

NOW IS THE TIME TO PLAN YOUR TRIPS FOR SUMMER 2017!

by Judy Dean

Winters are busy for boaters because they are planning their trips and activities for the upcoming summer, so let's begin that planning right now.

This past summer's beautiful weather did not bring an increase to travel and traffic on the Hudson River/Champlain Canal. Boaters reported almost daily that "we were about the only ones up and down the river". Fuel prices were reasonable, so what was the problem?

The situation reminded me of an article that BOTH's own Editor John Vargo had written a couple of years ago about the underutilization of the Hudson River and NYS Canal System. He and I are in agreement and have had subsequent conversations since then and have wondered - are we the only people who realize what a magnificent, clean and accessible Hudson River and NYS Canal System we have?? Are we the only people who can see the myriad of opportunities for travel, exploration, fun and truly soulful experiences are found on the Hudson River and NYS Canal System??

Obviously we are not, but this magazine is currently the only publication devoted to the promotion of the river and canal system.

Our media today has tuned into an aggressive, mean-spirited one that focuses on the bad, the negative and always looking for an answer to "What is Wrong", instead of "What Is Right". One prime example up here on the HR/Champlain Canal is the USEPA/General Electric Co. PCB Environmental Dredge

Project that ended in the fall of 2015.

Our state, federal governments and environmental groups spent years trying to convince us that this was the most toxic and unhealthy river on earth, all the while never finding one person dead or alive whose health had been adversely affected by PCBs. But, as a federal Superfund Site, it was decided that the section of the Hudson River/Champlain Canal between Troy and Ft. Edward must be environmentally dredged to remove PCB laden sediment which would in turn lower the levels of PCBs in the fish population. The EPA and NYS DEC determined that the only danger to human health was in eating 1 ton of fish over a forty year period, and even then could not determine just what would

happen to the human body. The entire project was built on fear, conjecture and a political will that could see no reason beyond their own promotion, headlines and dollar signs.

Ok, Ok, but now that it is over and there is not a word from USEPA, NYSDEC, environmental groups or even the NYS Canal Corp that says "Come back, Come back, your Hudson River/Champlain Canal is ready and waiting for you to enjoy!!!!". This silence is punctuated though by the continued drone that the river is still bad and needs years and years of work to get it clean again. One of the highlights of this past election year advertising was the one by a woman running for office on the stance of cleaning up the filthy Hudson River while she is in a boat on the river with a beautiful blue sky and blue water set against the stately Kingston Lighthouse. I could only shake my head that a politician would use the beauty and recreational possibilities of the river to say that this is NOT the case and that we need her to clean it up for us.

So readers, it leaves the job of telling the world about the wonders of our Hudson River to us many businesses, clubs, chambers of commerce and men like John Vargo to do it!!!

Make 2017 the year to explore and do those things that you have wanted to do (even the young have Bucket Lists!). Make it the year that you return to those places you went to long ago. Make it the year to get your fiends together and boat with them, even if you only have a weekend or a few days. Make it the year to take a trip that will make your friends green with envy!!

Of course one of the best sources of information about the Hudson River and connecting waterways in this magazine. We know of boater who will take magazine and blindly find a page and a story or advertisement and then plan his trip!! There are also guide books and charts to help you but we find that one of the best ways to gather information is directly from other boaters. So many travelers have their own blogs nowadays and the websites for Active Captain and The Great American Loop have become primary sources for those who travel the inland waterways and entire eastern seaboard.

Another fun way to plan is to take a trip first by car. We have people stopping by to check us, Schuylerville and Saratoga Springs out and then the next year we see them in a boat! Think of a few days enjoying the Adirondacks and Vermont by car and visiting Lake Champlain just to see what all of the shouting is about on our magnificent 6th Great Lake.

If you are in a yacht club find out about others in your federation and visit them. Attend and support the various annual weekend events - the Steak and Chicken Bakes, Bar-B-Ques and holiday celebrations. If your club does not have such an event, plan one and raise those needed funds all the while meeting and new people and hearing their stories.

Although we don't want to hear of you spending your summers hours in front of the computer, the cold winter is the perfect time



Enjoying summer on the Hudson at Schuyler Yacht Basin/RV Park.

for online investigations. But don't limit yourself online only, we and other marinas, businesses and chambers of commerce welcome a friendly phone call. And remember, there are no silly questions, this type of trip planning is not a part of your everyday life and we'd worry if you didn't have questions!

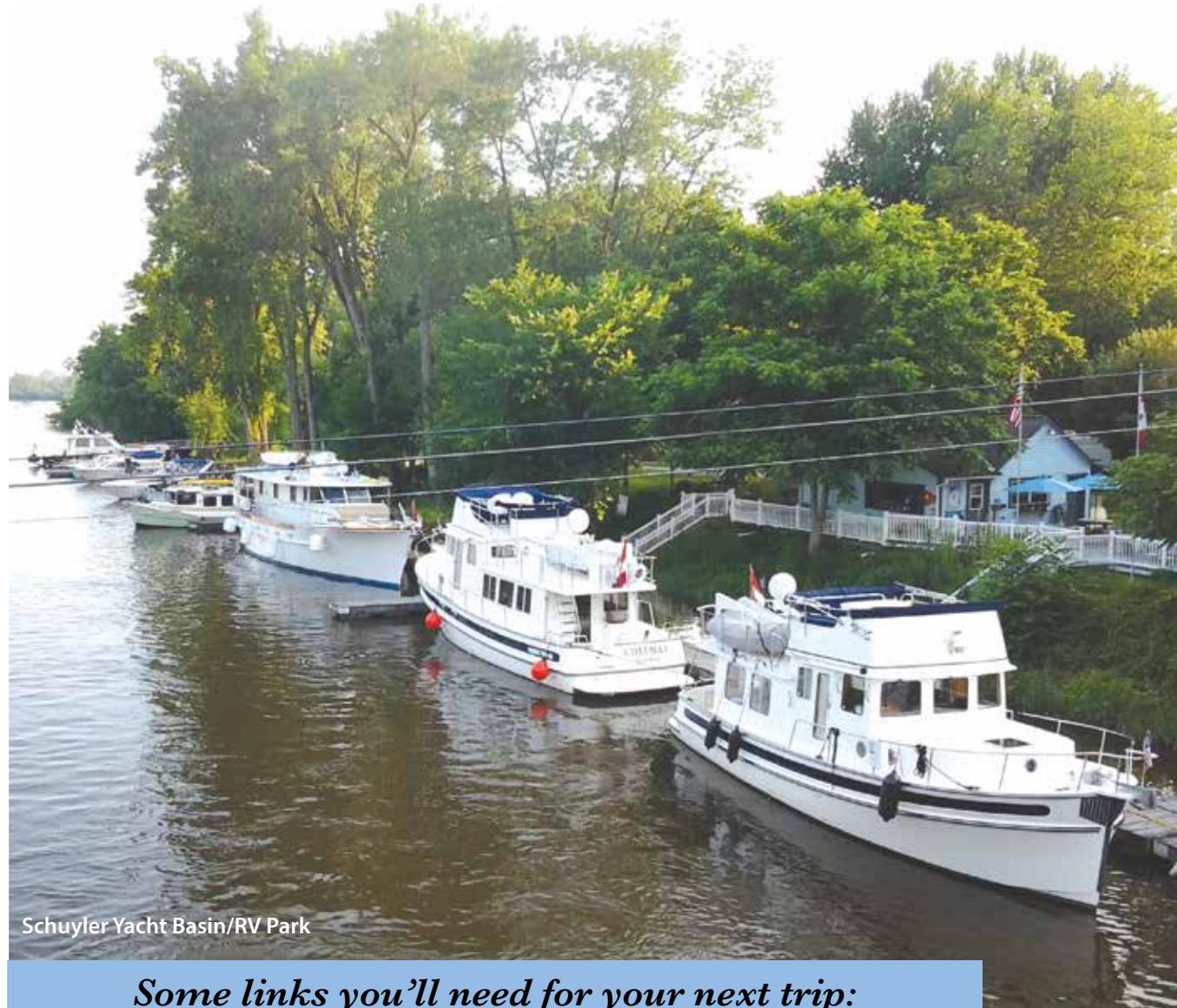
In a past article for this magazine I wrote of the great things that you can do here at the Schuyler Yacht Basin,

Schuylerville, Saratoga Springs and along the NYS Champlain Canal and Lake Champlain and I'd like to give you that list once again to get you started.

Our lives are lived so fast these days and we find that unless we do those things we want to do now, we may never have the chance again. Make 2017 the year you do all of those things, take all of those trips that you've thought about and truly enjoy yourselves!!



Beautiful garden patio at Schuyler Yacht Basin/RV Park.



Schuyler Yacht Basin/RV Park

Some links you'll need for your next trip:

Schuyler Yacht Basin/RV Park	www.scuyleryachtbasin.com
NYS Canal Corp.	www.canals.ny.gov
Southern Saratoga Chamber	www.southernsaratoga.org
Saratoga Co Chamber	www.saratoga.org
Schuylerville Chamber	www.schuylervillechamber.org
Hudson Crossing Park	www.hudsoncrossingpark.org
Lake Champlain Pub. Co.	www.lakechamplainpub.com
Lakes to Locks Passage	www.lakestolocks.org
Lk Champ Maritime Museum	www.lcmm.org
Parks & Trails NY	www.ptny.org
Saratoga Nat. Hist. Park	www.nps.gov/sara
Erie Canalway Nat Heritage Area	www.eriecanalway.org
Active Captain Interactive Cruising Guidebook	www.activecaptain.com
America's Great Loop Cruisers Assoc.	www.greatloop.org

You can reach Judy Dean at Schuyler Yacht Basin & RV Park
1 Ferry St
Schuylerville NY 12871
(518) 695-3193

Champlain Canal

The Locks at Waterford

The Locks are in regular recreational use by both local boaters - fishing, rowing, kayaking, canoeing - and also by long distance cruisers heading for their favorite seasonal waters. The process is fairly straightforward with a few basics. First, each lock is managed and maintained by a resident "Lockmaster", whose job it is to insure timely and safe operation. As your boat nears a lock, contact is made with the Lockmaster over radio or cell phone. You'll be advised of lock status and given a time estimate for lock availability for your passage. There is a traffic light signal at each lock gate and just as on the road, red means NO ENTRY.



Entering The Lock

The green light means it's OK to enter through the open gate. Since the lock sides are stone or cement, you'll want to protect the sides of your boat by rigging fenders over the side.



Pulling Alongside

Locks are equipped with holding lines, and boat crews snag these lines with bathooks and haul in.



Waiting For A Lift

Once the lines are in hand, then it's just a matter of holding on while the water level in the lock is raised or lowered (depending on your direction upstream or down).



A Flooded Lock

As you can see in the picture, the sailboat was heading upriver, so the lock was flooded to raise the boat to the upstream level.



Exit Gate Opening

When the lock water level matches the upstream level the upstream exit gate can be opened.



Bon Voyage

Lines are cast off, and the voyage is continued to deepwater Lake Champlain and beyond.

