

ROCKY MOUNTAIN
CLASSICS, 41ST
CHAPTER OF THE
ANTIQUE & CLASSIC
BOAT SOCIETY



The Bilge Pump

Rocky Mountain Classics Chapter

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 1

JANUARY-MARCH 2011

RMCC Elects New Officers

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On Saturday, October 9, 2010, a quorum of RMCC members met at the Boatyard Restaurant in Frisco, Co, for the annual meeting.

Attending were Jim & Rhonda McGaughy, Maggie & Pete Woods, Chris Braaf, Wayne Spaulding, Jerry & Chris Ross, Mike Novick,, Bill Tordoff, Charlie Geuin, Mike & Vickie Rutkowski, and Mr. & Mrs. Bob Moharter.

The most pressing business at this meeting was the election of new officers, and the attendees passed the slate of nominees unanimously. The 2011 RMCC Officers are:

Maggie Woods, President

Bob Phillips, Vice President

Vickie Rutkowski, Secretary

Charlie Simons, Treasurer

Returning Directors: Michael Vannier and Jim Brooks

New Directors: Doug Brown and Michael Rutkowski

Outgoing President, Jim McGaughy presented this year's President's Trophy to Michael and Diane Vannier, recognizing their hard work and dedication to the club and to getting the new club website up and running.

Speaking of which, the new website was up and running as of the end of December! Check us out at www.rockymtnclassics.org.

Tootsie Wins Frisco People's Choice Award—AGAIN!

As always, there were many, many beautiful wooden boats on display for the 2010 Frisco Boat Show last August.

And as always, we collected ballots for the People's Choice Award. Again this year, Tootsie, the 1940 23ft triple-cockpit Chris Craft owned by Kit Phillips and Cindy Wilson, was the favorite.

Tootsie is beautifully restored and boasts a 425 hp, Ford V-8 engine so in addition to being beautiful, she is fast on the water.

Congratulations, Kit and Cindy, on another win !



From the Helm by President, Maggie Woods



President, Maggie Woods on Grand Lake

Greetings Fellow Boaters,

My, how the time flies! It seems just like yesterday we held the shake-down cruise in June. I hope your 2010 boating season was just as much fun as mine was. I especially enjoyed my Sunday morning cruise on Lake Dillon at our Frisco event. I got to meet Rocky Mountain Classic charter members, Bob and June Moharter at the Annual Meeting, held October 9th at the BoatYard Restaurant in Frisco. Bob told me the history behind the president's gavel, and later that day I was given the gavel by new past president Jim McGaughy, so that I might take up my duties as the chapter's new president. I hope to serve you well.

At the Annual Meeting, Jim and Rhonda McGaughy discussed the results of the interest survey you responded to this year. Many members expressed interest having a chapter web site developed. Mike Vannier volunteered to develop the web site and it is almost ready to go live. We are still looking for content material, and we hope to have member home pages available. Please contact Mike for more information regarding the web site.

As we set the event calendar for the upcoming boat season, we addressed the other finding of Jim's interest survey. Members want to extend the season to include rendezvous and

informal boat shows into September and early October, weather permitting. Much discussion occurred, with many venues being suggested. It was agreed that I would head a committee to research venues and develop events for August, September, and possible October. So I am asking for anyone interested in working with me on this committee to contact me via email. Thanks for your help.

Jim awarded the President's cup to Mike and Diane Vannier for their efforts in taking up both the ship's store and developing the web site. I want to thank all of our officers, directors, and people who make our boat shows such a success. I am gratified to have such a fine group of people to work and boat with.

See you at the Denver Boat Show January 14 -16th at the Convention Center. Aaarrgg! Wear your best pirate gear mateys. And now... it's off to renew my ACBS membership that just arrived in the mail. Don't forget to renew yours.

Sincerely,

President Maggie McNeill-Woods
Westminster CO
Dragonfly and Holly B
mmcneill14@comcast.net
303.550.1688

Woodies tie up in a secret cove; Frisco Boat Show, August 2010



RMCC Announces 2011 Event Schedule

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Rocky Mountain Classics Announces the 2011 Event Schedule.

*Details for each event will be sent separately and also available on our web site:
www.rockymtnclassics.org*

Dates	Event
January 14-16	Denver Boat Show/Colorado Convention Center Coordinator Jeff Waco at jeff54@earthlink.net or 303/421-3141
March 3-6	54th Annual Colorado RV, Sports, Boat & Travel Show National Western Complex, Denver, CO; Co-ordinator: Peter Woods at peterwoods7469@comcast.net or 303/514-9747
June 11	2011 RMCC Shakedown Cruise Lake Loveland, Loveland, CO Coordinator: Rich Ball at lu_ball@msn.com or 970-667-3965
July 9	Grand Lake Antique Boat Show /Grand Lake, Co Contact Chris and Bob Braaf at bbraaf@msn.com or 970-887-2210
August 6	Frisco Boat Show/Frisco, CO Coordinator: Bill Tordoff at amsiinc@cs.com or 970-409-9224

In addition to these schedule events, we'll plan several informal boating outings. Watch the web site and email for details.

Anyone interesting in helping to plan an informal outing? Contact any Club Officer. They'll get the ball rolling.

Not a member? Contact Membership Chairman, Bob Braaf (bbraaf@msn.com or 970/877-2210) for information on joining the RMCC.

Bill & Wayne Talk Boat Restoration



Wayne (in red cap) & Bill (in blue) chat with friends at the 2008 Frisco Boat Show.

“ANY boat can be restored. It’s just a question of time and money. Sometimes it would take more money than the boat will ever be worth.”

You can’t think of the “Who’s Who” of the RMCC without thinking of Bill Tordoff and Wayne Spaulding. Both have been active members of the club for some time. Bill is a past President and Secretary, and both have worked several years as coordinators of the Frisco Boat Show.

Recently, I had the pleasure of sitting down with Wayne and Bill to discuss how they met, the joy of finding the perfect old boat, and what to think about before you start a wooden boat restoration.

BP: How long have you known each other? Did you meet in the club?

Bill: No, not in the club. I moved here from Ohio in 1996. In 1997, I walked into a restaurant and saw a wooden boat Christmas ornament on the bar. When I asked about it, the bartender said it belonged to the owner “who really likes old boats.” Wayne was in the kitchen cooking so I went in to introduce myself.

Wayne: We discovered Bill had a 1956 Sportsman, and I had a 1957 Sportsman.

Bill: We met the next morning at the marina and have been friends ever since.

Wayne: We each had a boat to be restored (Sweetie Pie and Ain’t She Sweet.) I had the space, and Bill had the tools so we started working together.

BP: How did you even know where to start?

Wayne: We’d both done restoration work on our Sportsmans so for both of us, those boats were practice.

BP: How do you identify a boat that is a good restoration candidate?

Bill: ANY boat can be restored. It’s just a question of time and money. Sometimes it would take more money than the boat will ever be worth.

Wayne: Right. But if the boat is a family heirloom, maybe it’s justified. It depends on the circumstances.

BP: Explain the difference between “preserve” and “restore”

Bill: Preserve is just “sand and varnish.” Restoration is updating the boat, and that can mean anything from superficial, cosmetic changes to the “near death experience.”

BP: Is one approach clearly better than the other?

Wayne: Definitely restoration because a boat with newer parts is safer on the water.

BP: What are the general steps for restoring a boat?

Wayne: First you prep it. Remove the motor, seats, and the hardware. Then build a wooden frame inside the boat to hold its shape. Put wheels on it so you can move it around the shop. Then flip it over and remove the bottom.

BP: You remove the bottom from EVERY boat? They all need a new bottom?

Wayne: Sure. Those bottoms were originally built to last a max of 10 years. Now they’re 50 years old. You can add a bilge pump in the front and a bilge pump in the back and keep the boat afloat, but that’s not how the boat is designed to work. You hear about people who, every season, go through this process of putting their boats in the water to “soak”. The wood absorbs water and swells, and it will float, but the extra weight makes the boat slower and inefficient.

Bill: Just getting the bottom off takes time. A 17ft boat has 5000 screws in the bottom. Chris Crafts have another 3500 on the inside!

Wayne: Once you’ve made the necessary repairs/replacements, then a 5200 bottom is definitely the way to go.

BP: What’s a 5200 bottom?

Bill: It’s an adhesive made by 3M. The 5200 product comes in a caulk tube which is applied to the inner layer (marine grade plywood) before attaching the outer planking.

Wayne: It’s very flexible, more so than a West System bottom. (West makes a competing product.) A West Bottom is faster and cheaper to do but only good if you don’t leave your boat water.

Bill: Then you have to prep the boards for the

Bill & Wayne, continued from pg 4



Wayne's son with one of his works in progress.

“Usually a restoration will take between 1700 and 2000 hours—so a 1-year, full-time, 40-hr a week job.”

outer planking. We steam-bend them, using the old boards as a guide, then clamp them to the frame. You have to be sure to steam long enough and don't try too big of a bend. Sometimes you'll have to do the same board more than once.

Wayne: We use a clothes steamer from Bed, Bath, and Beyond. We put the board in a garbage bag, insert the steamer hose and seal it. Steam the board for about an hour and then remove the bag. You've got about 15 seconds to bend that board before it stiffens up again. We use a board wider than what we need and keep trimming it down until it fits. Fairing the boards (sanding them to get a truly “fair” surface) takes the most time. I use a long board to sand. If you use an orbital sander, inevitably you'll end up with places where you held the sander just a little too long.

BP: What's the most common problem you encounter in restoring boats?

Bill: They're all a surprise, but the stern and the back ribs almost always need to be replaced. Whether the boats been in the water or on a trailer, that's where the water sits. Oh and if it's been in salt water, you'll NEVER get the screws out.

BP: When restoring a boat, what increases the value of the end product most?

Bill: Keeping everything original makes the boat more valuable. Using modern parts makes the restoration easier and makes the boat more reliable. So it comes down to how you plan to use the boat. If you want to show it, you probably want to keep it original. If you want to use it, you probably want to use new parts.

Wayne: I prefer new parts. It makes the boat faster and safer on the water.

BP: What are the essential tools a do-it-yourselfer MUST have?

Wayne: A storage place and a lift. A 20ft boat weighs about 2200 pounds.

BP: What advice do you have for potential do-it-yourselfers?

Wayne: Before you start, research and read everything you can on the restoration process. And take your time.

Bill: Remember that the cost of a restoration isn't just the materials, it's the time. Usually, a restoration will take between 1700 and 2000 hours – so a 1-year, full-time, 40-hr a week job. You have to decide if you can invest the time to do it or if you'd rather have it done. Having said that, the materials can be very expensive. Hardware, for example, is pricey – IF you can find it.

Wayne: Right! I think it's more important that a boat have its original hardware than it is to have the original engine.

BP: What else do you think our readers would like to know?

Wayne: A good varnishing tip! I don't spray varnish or use an expensive badger hair brush. The best finish comes with using a foam roller. Spread the varnish and then smooth with a foam brush – no bristle marks!

Bill: Resources. We use Classic Boat Connection and Jamestown.

BP: Wayne, how DID you find that perfect old boat?

Wayne: I went back to New Hampshire for my brother's wedding. Driving along a country road, I saw this old gray wooden boat, on its side in a field. There was a big barn behind it, and a farm house nearby and it looked like it would make a pretty picture. I got out of the car, in my wedding clothes, and took some pictures. About that time, the farmer came out and asked if he could help me. When I explained my interest in old boats, he said there was one across the road I would REALLY like to see. He opened the barn door on a 1951 Hacker Craft, the luxury utility model. It wasn't his boat. A neighbor had passed away, and his widow wanted to sell it. I had a boat I needed to sell so I wasn't in a position to buy. Luckily, when I was ready to buy, it was still available. I thought at the time the wood was perfect, but of course it wasn't. Still – it's a Hacker Craft and a fairly rare one at that. It's a beautiful boat.

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Water, Woodies, & Weddings, by Tom Lange



Getting ready for the wedding. Photo by Maggie Woods.

Everything came rushing back. The 2 strokes years ago, her failing health in recent years. . .panic overtook me.



The bride arrives. Photo by Maggie Woods

It all began the day after the Grand Lake Show of 2009. After 19 years of marriage, I decided to ask Kathy to marry me all over again at the 2010 Grand Lake Boat Show. How perfect...our favorite place in the world surrounded by beautiful wooden boats, great friends and all of our family. Being a man, I had never planned a wedding much less had to keep it a total secret for 12 months....finding a minister, flowers, vows...but it would all be worth it when Kathy said 'yes' one more time.

Then everything came to a screeching halt. Our youngest son and his fiancé asked if they could be married on that weekend in July on the lake that we had so hoped they would love as much as we did.

What could a father say? They wanted to be married on our lake including our boats which would guarantee that the boats we love so much would become a part of their family forever. This would ensure that Legacy and Loon would be cherished and cared for by them and our grandchildren long after we were gone.

So my wedding plans went on hold so as not to eclipse their day. Kathy and I could wait another year. Then it happened....one morning, so much like many others, we were both going through our morning routine when I heard a crash in the bathroom. When I ran to check what had happened, I found Kathy lying unconscious on the bathroom floor. She remained unresponsive for some time.

Everything came rushing back....the 2 strokes years ago, her failing health in recent years....panic overtook me.

There is no way to prepare for something like that. During the next few days while I sat beside her in intensive

care, priorities became crystal clear. We cannot take for granted that next year will come. Never put off the important things for later...make sure you say and do the things that matter now...just in case.

Jeremy and Tiffany and I discussed their plans and they offered to wait on their wedding in order to make sure that Kathy and I had our day. Their selflessness made it clear that a double wedding weekend was the right thing to do for everyone, so the planning began in earnest.

On July 10th, the boat show was underway. Earlier that morning we had cannanned several canoes, Loon and Legacy over to the town docks for the show. Everything was set up and we were 'dressed' in our clothing from the early 1900's as part of our boat display. What a great day for a re-wedding!! Kathy still had no idea. Our granddaughter was dressed in her 1900's dress as well (which Kathy thought was cute, but only I knew why!!). I looked down the board walk and the months of planning came together.

As I had so many times before, I asked my wife to join me for a stroll on the boardwalk along the shore of Grand Lake. As we walked, she was sharing her thoughts of the beauty around us as she had so many times....she did not see the minister approaching us from the other end of the boardwalk until he was right in front of us. She hadn't noticed that a lot of people had gathered and fallen in behind us as we walked. She only became aware when we stopped and the minister said "Thomas and Kathryn, you look like you have come from a much simpler, happier time" and I replied "Simpler perhaps Padre, but never happier".

Then I dropped to my knee and asked her if she would do it all over again (I

Water, Woodies, & Weddings, continued



The Happy Bride and Groom in Legacy.
Photo by Maggie Woods

had great confidence!!) She said yes! The flower girl handed Kathy her bouquet and through the tears we both repeated our vows to one another.....truly a day to remember. After the applause, tears, hugs and congratulations from our boating friends and family, I sighed a sigh of relief that half of the weddings had come off without a hitch. One down...one to go. It was kind of like surviving 'D' Day' knowing they had scheduled Guadal Canal for 5 AM the next morning!

WEDDING DAY 2

We had rented a beautiful lodge on the shores of Grand Lake with a dock and a small beach area for our son's wedding. Sunday morning started early. The hairdresser began doing everyone's hair. The men began setting up chairs, arches and getting the sound system ready. Loon had to be decorated to carry the bride to the dock....everything was perfect. At 10:55 (wedding at 11), the sun was shining over the lake, it was 67 degrees and the music begins. Loon began her slow approach to the dock with the bride inside, the groom was idling out on the lake with flower girls and the mother of the groom in tow. Boat club friends bubbled with him sharing words of advice and encouragement and filling the slow ticking minutes until he would join his bride on shore...a memorable time he will cherish. Loon and the bride had nearly reached the

shore, Jeremy could wait no longer. He fired up Legacy and started his short trip to the shore and his new life. He reached the dock, exited Legacy and waiting for his bride on shore. As Loon arrived at the dock (having been escorted by the Braafs all the way!), the dock hands helped settle the boats, assisted the bride out of the boat, Pete removed her protective cape and she turned to face her family. All the time Maggie was taking picture after picture of this exciting moment.

The ceremony was all memorable. Tom was able to marry his son and new daughter-in-law(yes he is minister), sands from 3 lakes were combined in the sand ceremony representing the joining of families, cameras were flashing and there was not a dry eye in the place.

As the couple was presented as man and wife for the first time, the flotilla of woodies off the end of the dock let loose with horn and whistle salutes to the new couple.

Special thanks to Shearwater and her skipper. Her steam whistle salute echoed off the mountain sides announcing the joy and camaraderie that people who love the water understand so well.

The groom escorted his new bride to the water and the waiting Legacy. Legacy and the Langes left the dock and were surrounded by many boating friends who then proceeded to parade around Grand Lake celebrating this happy day and making it complete. Absolutely the perfect climax to a uniquely special wooden boat wedding weekend.

Reflection....

Sunday evening, I was sitting on the dock alone reflecting on the weekend and the natural beauty around me. I have always thought that God kept me around because I had something really important yet to do. This weekend was so important to Kathy and I that I had to lay back, close my eyes and believe that this was what I was meant to do. But I guess there is supposed to be more....I'm still here and have more to live for than ever before, so look out world!!



Tom & Kathy renew their vows.
Photo by Maggie Woods

RMCC Debuts on the Web

Now information about upcoming Rocky Mountain Classics activities is at your fingertips! Thanks to Michael Vannier, RMCC went live on the web in December 2010.

If you haven't looked at the new site yet, check it out at www.rockymtnclassics.org. The first thing you'll notice is the banner has GREAT pictures of our boats. The picture changes every time you click something on the site.

And there's plenty to click. The site will have everything from membership information, to the event schedule, to a ship's store, to links to other sites.

This is where you come in. You'll see that much of the site is still under development. We need your input to complete it. Send in your pictures, your classifieds, your suggestions for sites we should link to. Tell us what would make the site even more useful to you. We want to make our website your GO-TO place for all information related to our club and classic boating.

There's even a spot on the website for The Bilge Pump.

Going forward, we'll print and mail only the January edition of The Bilge Pump. That edition will give the schedule for the coming year as well as a retrospective in pictures and articles of the year just completed. The rest of the editions for the year will be available only on the website. This change will not only save the club some money, it will ensure that members have the most current information readily available to them.

Thanks again to Michael for making our website a reality! You can send him your input at michael.vannier@covidien.com.

"Tell us what would make the site even more useful to you. We want to make our website your GO-TO place for all information related to our club and classic boating."

Safe Boating Tip: If you don't have a blower, ventilate engine compartments before starting your boat. This will ensure that lingering gasoline fumes won't be ignited.



Wooden Boats on Grand Lake, 2007



Oh for the Love of Mike!

By Vickie Rutkowski

I can't swim. I grew up on a farm in central Ohio, raised by my mother and grandmother, both of whom were terrified of the water. "If you don't go near the water, you don't have to worry about drowning," they often said, so I was never around lakes or pools and never set foot on a boat. They passed that fear to me. I'm not afraid of drowning. I'm afraid of the unpredictability of the water and the boat on it. People have told me I'm afraid BECAUSE I can't swim. But I know that's not true. I'm not afraid of airplanes, and I can't fly either.

I didn't realize when I met Mike Rutkowski what an odd couple my fear of boats and his love of them would make us.

Mike grew up on the water in Michigan. He had his first boat when he was just 15 years old. It was a wooden hydra-plane style contraption a neighbor had built from a Popular Mechanics pattern. Mike paid \$50 for it with money he earned delivering The Detroit News.

He and his brother fiber-glassed the seams, painted it yellow and christened it Mr. X. On the day of its maiden voyage, Mike, his brother Tom, and five friends loaded the boat into a little brother's red wagon and hauled it to the water.

Mr. X had no motor so a neighbor kid got permission to use his grandfather's 6hp outboard motor. The engine's throttle was a lever on the front, and it had a long handle for steering. Mr. X was heavy in the stern, and when you pushed the throttle over too fast, all occupants had to slide forward to get the boat to plane. The motor had no neutral so when it started up, the boat had to be pointed in the direction you wanted to go, because it was taking off.

They fired up the engine and they were OFF for their first day of boating. Miraculously, no one was killed.



Deedee and Mike Rutkowski with his mother and stepfather, on their 40' wooden Chris Craft cabin cruiser "Attsa My Boat". Mt. Clemons, MI, circa 1978.

A string of several boats followed before Mike left Michigan for a job as a firefighter in Ohio, but I didn't know that. He didn't have a boat when I met him.

As things got more serious between us, I don't remember ever even discussing boating. It really never occurred to me that boating would be part of our lives together. What I know now that I didn't know then is that when someone loves boating the way Mike does, NOT having a boat is temporary situation. It really never occurred to him that boating would NOT be part of our lives together.

I realized I was in trouble when Mike suggested we spend one summer weekend in Michigan with his mother and stepfather. It wasn't meeting his parents that scared me; it was WHERE I was meeting them. We were spending the weekend with them on their weekend "summer home" – a 40ft wooden Chris Craft cabin cruiser.

The boat was in a covered well on the Clinton River in Mt. Clemons, Michigan. We arrived late Friday night, pulled our bags from the trunk, and headed toward a structure that looked like a roof on stilts. I thought confidently, "I can do this." And I kept thinking that until I

stepped onto the dock for the very first time in my life. It was a floating dock, and it dipped under my weight. I froze and thought, "How can I get back home?"

That weekend, I discovered I liked many things about the boating life-style. The weather was beautiful; the people were friendly; the food was delicious and there was enough good wine to keep my terror at a manageable level. In fact, as long as the boat was tied to the dock, I was fine. Unfortunately, we spent most of the weekend zipping around the lake, powered by two enormous Lincoln V-8 gas-guzzlers. "NEVER again," I thought. "I'm never getting on a boat again in my life."

Michael and I married and within the first year had a big fight over the purchase of a small sailboat. I decided then that Mike was important to me, and if boats were that important to him, I'd learn to live with them.

And I did. It took time, but gradually I conquered my fear. We got a bigger sailboat, and then a 36' Islander that we kept on Lake Erie. Before we moved to Colorado, we sailed every weekend, every summer for ten years.

Today, when people ask me what it is that I miss most about Ohio, it's that boat.

After boating the Great Lakes, I never thought we'd be boaters in Colorado. One summer weekend, we were walking around Grand Lake and wandered down by the marina. Behind it, in the weeds, was an old wooden boat that clearly hadn't seen the water in years.

"She's beautiful and she's FOR SALE!" Mike gushed. "Here we go," I thought.

The Bilge Pump

**Newsletter for the
Rocky Mountain Classics Chapter,
ACBS**

Vickie & Mike Rutkowski, Co-Editors

4529 Mohawk Dr.

Larkspur, CO 80118

Phone: 303/681-3329

EMAIL: ver3298@msn.com

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