



Scuttlebutt

Monthly Newsletter



Volume LVIII, No. 7, July 2025

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUL/TBD	Huntsville City FC Soccer Game
12 JUL	Short Creek Raft Out
28 JUL	ExCom Zoom Mtg — 1800
31 JUL	FREE Seminar at Ditto Landing — 1800 <i>Boating Rivers, Locks, and Lakes</i>
16 AUG	Lake Guntersville Dam Raft Out

THE BRIDGE

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The latest *Scuttlebutt* and our Calendar of Events can also be found on our Squadron Website at: abcnorthalabama.org.

Be sure to check out the America's Boating Club and America's Boating Channel websites for even more helpful information at: americasboatingclub.org.

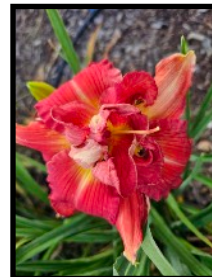
COMMANDER'S LOG

CDR Lisa Shier, JN

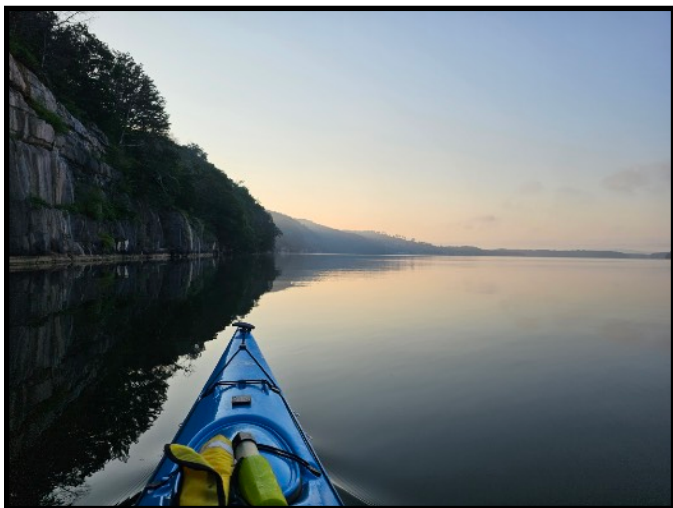
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Boating is better with friends! The boating season is in full swing. We have a number of cruises and educational events coming up the next couple of months. Do you know someone who would like to come along? Maybe you could host them on your boat, or they could bring theirs. You can make plans to bring some friends to our *Boating on Rivers, Lake, and Locks* seminar. Please consider all of the value you get from our club and share it with other boaters and would-be boaters. Boating is better when we share it and we are all better off with better educated boaters on our local waters.



I was out paddling on Limestone Bay this morning and encountered a fishing boat with a motor that wouldn't start. The operator had already called a friend, who was coming to a nearby ramp. This was hardly an emergency. However, I stuck around until the fishing boat was out of the water and let them use the ramp first. Please stop and give aid to boaters in distress. Not everyone does. Let's be good examples of the right way to do things. In the case of an actual emergency, just one helper, even in a boat with no motor, can make a real difference. Rich Walter and I would love to hear your comments and suggestions. In service and safe boating. Please reach out if I can help in any way. I am here for you—your commander.



Let's Go Play On The Water!

SECRETARY

Lt/C Ken Rorie

kenneth.rorie1350@hotmail.com

23 June 2025 ABCNA ExCom Minutes

Attendance: CDR Lisa Shier, Vern Gehm, John Kennedy, Ken Rorie, Rich Walter, and Chuck Wills

Chuck spoke of the great turnout with the kayak trip. The next event is the raft out schedule for July 12th. There are plans for an August 15th raft out depending on feedback. There was a discussion for a club website that we must vote on. It's a reimbursement for a web page at a cost of \$360.00 for 2 years.

Rich commented on the Ditto Landing events. He has reserved, the 15th, 22nd, and 31st July. There will be a Lock seminar on the 2nd of Aug. There was also a discussion for a local boating on Guntersville class. Part of the class would be to plan a trip and analyze what it takes to execute a basic trip. Rich would like feedback from the new boating class seminar talking points.

Vern urges members to join in on meetings for awareness and perspective.

John reports that our finances are in good shape and the insurance is moving forward. We need to vote and decide on coverage for 2 years.

Megan Basso, attorney-at-law, is reviewing the insurance language and liability for the Club under Alabama law. She will break it down in layman's terms for the club to review and fully understand. Ken will follow up with her when she is finished and report back to the bridge. The meeting concluded at 1840.



ABCNA Members Float the Flint!

www.abcnorthalabama.org

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EDUCATIONAL OFFICER

P/C Rich Walter, AP

rww2468@outlook.com

FREE Summer Seminar

Boating on Rivers, Locks, and Lakes—Ditto Landing—31 July 6pm

A FREE seminar on *Boating Rivers, Locks, and Lakes* is scheduled for Thursday, 31 July. We are trying a new location closer to Huntsville and scheduling the class on a weeknight, specifically Thursday evening. The seminar provides an overview of boating on the river and includes specific training on how to traverse your boat through the locks. The club will offer a follow-on group event to allow those interested to experience going through the locks, either on your own vessel, or as a guest on one of our members boats.

The class will be held Thursday, 31 July at 6pm at the pavilion at Ditto Landing Marina. The marina is located off Hobbs Island Road just east of the 231 bridge crossing the Tennessee River (south Huntsville area). Please email or text Rich (rww2468@outlook.com / 256.230.5047) to let us know you are coming. There is no cost for the class. It is outside so dress comfortably. More information on Ditto Landing Marina is available at the following links.

www.dittolanding.org/about

www.dittolanding.org/contact

If you have a specific seminar you would like to see taught, please let myself, or one of the bridge members know. A list of available seminars can be found here: <https://americasboatingclub.org/index.php/learn/select-type-of-boating/all/all-seminars>.



Short Creek & Flint River Fun!

www.americasboatingclub.org

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ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

P/C Chuck Wills, AP

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EVENTS RECAP Our kayak trip on June 21 was a great day! Lisa did a top notch job organizing us and the weather was perfect! The Flint River is such a great natural resource and for those that missed it this year, I encourage you to give it a try. Having our commander, Lisa Shier organizing and providing tips on the water make it an even better way to experience the river. We had 9 paddlers participate. The river was high, so Brown Bear Rentals took our group and kayaks upriver about 5 miles and we took about 2.5 hours to get back to our starting point including a stop on a gravel bar. After kayaking, we had lunch at a nearby Mexican restaurant. Everyone had a great time, and I personally can't wait for a chance to do it again.



On Saturday, July 12th, a group of us had a super fun raft out on Lake Guntersville's Short Creek. We had four boats tie up together and enjoyed a few hours on the water floating and hanging out. Special thanks to all who brought their boats out: the Headrick's (*Layabout*), Kennedy's (*Friendly Confines*), Walter's (*Approved Mistress*), Wills's (*Positivity*), and the Van Etten's (*Ruby's Ride*). Rafting out with other boats is one of the great things to do on the water—we sure hope you can join us for our next raft-out in August. It's so much fun!

UPCOMING EVENTS August 16—Raft out on Lake Guntersville. The second raft out of the year will be near Guntersville Dam. The tentative plan is to meet at near the dam, but this may change on the day depending on the vessels participating and the wind conditions. Everyone is welcome to bring your boat and to tie up to the designated anchor boat. Remember that the approaching boat must have fenders and lines ready and communicate with the raft up when approaching. As you near the dam, there is a protected area off to the left which has water about 10 to 20 feet deep and is generally far away from boat traffic. We will plan to do raft ups in different locations so our members can experience different settings and potential locations where they can anchor on their own or even overnight. Lake Guntersville has many nice places to hang out and have a drink, a picnic or a swim in the water. If you don't have a boat, no problem, we will match you up with someone that has space. Mark your calendar and watch for the Mixily invite as the date approaches.



Admin Comments Many people were out on the lake at night for the July 4th fireworks. While I did not go out this year, I saw a common mistake while watching the vessels from the shoreline. Some vessels were using docking lights or spotlights like headlights on a car. This is illegal! The Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) advises that Marine Patrol Troopers stop boats for operating with docking lights displayed continuously after sunset, as this can hinder the proper display of navigation lights and cause confusion for other boaters. When out on a busy night like the Fourth, please be extra careful. While you may know the rules of the road from the classes we have taught or reading the regulations you will find that many vessels just don't know or don't care. The last time I came back from the fireworks I counted six vessels that came from my port that cut in front of me within 200 ft. Just because you see the green light navigation light meaning you have the right-of-way does not mean the approaching vessel will do what they are supposed to do. Keep your head on a swivel, have a lookout and be ready to avoid collisions!

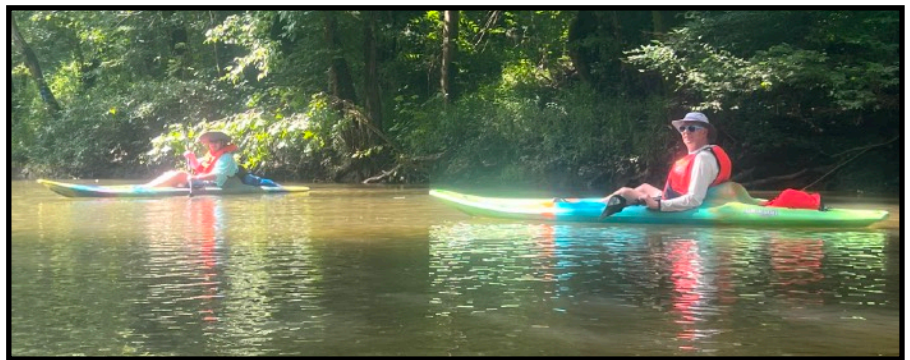
SAFETY OFFICER

P/C Joel Weinbaum, AP

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Nowadays, when you buy a modern boat the mfr. follows the requirements for navigation lights, for running and anchoring, set out by the USCG, and the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA). But time and weather takes care of everything, so this might be a good reminder to check all the lights on your vessel for operational use. And a good time to consider switching over to the LED light fixtures or LED bulbs available today. LEDs definitely reduce battery load. Plastic fixtures give way to the sun and weather along with seals allowing for moisture encroachment and corrosion. Spider webs could even be a problem. In the old days I had a small fishing boat with a clamp-on flashlight with a split red and green lens for a running light and a clamp-on rear pole light powered by flashlight batteries. You can easily Google for the current USCG requirements, check with any marine dealer, or your Squadron VSC inspector, and always do a visual check of your lights while still dockside before your cruise. And what happens at night when you have a visual on an approaching vessel without a change in sighted bearing...you're on a collision course. Take action. Keep those navigational lights working. And keep a good lookout for approaching vessels.

Yours in Safe Boating—Happy Cruising!



Kayaking the Flint River!

WATCH THE WEATHER—SPECIAL ARTICLE

Stephen Kirby

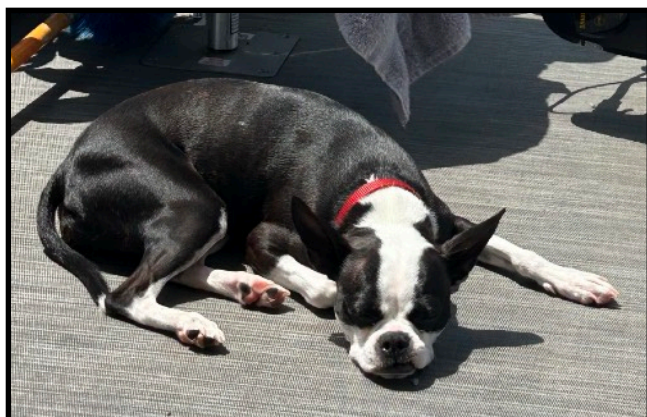
benz300sd@gmail.com

Towards the end of June, I put my boat on the trailer so that the marina could find an oil leak from my boat causing a sheen on the water. That evening I was covering the helm to keep everything dry in the thunderstorms. I could see the rain coming off the water toward me. What I didn't see was the shear winds that were headed straight to me. I was ready to get off the boat and sit it out in the truck. I was blown over on the starboard couch back rest. Before I knew it my legs were going over and I was trying to find anything I could to hang by but there was nothing. Everything went dark and I was awoken by a fellow boater in the pouring rain. The first thing I noticed was my head was in a puddle of blood.

He called the ambulance and we called Rita. My next conscious moment was waking up in the hospital. I was dizzy and in horrible pain. I had two large lacerations on my head. I have compression fractures to several vertebrae and a broken collar bone.

While in recovery I read about tethering to a point in the middle of your boat during unsafe conditions. Well that would have helped, but so would grab rails around perimeter of the boat. Even more effective would be to have a strong respect for the capabilities of the weather and to remember you are not invincible.

Watch The Weather—Stay Safe on the Water!



Commander Lisa Shier & Shauna Wills Betz get ready for the kayak adventure and Ruby Van Etten, of *Ruby's Ride*, naps after her Short Creek swim!

PHIL DUFFY—SPECIAL ARTICLE

Norma Martin

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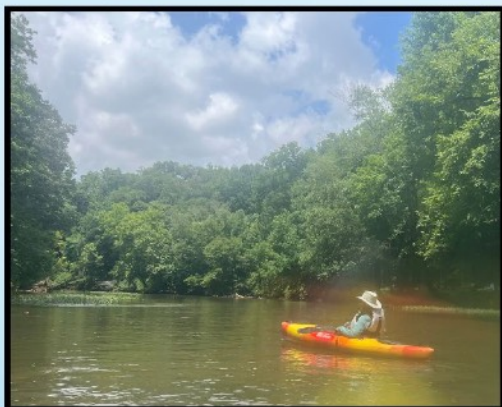
I saw in the *Scuttlebutt* the paragraph about the knot board handcrafted by Phil Duffy. Phil was a very active member of the "Huntsville Sail and Power Squadron" and served as Commander in 1998 and achieved the grade of Senior Navigator. I did a little digging and came up with this photo taken at the Change of Watch in 1998, when Phil succeeded Bud Norman as Commander. He is still shown in our current roster as a member, although he and his wife George-Ann moved to Murfreesboro, TN, some years ago. I believe they are both in poor health, if they are, in fact, still living. He has 29 merit marks and therefore a Life Member. So, unless he transfers or is reported as having passed, I guess he will remain a member of our squadron. Phil was quite a wood craftsman. "Back in the day," the district held an annual Predicted Log Contest, with hosting duty rotating among the district squadrons. Our squadron won it many times, I believe. Phil crafted a beautiful traveling trophy for this event. The older I get, the more nostalgic I become and enjoy reminiscing. Hope you find this bit of info about Phil to be interesting and informative.



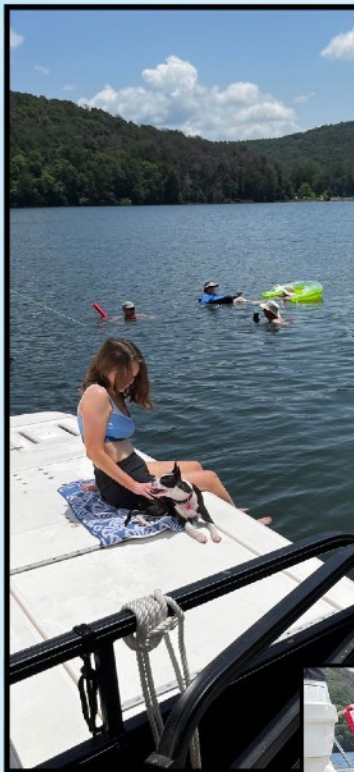
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Flint River Kayak Adventure!



Short Creek Raft Out!





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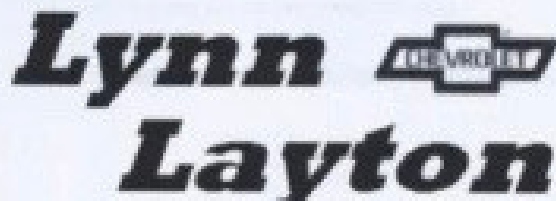
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