



# The Wet Edge

NEWSLETTER OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER  
ANTIQUE & CLASSIC BOAT SOCIETY

**NOVEMBER 2015**  
Guest Editor - Greg Price

It's hard to believe that another summer season of boating in the Pacific Northwest has come to an end, but it wasn't without a fantastic ending. The Mahogany and Merlot event can always be counted on to be a great ending to summer and it's something that continues to grow in size, scope and popularity. It's easy to see why, given the scenic Lake Chelan location, beautiful early fall weather and passionate classic boaters that want to show and use their boats with friends.

Of course Mahogany and Merlot 2015 (the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual) had all of the aforementioned ingredients to make a memorable event, but it's the new things that keep the event fresh and interesting each year. For example, for the past five years or so we've had a dinner event on Thursday night at one of the houses on the lake. This year our group decided to expand the run up to Stehekin by going up on Thursday and returning the next day. This exemplifies one of my favorite characteristics of our group in that we like to USE our boats. I believe the run to Stehekin with the overnight is something that will grow in number. Heck, in just the first year we had a total of 30 people and 9 boats! The reality is that it's basically a mini odyssey on the front end of a cool boat show!

The classic car portion of the event continues to expand and this year we had the pleasure of having several very cool Ferraris. I hope this trend continues because I think we can all agree that "classic stuff", whether it's in the form of hydros, wood boats or cars, is very cool and all go well together.

In another first at M&M 2015, the group had an opportunity to get 16 or so boats out on Lake Chelan running up lake while a known photographer captured the action from a helicopter above. Let me tell you, that's a lot of boats in one big row! The word is that there will be more of this to come at next year's event. If you have ever attended the Mahogany and Merlot event you know what I mean and if you have not, then you should put it on your calendar next year.



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# Rhubarb's Journey

## Part 1 of 3 - By Scott Mason

You must be wondering, "Why would anyone tow their boat all the way to Gull Lake, Minnesota in late September for a boat show?"

There are three reasons; the first is coincidental. Last November I was heading home from pheasant hunting on the Snake River, driving on highway 26 near Washtucna. As I passed a vehicle pulling a Chris-Craft Capri in need of total restoration, the vehicle pulled off the road. After about a quarter mile, I theorized that this wood boat enthusiast may be having a mechanical problem and might need some assistance. When I doubled back, I asked the driver if he needed help. Fortunately, he was just stretching after driving from Everett to Lewiston, Idaho. That guy was Scott Harrison and after talking for a few minutes, I discovered he knew many of our members. More importantly I learned that he spends the summer in Northern Minnesota and that his BSLOL chapter would be sponsoring the 40th Annual International Show and he would be guiding a group on the Whitefish Chain of lakes. This invitation immediately planted a seed.

The second reason for driving to Minnesota was to visit the land of Patty's birth and her pen pal of 50 years, Barb Anderson. It turns out that her husband's, (Mike) mother lives on Niswaga Lake and they invited us to spend the week there. Niswaga Lake, which was central to all the activities, is very small, perhaps 600 acres. It is also the home of Lee Anderson who hosted our Friday night dinner and fundraising event. Our Anderson's (is everyone in MN named Anderson?) sent an article advertising the International show and a photo of Lee Anderson's museum. We were almost hooked.

Finally, I thought the show would be a great way to celebrate the two year journey of the hunt for the boat, preservation and her "coming out party".

The first day of our 1600 mile journey was uneventful. We left Saturday morning arriving in Butte, MT early enough to have a great meal at the Uptown Cafe (four courses and wine for \$25). We were getting a whopping 10 mpg (that only improved to a best of 11.5 mpg over the duration) so I was able to check the bearings at each of our frequent gas stops.

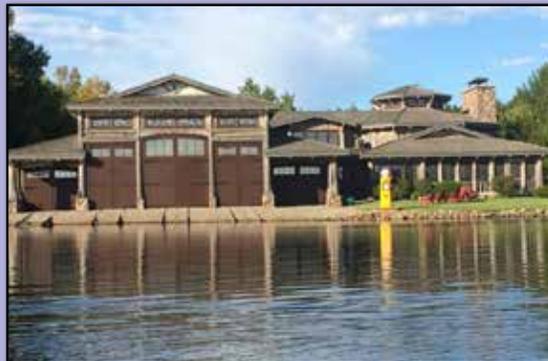
Sunday was far more eventful. About 50 miles outside of Billings we had a flat tire on the trailer. No big deal; changed it, on and on the road in 30 minutes. I convinced myself that this was an anomaly. When we pulled into Glendive, MT for fuel, (population 5600) I



noticed another tire going down. Now our day was turning ugly; 86 degrees, 200 miles from our hotel reservation in Bismarck, ND, no more spares. I asked the attendant at the gas station if there was anyplace to purchase a tire and get it mounted on a Sunday afternoon while Patty checked on places to stay. The attendant pointed us into "town" to Berg's. It turns out Berg's is a combination gas station and Goodyear tire store. The tire store was closed, of course, but the cashier called an employee who was there in fifteen minutes. When he arrived he never said a word, just used two jacks and removed two tires and the spare. I mean he didn't say one word... not that he had the tires, not the price, not the cause of my demise. He just went to work mounting and balancing 5 tires. Upon completion he finally indicated that the tires were stamped 2005 and that was the cause of the failure. We made it to Bismarck around 10 pm that evening including the time change.

Monday we made it through North Dakota into Minnesota. What a change in landscape from agriculture to trees and lakes. We arrived at Niswaga, met Mike and Barb and went for a pontoon boat ride around the lake including a very slow passage by Lee Anderson's phenomenal boathouse and home. Additionally he has approximately a dozen wooden boats on the water under 40' covered slips.

Tuesday morning, we launched Rhubarb at CC Boatworks on the Whitefish chain. Scott Harrison met us at the launch. I didn't recognize him at first as we only met briefly on the side of the road in Eastern Washington. We motored a short distance to Moonlight Bay for a continental breakfast and a Captain's meeting to summarize the day's journey. I'm guessing two groups totaling 30 boats cruised the chain



# to the International Boat Show

of lakes meeting back at Moonlight bay for lunch. It was a glorious sunny day 75-80 degrees. Rhubarb ran great and just as important, the ride was phenomenal regardless of wind and waves. We also met Dave Thompson and saw Rio Rita, a beautiful boat that Alan Thomle had previously owned.

The weather forecast for Wednesday and our planned cruise of Gull Lake was horrid; 100% chance of rain and thunder showers. We were told the cruise would proceed rain or shine unless there was lightning. Well, there was lightning so the cruise was scuttled. Instead we went to Madden's, the ACBS headquarters hotel, and registered for the show where I decided to purchase way too much stuff to remember this trip by. From there we joined the other folks in town for the



boat show at the Grandview Lodge for lunch. At the lunch, (ate Walleye for first of many times) we listened to a presentation on the 100 year old lodge and a history lesson of Gull Lake. At one time there were 170 lodges on the lake, and it ain't that

big a lake. An announcement was made that there was a window between 2:00 and 5:00 when no rain was expected and anyone interested was invited to do a two hour cruise. Unfortunately I had to skip the Q & A of Chris Smith to run back to our residence, hook up Rhubarb and get back to the boat launch and rendezvous all within an hour.

The cruise was awesome which included going through some of the shallow, narrow channels which open up into different parts of the lake and ultimately through a canal and onto lake Nisswa where we were staying. Upon arrival back at Bar Harbor, the site of the boat show, we docked Rhubarb in her primo viewing spot for the remainder of the week. She was given the first spot as you entered the docks. This allowed us the opportunity to chat with every boat show visitor.

Thursday was a day of reflection although it didn't start out that way. I awoke at midnight unable to sleep so decided to drive to see if Rhubarb was still afloat. I crawled under the cover, manually turned on the bilge pump and waited no longer than 10 to 15 seconds until it shut off automatically. Then I waited to see how long it would be before it came on again...it never did so after an hour of waiting and visiting with the security guard I went back to bed.

The boat show opened on Friday and it was amazing with more than 133 boats registered. The boats showing up were incredible in their style, condition and uniqueness. I originally

thought the show itself would be much more ostentatious and Rhubarb would be rather ordinary, but I couldn't have been more mistaken. She got a huge amount of attention from people who knew she wasn't a Chris Craft. The fun we had "Sheparding" her through rough water solidifying my goal that she never become a "trailer queen".

Friday was a day when memories are formed and justification for all the expense, travel and effort it took to get to Gull Lake. At the docks, boats were still arriving in the dense fog including Lee Anderson in the Apache with the sound of all the cylinders echoing off the surrounding landscape. By 8:00 am, I had polished Rhubarb enough that dock assistants were worried I was removing the varnish. She was ready to meet judges, townspeople and fellow woody boaters. Patty did a great job displaying the boat with a period ice chest, green coke bottles and of course fresh rhubarb. Within minutes it seemed the docks were filled with people and the response to Rhubarb was amazing and extremely fun. The men seemed in awe of the engine compartment while the women were more intrigued by the name Rhubarb. We could have written a cookbook with all the recipes offered. Instead of the typical question, "Is it a Chris-Craft?" the most common question was, "Why the name Rhubarb?" It was a joy hearing comments like "beautiful" and "stunning".



In the morning Rob DePron and Ron Stevenson showed up on the dock. It was great to see familiar faces and give them their tickets to the most coveted event in town, the auction. There were 450 tickets available for the ACBS Scholarship Auction and gathering at Lee Anderson's museum and boathouse. I was fortunate to have overpaid my registration and had extra tickets for them. Rumor on the docks was they were selling for \$500 instead of the stated value of \$50. Rob and Ron knew virtually everyone on the docks and introduced me to many.



Judges, with their identifying hats and clipboards, waked the docks all day, so accordingly I sat by the boat waiting for them to judge Rhubarb. Others had advised it was wise to be present to answer any questions. During the day I found myself getting more and more nervous and a bit frustrated

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## Rhubarb's Journey to the International Boat Show (cont.)

wondering if I got skipped. The daily show ended at 4:00 and I waited till 5:00 for the judges to come around. Finally, one of the judges walked by and explained that he had five boats left to judge and would be back in the morning. I was relieved to know that I was on the judge's list.

Friday night's event at Lee and Penny Anderson's home was not worth \$50 or \$500 it was priceless. I don't even know where to start to tell you how awesome this event was. The venue (boathouse and museum) is beyond description. Hopefully most of you subscribe to the Woodyboater blog and read about and saw pictures of this event. Mr. Anderson conversed with each and every one of us in attendance. This single event made the entire trip worthwhile. Memories are what it's all about and this is a great one.

Saturday, Rhubarb finally got judged. I was able to answer questions about what was upgraded (floor, ceiling boards, gauges and assorted engine parts) and what they questioned was original (dashboard, engine, transmission) and exhale. We had a great day checking out as many other boats as possible. I finally got to see the eventual Peoples Choice – Big Boy restored by Alan Thomle. We also met many people and enthusiasts on the docks. Patty did battle with folks from Minnesota regarding the title of "Rhubarb Capital of the World". She conceded they may have invented the Honey Crisp apple but Sumner, WA is definitely the Rhubarb capital of the world.

We arrived late to the awards banquet as I was told at

the boat launch that if I didn't get the scum of the boot stripe within an hour it was permanent. Upon arrival, I was congratulated by many of the fine folks that we had met advising Rhubarb was awarded a "Silver" award. Needless to say we were elated. After dinner we gathered our trophy and were given the judges scoring sheet. When



we got back to Nisswa I looked at the judge's sheet and it seemed to add up to 93 to me which would have been gold. That assumption has now been confirmed by the Chief Judge and a gold name plate is forthcoming.

Sunday, we sadly left our golden hosts, the Anderson's, to head west for our date with a fine cabin on Flathead Lake and ultimately to our final destination at Mahogany and Merlot in Chelan. Before we left, Barb insisted we complete the christening ceremony. We drank champagne (sparkling wine), poured some on her cutwater and said the all important words, "To the sailors of old to Rhubarb (toast) "To the sea....To the Sailors of old.....To the Sea!", and several other passages (and toasts) all of which have equal importance in assuring Rhubarb and her crew safe passage.