L5603** looks to be the closest in size to the one I have here at the plant.

While on the subject of those hard to find little plastic parts; you can locate the clear retainer clips for the smoked glass windows in the galley cabinet and the electrical panel doors at the Rockler Wood Working web site at: <http://www.rockler.com/product.cfm?page=11269>. Woodcraft.com also offers a variety of these small retainer clips. I am sure you can find something at the big box store and cabinet supply stores as well.

Every now and then one needs to remove a fitting above deck. **Ben Wilde, Nordic Lady (54-008)** reports that the factory uses Sikaflex 291 for all bedding. Unlike 3M 5200, the Sikaflex 291 is "easy to remove".

Joel Truher, Beach House, (37-176) wanted to share a success story with all tuggers regarding the pantograph wipers on his tug. After a few years, they had corroded to the point of uselessness, so he went looking for replacements from the manufacturer, AM Equipment. They were extremely helpful with the entire process, particularly Butch@amequipment.com who helped him personally. There is a much improved, corrosion resistant pantograph arm (part # 352-0066) available at a very reasonable price, and the installation was a snap. Because the pivot spacing of the new arm is slightly wider than the old one, you need a pantograph adapter for each arm (part # 305-1007). Another part you might want is the rubber cap for the pivot arm ("mine was cracked and brittle") that's p/n 407-1017. In his case, he used the extra deep caps, p/n 407-1072, and cut them to fit, but he thinks the normal ones would have worked too. "I also got new acorn nuts, since I scarred up the old ones pulling the arms off; also a part called a knurl, which adapts the pivot shaft to the pantograph arm. Some of these items are available at

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www.store.amequipment.com, but you have to talk to a human to get the little parts. Oh also, while you're putting things back together, I recommend Boeshield (<http://boeshield.com/>) for exposed metal and Tefgel on mating surfaces.”

In response to a query about replacing the halogen bulbs in the saloon (and elsewhere), a tugger reported he'd replaced all of his bulbs with LED bulbs at a cost of \$1.00 each plus shipping. Check it out at the following web site:

<http://stores.ebay.com/lxdstation/i.html?nkw=g4+led&submit=Search&sid=362832758>

In response to Mark Laffin's article, "**A Tough Tug & Lessons Learned Story**" in the Spring 2011 Newsletter (Issue #57) I received the following from Bill Johnson (32-200), a professional mariner, who wished to add a few points to Mark's story.

“My first point would be to get the prerequisite training if you are going to travel similar routes. Spend the money at take Basic Safety Training course that meets STCW requirements. You will be in a class with professional mariners, but so what? We would rather meet you in a classroom than hear the radio call for help and have to find you in the ocean and put ourselves in jeopardy. The course has 4 modules: First Aid/CPR (and maybe AED), Marine Firefighting (difficult), Water Training (liferaft and survival suit), and 4 hours on shipboard communications (boring). You will get to wear a gummy suit and get in a life raft in the water, both of which are a confidence builder. My feeling about life rafts is that they are better than dying, but not much better. It is an ugly experience that *nobody* will want! This will cost you around \$1,500, but if you can afford one of these boats you can afford this. Get over it!

It will also teach you how to respond to a helicopter rescue without killing yourself and everybody involved. Did you know the pilot

sits on the right side of the helicopter, not the left as in fixed wing aircraft? I didn't think so. Why is this important? Because when the helicopter approaches it will look odd and appear to come from an odd direction for the pick-up.

New batteries in everything every spring.

Highly recommend installing an AIS transponder. Prices are reasonable for a class B now.

Strobe on your survival suit/life jacket. Don't bother with a lightstick or anything powered by a size D battery. I recommend a Firefly Waterbug. It's \$100. So what! Rescue personnel can see you at night.

I would also add that a float coat (Mustang or Sterns) works great and will give you some insulation for cold water. It's not a gummy suit, but it's better than a Type 1. Your survival time in cold water is measured in minutes, and those charts you see about 'survival times vs water temperature' are done with a reasonably fit young person. Is that you? I didn't think so! Plus, your chest muscles contract in cold water making breathing difficult.

Good luck!

Bill Johnson, 32-200

For those older tugs with rubber gasketed window frames, **Mike Arnold, Chilula (26-103)** has a suggestion. “A connection for the window gasket material is C.R. Laurence Company, Inc. The part number is AS937 Description: "SSWS" The material comes in 50 foot rolls. They sell a small tool to pry the gasket over the boat's window frame. I think the cost was about \$12.00. Check www.crlaurence.com I changed all of mine in 2002. You will have to heat the gaskets up when you install them. I used our turkey fryer and put the gasket in near boiling water, then with gloves on, fit the gasket over the glass, then fit the window into the boat's frame. You will need at least two people with gloves on to perform the installation.

Jeff Hassell, Toto (32-285) wrote: “My (2007) 32 has a factory installed Cummins/Onan 5 kW generator (MDKBH). It came with the standard (minimal) control panel mounted below the A/C distribution panel. The only result of any detected problem is an immediate shutdown and a small flashing light whose meaning can be decoded with the help of the Owner's Manual. The Control Panel does not display any other information. To see the generator engine hours I have to get in front of the generator in the engine room (no small feat) with the generator running. I have asked three different factory service techs who were here servicing the unit to give me a proposal to upgrade to the optional digital control panel. None ever did. So I finally took it on myself. The upgrade Control Panel shows (Generator) engine hours, oil pressure (PSI), coolant temperature (°F), A/C voltage and start battery voltage. It also has a "Pre Alarm" light. I'm thinking this will allow me to avoid the unpleasant, ill timed loss of 120 Volt power we have had to put up with for the last four years, during which I've replaced the impeller five times. It is hot in Florida (I guess nearly everywhere now) and the Admiral requires the availability of cooling. It was an easy install, truly plug and play. The only work was to cut a larger opening in the panel after removing the original controller. It wasn't cheap (**Onan Part 0541-1130 CTRL KIT, \$625.48**) but still less than a boat unit. That was the best (only) price I could find on-line. The only hiccup was that the template that came from Onan was not correct. Measure for the hole. There was plenty of room behind the panel for the new panel to recess into. Thanks to the beautiful work of Nordic Tugs, remove four screws, lay the A/C panel down, snip a few cable ties, unplug the old, plug in the new, replace cable ties and you're back in business. My generator raw water impeller problems may be partially due to the fact that I keep my boat on a lift and the cooling water line may drain and have to be refilled every time I launch. Or perhaps not. But at least now I can see if it is running hotter than usual before it shuts down.

Carpet Removal

Several readers have wanted to remove the carpet from the saloon and/or the pilot house in order to replace it with different carpet or with a teak & holly sole. When Nordic Tugs installs the carpet, it is “really” glued down. **Irwin “Scotty” Scott, Three Jeans (37-063)** bought an “Oscillating Multifunction Power Tool” and a “Rigid 2” Scraper Blade” from Harbor Freight. He reports the job still took time and effort but it did get the job done neatly and was well worth the \$30.00 - \$40.00.

Jon Block, Red Griffon II (32-104) reported an unusual situation that owners in the northern climates may find interesting. “I noticed it this last spring after her first winter on the hard up here in Thunder Bay, Northern Ontario.”

Water had somehow found its way into the forward rail tubing, froze and swelled the rail. The port side is worse. (see photo below)

He said, “I drilled a 1/16” hole just above the aft base plate and got maybe a pint/qt of water out. It had a slight salty taste so presume it was from our crossing from Bahamas - Florida, which was a bit rough. I drilled the starboard side and got a cup full out but there was minimal swelling in the starboard rail.”

“The only point of entry is the V-shaped fitting right at the bow.and no, we were not burying the rails underwater. It's from spray/condensation. Having said that I've owned a sailboat up here in Northern Ontario for 17 years and never seen the likes of it.”

“Others who winter in freezing temperatures might want to check their railings.”





Charlie's invitation to contribute to this newsletter comes at an interesting time...it is almost a year to the day that we turned the lights back on in the factory and we emerged from our

temporary closure that allowed our dealers to clear some inventory that had been sitting at the dock. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each of you that sent notes of concern and encouragement during the past year.

2011 has been a challenging year. Our once lofty goals had been reduced to "live to fight another day", as we watched our industry struggle. We've "right-sized" and reexamined and reevaluated and planned and met with our financial backers and now I am in the process of making the rounds of our domestic dealer network and we are poised, ready and anxious for 2012.

You can keep abreast of developments at Nordic Tugs on Facebook at Nordic Tugs – factory www.nordictugs.com. We post pictures of work in progress, provide some insight to the little things that make us special, high-light some special events and in general share things that might be of interest to our Nordic friends and family. Please visit and "like" us! I am somewhat new to social networking, so please feel free to make suggestions or send us pictures of your tug in your favorite places.

So last year was "survival" and we succeeded in that regard. Looking ahead, we have to begin the rebuilding process and so our goals, while still conservative, are focusing on growing some specific market segments. It's no secret that the boat market continues to struggle to regain its footing and we have found very little news that gives us hope of a quick revival. I'll not pretend to be an economist, but what we found in our research is that very large boats seem to be selling, and to our surprise, "pocket cruisers" are doing better than mid-range products. To that end, we are re-introducing what we are tentatively calling the Nordic Tug 26cr; the "cr" meaning "cruise-ready". We've made some changes to allow us to manufacture the little 26 more efficiently, and instead of rolling the savings into our pockets, we are putting it back into the product

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by providing some additional amenities. No cut corners! It is still as stout and seaworthy a craft as it has ever been, only now when a new owner buys his, hers or their new Nordic 26cr, all they'll need to do is fuel it, load their personal belongs into the nicely finished drawers and storage areas, grab some snacks and their friends and they will be ready to go! We will be showing this new boat at the Hartford, CT, the New England (Boston) and Seattle indoor shows in January. I would invite you to come and visit and bring along a friend! It is still everything you'd expect from a Nordic Tug, and now there's more. Watch for updates on Facebook and on our WEB site as the show gets nearer.

Another change you'll see in the coming months is a "freshening" of our WEB site. One thing that readers of this fine newsletter can do for us is to provide some good stories! We acknowledged that our "testimonials" page has been neglected and that you have better stories than we do! If you have a flair with a phrase, we'd like to share your stories and impressions with those people that may be considering the tugging lifestyle.

The holidays are just around the corner, so on behalf of all of your friends at Nordic Tugs, we wish you a hearty and happy Thanksgiving, a happy Hanukkah, a blessed Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year! See you at the boat show.

Paul Johnson
General Manager

Tugs For Sale

Hoyl Gill reports he has dropped the price on his tug, **TUGILLS (32-053) to \$99,000.00** See a photo & information at http://www.sentoa.org/for_sale.html You can contact Hoyl at **865-584-3543**, or E-mail at gill@microcerv.com

Due to a transfer from the Puget Sound area to Nevada (Navy work), **Dale Johnson** reluctantly has his tug, **Nordic Sun (32-023)** up for sale. You can contact Dale by E-mail at kingneptune59@hotmail.com or by phone at **360-509-3060** for more info and price.

YOUR NEWSLETTER & THE FLEET LIST

Urgent Request – If you sell your tug, or trade in your tug on another tug, please let me know so I can accurately update the Fleet List with the name of the new owners of your previous tug and/or your new tug information.

Be sure to support your local area NT owners' association and visit their web site to keep up with what's going on in your area. You can find links to all areas by visiting www.nordictugowners.com

Now that the newsletter is on-line, and not limited to a specific number of "printed" pages, please submit any articles and/or photos you think may be of interest to other tuggers. Just E-mail them to me at ceb@oz.net
Below is a fine example a **great** photo. How about sharing one of yours?



Jenny Jo (37-039), owned by George and Mary Jo Wilson (Fish Creek, Wisconsin). The photo was taken at sunrise one morning as the full moon was setting to the west and sun was rising to the east. Fog was just lifting. The location was the East Channel of McGregor Bay in the North Channel, a beautiful anchorage.