

The SSMA Journal

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- Bonnie's First Boat
- Theodore the Tugboat
- FV Thunder



- Read about Three Clubs Summer Fun Float and Boat Show Stories
- USS Constellation CC2 - Progress Update

SSMA The Scale Ship Modelers Association of North America, Incorporated (SSMA) is a not for profit organization as filed in the State of Delaware. SSMA was founded in 1988 to promote scale ship modeling. We assist our members and club affiliates by sharing ship building information, cooperatively providing liability insurance, providing assistance in organizing and publicity for regional and national regattas, and by representing their needs to the modeling industry.

Individual Membership As an individual member of the SSMA you are entitled to receive a quarterly newsletter. Cost of membership is \$32.00 per year. Contact the Membership Director. You will find a membership application is included with this issue— please pass it along to a club member or friend. DO NOT SEND MEMBERSHIPS TO JOURNAL EDITOR.

Club Membership Membership in the SSMA is open to all radio control scale model boat clubs (electric, steam, and sail) residing in the North American Continent and related possessions. Each club is entitled to receive a Charter, the quarterly newsletter, and Regatta Handbook.

SSMA Newsletter The SSMA Newsletter is a quarterly newsletter. Articles, projects, pictures, info. etc. can be submitted to the Newsletter Editor (Bob Kostosky) by emailing: bobkost@verizon.net. Articles should be submitted, either by email in Microsoft Word, or Text format. Photographs should be submitted separately and at the highest resolution possible. (ACTUALLY, send in any format, we can figure something out— journal@ssmana.org) If you have questions about submitting pictures, you can email me as we may be able to assist you. Submissions are encouraged from any author, member or not. We assume unsolicited material is intended for publication unless otherwise noted. We assume letters, questions, news releases and club news items are contributed gratis. So there. And thank you for your participation! Enjoy the hobby and encourage the young!

We are open to ideas on other services that the SSMA can provide to its members and / or other clubs. Please feel free to contact any of the directors with any ideas you may have.


Attention all club officers-

If you send the Editor, (Bob Kostosky) a spreadsheet list of your members with their emails, I will be happy to send them an electronic past issue of **The JOURNAL**. (No junk mail to follow!)

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Please join us in making our membership grow!

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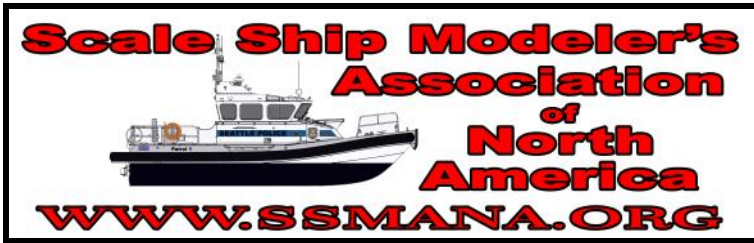
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TO ALL SSMA MEMBERS AND FAMILY

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HEINZ AND ALL DIRECTORS DON, GARY, BILL, BOB, TOM



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Operational and Radio Control Association of Shipwrights

2023 FUN FLOAT AND BOAT SHOWS

By Bill Dion

Traditionally in the North Florida ORCAS April Spring time means the Fun Float and Boat Show held at the Colonial Manor Park, Aka the Duck Pond! This year was no exception as the weather was lovely! We were greeted early with a pretty blue sky, gentle wind and a pond with high water for easier launching over the wall. Bob Farrar and I got to the Pond early to borrow long tables from Joe Honeycut and Judge Charlie Coffey

The Morgan family arrived followed by Louis Perez and Gary Dickinson. Gary brought some nice table clothes. Pop-up tents were erected and Louis Perez got the waterfront docks and buoys out. Within minutes we were totally ready for a great day!

Despite all five 8 foot folding tables set up to display boats, high member turnout and participation called for additional small tables and a few ground displayed boats this year.

Most of the boats cruised the pond. There was plenty of real boat traffic on the pond! In fact, the pond really looked far more like a busy city harbor than a pretty little pond for ducks!

Right bottom: A newly restored US Navy destroyer from the Arleigh Burke class named the "USS Lassen." She has been restored to great accuracy by Brian Bush. Fun part is she does not fire missiles or shells... just water!



There were many “firsts” participating. Here is a beautifully completed model of the Yacht, “Atlantis” by Bill weeks. He built this from a high caliber Robbe Kit and is 100% accurate!



She may look like she has sailed many nautical miles, but she is a one-design by Lester Gill. I sailed her for over an hour and found her to be a lots of fun and a steady boat!

Captain Lester Gill!

Louis Perez’s “MARKO” super tanker gets ready to be guided out of the harbor by a “ready team” of Springer tugs... Note the US Coast Guard chopper on Marko’s Helo-pad ready for takeoff.



Long line-up of the ORCAs Fleet on display



Below: Bill Dion's rum-runner, "Vagabond"

Bill's Grandfather made some of his fortune running boot leg booze during the prohibition by running his boat, the "Vagabond" at night without running lights sneaking past revenuers and the US Coast Guard. The boat is named after his grandfather's rum running boat!



There is more to mention about Theodore and his history, but this will be covered in a later side article. Below, Gary Dickinson set up a wonderful surprise for the Club. Theodore proudly sits with the ORCAS Mascot. From Left to right: Captains, Carl Long, Gary Dickinson, Luis Perez, Bill Dion, Don Laye, Bob Farrar, and Bill Weeks.



Surprise!! "Theodore the Tug" comes to ORCAS!



Future Captains learning about the hobby!



Captain Bill Weeks's Fleet....All built by Bill, himself... Schooner, "Atlantis", Railroad Tug, "Akron", Grand Banks Trawler, "Roxie" and speedboat, "Aqua Riva". The Fleet is accented by the beautiful Colonial Manor Duck Pond.



May 13th Float came as a very nice day at the Duck pond. It was nice balmy weather... To the left is Carl Long's US Coast Guard Fleet and on the right is Louis Perez's newly acquired Chris Craft Cobra speedboat.



Below: To the left, is the "Tom O'Dell", Douglas Greg tug is piloted by Gary Dickinson. Center is Don Laye's new Eclipse sailboat. To the right, is the African Queen is piloted by Bill Dion

In summing up our 2023 Fun Float & Boat Show, it was probably the largest Annual Fun Float & Boat Show with 30 captains and a fleet of over 50 ships and boats!

OTHER GREAT FLOATS SO FAR....

Despite the challenges of weather, our Club continues to have great Floats, grow the membership and expand the Fleet!





Above: taken from the May 19th great Float at Losco Lake....New and Old sailing together!

Left is, Steve Wiggins's EC 12. Center top, is Steve Morgan Jr's EC 12 "Black Pearl". To the right, leaving the pack is Thom Rodger's EC 12 and at the center bottom is Bill Dion's schooner "Emma C. Berry".

This was Emma C. Berry's maiden voyage after an extensive refit and cosmetic upgrade by Bill Dion:



Above: Here is a cool looking "Taxi Boat" from Warren Wilson's fleet built by Andy Anders. She has been out on Losco many years before... but today was a great day for excellent taxi service!



Above: Another maiden voyage: Tom Kotheimer's first build, a very nice looking "Snipe" sailboat... Great success, Tom!

Below: The Latest Douglas Greg class tug being restored by Brian Bush



This Tug has a good tale: The tug has been passed through three great ORCAS members in less than one year. She was originally owned by Charlie Johnson, who, last year, traded her to Bill Bibault in Athens Georgia for a Gato class submarine. A few months later, Bill decided he wanted to sell her. Brian Bush, fairly new active member of ORCAS, wanted a good tug to restore. Bill Dion led Brian to Bill Bibault. So Brian met Bill B and a deal was made. Brian is doing a super job in this restoration with lots of details and more to add.

Below: Three of our Club's Douglas Greg class tugs cruising.....



A recent get together with three Douglas Greg class tugs.... All are exquisitely restored Below: Brian Bush's is in the center. Steve Morgan Jr's, the "William R. Morgan" is on the left and Louis Perez's Tug is on the right.



July 15th Float: We had to go to" Plan B". We chose the Colonial Manor Duck Pond instead of Losco Regional Park as the lake had a heavy weed growth due to high summer heat and rain, (Continued information, next page)



From Previous page: Though a very toasty day, the Duck Pond offered shade and a very nice cooling and sailing breeze.....The above photo, though hard to see, Shows “Tom O”Dell” Tug in the distant Center, “Taxi,Taxi” on the left, The “Wolf” Tug in front and the “Echo” to the far right. I was reluctant to put this photo in, but it does point out the wide diversity of boats in our Club Fleet

Other great Boats....

Below: Charlie Johnson’s canal tug boat (work in progress)



Above:“Leroy” belonging to Captain Eva Perez

Below: “Skittles”, Steve Morgan Jr’s Catamaran. For now, this is the only running “cat” in our Club... But, I am sure there will be more in the future!



Below: Louis Perez’s recently restored EC 12 “Serenity”



There are so many more great boats built or rebuilt by our members, I had a very difficult time to select for this issue. ⚓

Theodore the Tugboat



Let me first intervene with this short note to introduce the late William Mc Neal who was an officer and active member of North Florida ORCAS. He was a great scratch builder of both radio control aircraft and boats. Bill became good friends with Gary Dickinson as well as other members of ORCAS. Unfortunately, Bill was all too young when he passed rather suddenly from a bad bout of cancer. He contributed much to our ORCAS and one of his creations was a scratch built model of Theodore. Gary shares the next article that was Bill's own letter used to introduce Theodore the Tug to our Group back in 2012

When Bill Mc Neal passed away, Gary Dickinson wrote the following note....

Bill was born December 1964 in Albany, NY and grew up in Silver Spring, MD. He was a graduate of Montgomery Blair High School, Silver Spring, MD and Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, FL. He was a former employee of Piedmont Airline, at their maintenance bases in Salisbury, MD and Jacksonville, FL. Bill's passion was the designing, building and flying of RC Airplanes and building RC Boats from scratch, like "Theodore the Tug." He and his late friend Bob Masterson were the founding members of the North Florida Dawn Patrol Flying Group RC Boat Club. (www.dawnpatrol.iwarp.com). He also flew frequently at the Oceanway International Miniature Airport. He was a past member and officer of the North Florida ORCAS

Gary still remains in touch with Bill's family.....



Theodore.....

By The late William McNeal, Dec 19th, 2012

Back in the mid to late 1990's there was a TV show on public television called Theodore Tugboat and Friends. It used live action model tugboats to tell children's stories with lessons and good morals.

About that same time, I joined the North Florida ORCAS Model Boat Club; I thought it would be cool to make my own model Theodore Tugboat. I drew up some plans and several months later my model was a regular at the ORCAS regattas.

It had a long career entertaining local kids and rescuing other disabled boats stranded out on the pond. Now I am into RC float planes and Theodore is now doing duty rescuing my RC planes when they occasionally get stranded out on the pond.

My Theodore has a 36" long fiberglass and foam hull with a balsa wood and ABS plastic upper deck. It has full functions forward, reverse, left, right and the eyeballs move back and forth. It also has a horn which is a digital recording of the original Theodore tugboat horn from the TV show. It is powered by a Dumas 6 volt electric motor with the running hardware from the Dumas Brooklyn tug. It uses a 6 volt lantern, or emergency exit sign battery.

Theodore will continue to entertain, and rescue disabled RC vessels.





FV THUNDER

RC Downeast Tuna Boat

Written by Tom Ewer and Traci Ewer Volstad

LOA: 6'
 Beam: 2' 3"
 Draft: 8"
 Bridge clearance: 4' 10"
 Dry Weight: 95 lbs
 Power: (2) 1 hp Electric Motors
 Running Gear: 4 Blade Props, SS Shafts
 Speed: 14 knots
 Builders: Capt. Tom Ewer, Capt. Nat Ewer, and Capt. Don Ewer

Origin Story:

The popular 6 foot RC fishing vessel "Thunder" has humble beginnings originating in Beach Haven, NJ. She was a scratch hull custom built in 1972 by Captain Nat Ewer. Her original hull was 3/16" plywood and she was modeled after a 36' coast guard rescue boat. She's seen her fair share of the east coast traveling from the Northeast, down to Key West, and eventually settling in Palm Beach, Florida. Nearly 50 years later, she has received a total refit, overhaul, and conversion to a traditional downeast-style commercial tuna fishing boat. It has been a multi-generational family endeavor with Capt. Nat's son, Capt. Tom Ewer, leading the project along with his brother Capt. Don Ewer. The family has worked together over a three month period converting every aspect of the family heirloom into a detailed masterpiece.



NOTE: A number of videos were created to show more details about the ship. Enter the highlighted address into your web browser to view each video that is included on the following pages.

<https://rb.gy/ua3zyx>



Deck, Hull, and Hardtop:

Thunder's hull and decks had some soft spots after about 5 years of use and 40+ years of storage. Her bottom, hull sides, transom, and topsides were stripped and made sound again with epoxy and fiberglass cloth (both interior and exterior). Her

hardtop was extended to follow the desired lines and overhang of a traditional downeast vessel.

Tom elevated her finishes by custom cutting, sanding, and installing a teak transom and covering boards. She was then faired and sprayed with high build primer, and faired again before her first coat of Awlgrip Haze Gray hull paint and Matterhorn White topsides. Her bottom paint followed using a flat black Awlgrip paint. Her decks were fabricated using 1/8" x 1/2" teak strips and black Thi-



col filler. The cabin windows were fabricated out of gray polycarbonate.

All interior details (console, seating, tackle center, coolers, and engine box) were made of 1/16" plywood, epoxy coated, and Awlgrip painted. All varnished surfaces were coated with 10 coats of Schooner Varnish.



Tower:

Nat constructed a 1/6 scale Tuna tower from 1/4", 3/8", 7/16" aluminum tubing. The tower sports:

- Full Controls
- Sunshade
- Antennas
- LED 12 Volt Tower Spreader Lights

Enter the highlighted address into your web browser to view the video <https://rb.gy/3mqsqj>



Running Gear and Power:

Thunder's rudders were custom made of brass and installed with a heavy-duty steering servo and are located under the stern fish box. The fish box is removable for easy access. She wouldn't be complete without fully functional exhaust pipes plumbed with smoke and water simulating a real exhaust system.

- 4 ¼" 4 Blade Brass Propellers
- 3/16" Stainless Steel Shafts
- Custom Motor Stringers
- (2) 1 hp Electric Motors
- 40 Amp Speed Controls
- Custom Built Shaft Logs
- LED Engine Room and Bilge Lighting
- 12V Power Supply/Regulator
- Functional Custom Marine Exhaust System with 12V Water Pump for Cooling
- Smoke Generator Plumbed into Exhaust

Enter the highlighted address into your web browser to view the video <https://rb.gy/lx2wna>



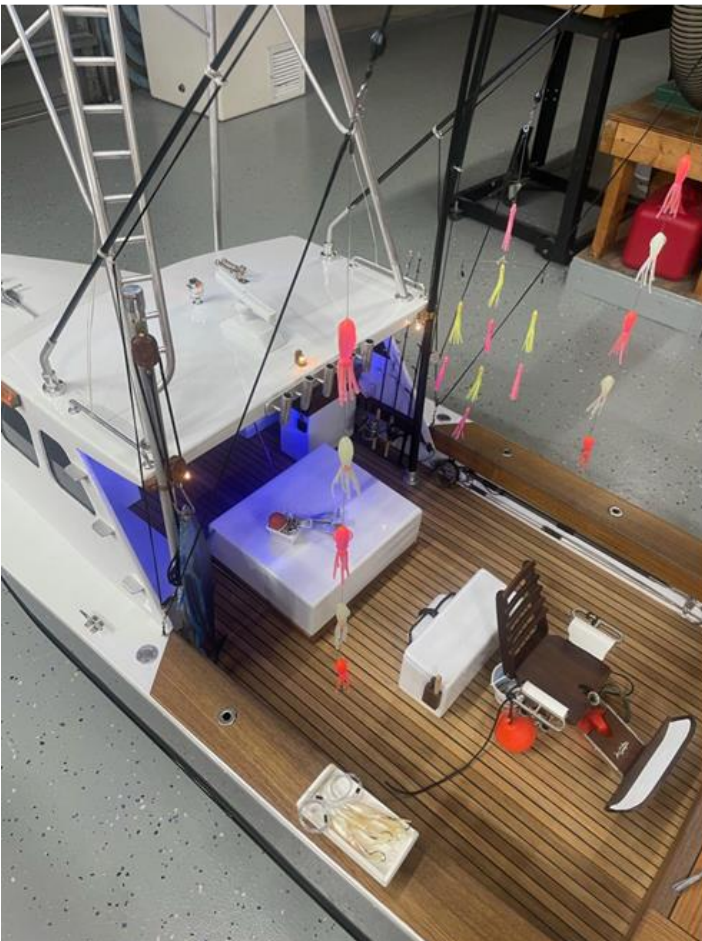
Fishing Equipment:

FV Thunder is a fully equipped fishing machine. Capt. Nat, Tom, and Don have a collective 70+ years of experience on the water with the majority of those years spent commercial and sport fishing. The RC downeast boasts two fully functional bandit reels custom built by Nat. All tackle was custom rigged by Tom using miniature hooks, swivels, clips, crimps, and artificial lures/baits. All terminal tackle was custom built as well. This was one the most unique and intricate parts of the build. It shows off the family's heritage and fishing acumen as well as their eye for accuracy and precision.

- (2) Bandit Reels (12 Volt Operational)
- Green Stick
- Gin Pole with Block and Tackle
- Flying Gaff
- (2) Straight Gaffs
- Operational 22 cal. Bang Stick
- On Deck Drink Cooler/Bait Box with Ice
- Murray Brothers Fighting Chair
- 12/0 Fin-nor Tuna Reels on 130 Tuna Sticks
- (3) 30 lb. Spinning Rods and Reels
- Safety Lines
- Insulated Stern Fish Hold
- Under Gunwale Gaff Racks
- Rod Racks for Spinning Rods and Bait Net
- Drawer/Tackle Storage
- Knife Storage with Knives
- Cleaning Table
- "Gemlux" Screwless Rod Holders - 0°, 15°, and 30°
- Custom Bucket Harness
- Operation Raw Water Wash Down

Enter the highlighted address into your web browser to view the video <https://rb.gy/jp4q8f>





Electronics and Navigation:

- Helm with Steering Wheel and Throttle at Console and Tower
- Gauge Package
- Operational Furuno Radar
- LED Running Lights
- LED Deck Lights
- LED Tower Lights
- Satellite TV Antenna
- Satellite Communication Antenna
- Compass
- Barometer
- Clock
- Helm seat to Starboard
- Lounge Seat with Storage to Port



Safety Equipment and Other Amenities:

- Gold Leaf Lettering on Teak Transom by Kauffs Signs
- Fenders/Poly Balls
- Bucket/Cleaning Supplies
- Tool Box with Jumper Cables
- First Aid Kit
- Life Jackets
- Air Horns
- Operational Spot Light, Deck Lights, and Navigation Lights
- Salt Water Wash Down Hose
- SAT Phone
- Stainless Steel Deck Hardware and Cleats
- Stainless Steel Rub Rail
- (8) 3/16" 3-Strand Dock Lines with Spliced Eyes

Enter the highlighted address into your web browser to view the video <https://rb.gy/dag0h8>

Trailer

Another rare custom component of the FV Thunder project was her very own fully functional triple axle aluminum trailer built by Capt. Don. She replicates a classic float on ACE Trailer - one that Don and Tom have hauled hundreds of times in their long careers in the marine industry. She can haul the downeast and launch down a boat ramp with ease via a golf cart or RC truck. All metal was custom cut, bent, and assembled with the following details:

- Guide Bars
- 12V LED Tail Lights
- Safety Chains
- Winch Stand
- 1 1/2" C Channel Aluminum Frame
- 5/16" Stainless Steel Axles
- Diamond Plate Fenders
- Aluminum Rims with Rubber Tires
- Custom 5" Aluminum Drop Hitch with 1" Ball
- Florida License Plate

Enter the highlighted address into your web browser to view the video

<https://rebrand.ly/tb4lryd>



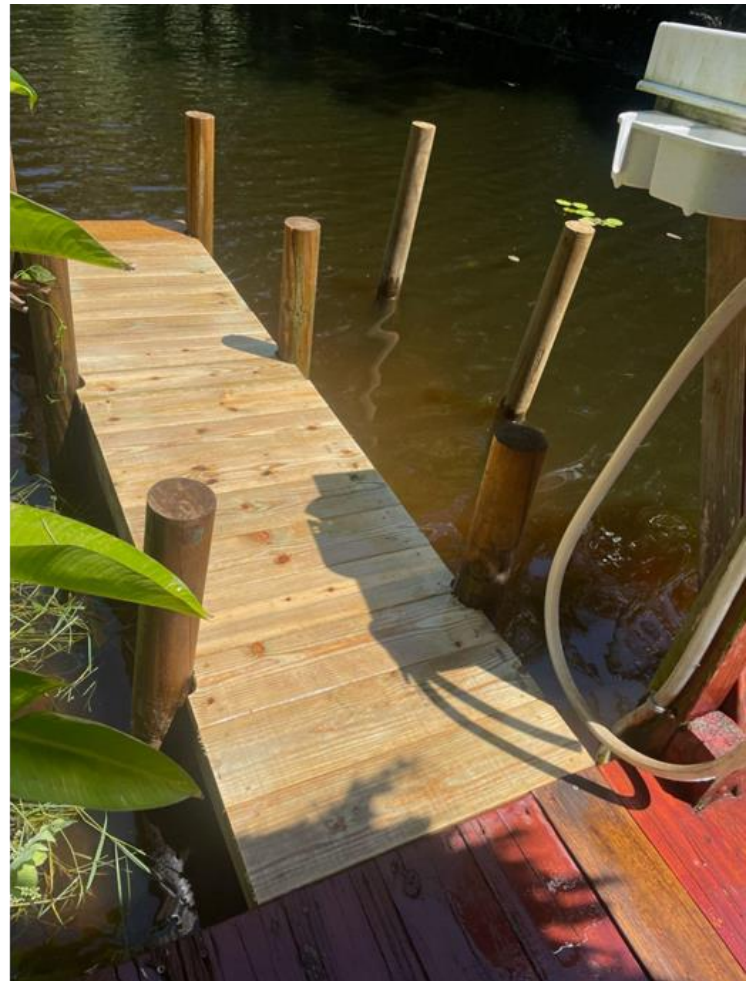
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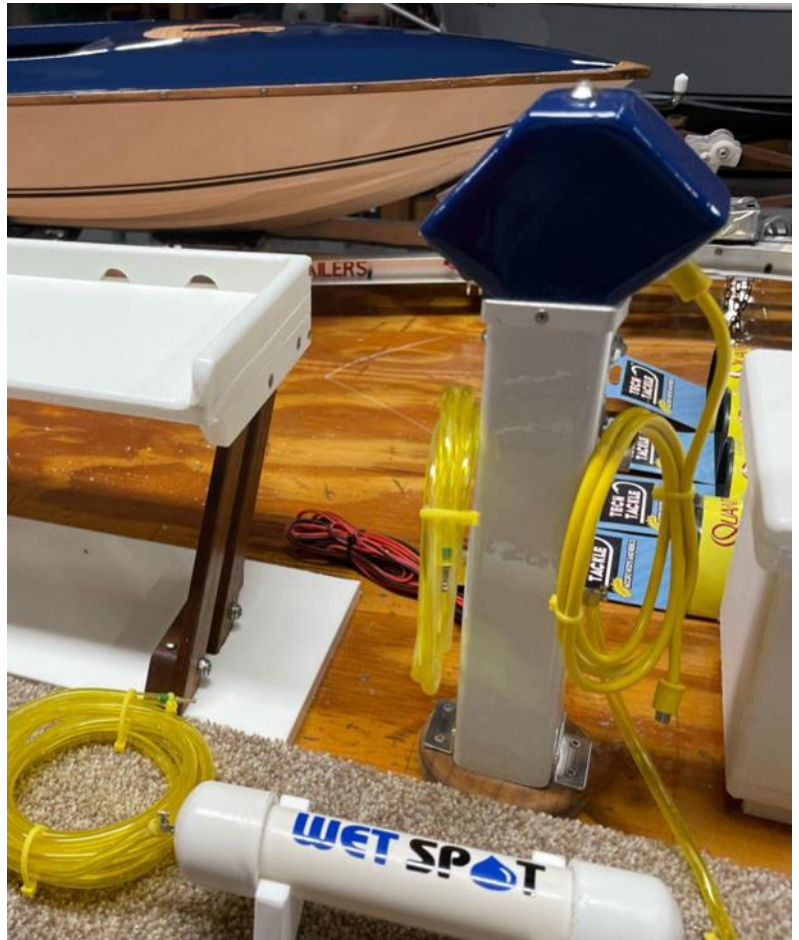
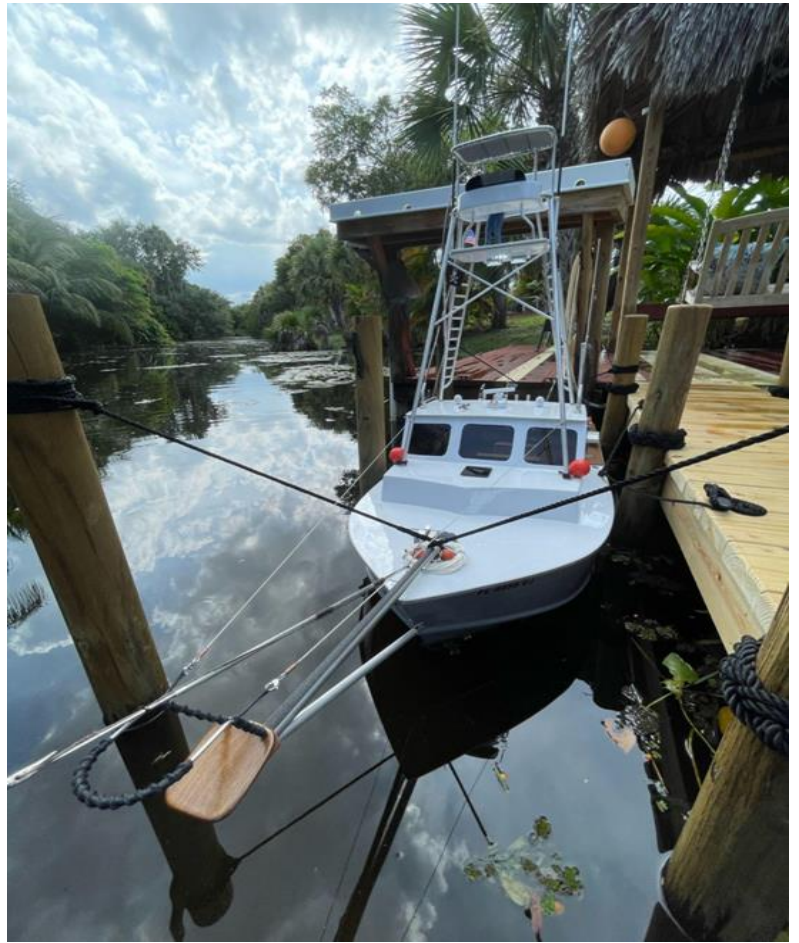
After much thought, dedication, heart, and soul went into Thunder's rebuild, she needed a proper place to call home. Her hailing port was fashioned with a custom dock and wet slip for her to tie up after a long day of fishing. It was constructed just like the real thing with pressure treated lumber and 3" pilings water jetted 6 ft into the canal bed. Her marina style amenities were another fun extension of the project.

- 50 Amp Power Pedestal with LED Lighting
- Fresh Water Wash Down Hoses
- Wet Spot Water Softener
- Dock Box
- Fish Cleaning Station
- Aluminum Swim Ladder
- Stainless Steel Dock Cleats
- ¼" 3 Stranded Spliced Dock Lines
- 3" Pressure Treated Pilings with Line Holders
- Weigh Station with Scale
- Live Bait Pen

Enter the highlighted address into your web browser to view the video <https://rebrand.ly/3eocb5q>

Enter the highlighted address into your web browser to view the video <https://rebrand.ly/x9w5ffq>






The majority of Thunder's parts and pieces are custom and handmade with countless hours of thought, planning, and fabrication. The rebuild of Thunder has been a team effort for Nat, Tom, and Don. They have devoted many hours of creative thinking and hard work - not to mention quality time spent as father and sons.

They have many more things to come. Stay tuned for updates on the FV Thunder and her conversions from tuna fishing to longline swordfishing and shark fishing/diving adventures.



You can follow along with Thunder's complete rebuild from start to finish on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#) with @theCaptandTheKid <https://www.instagram.com/thecaptandthekid/> 





Maine Fun Float in Scarborough

By Bill Michaels

Once again, we were blessed with terrific weather for our annual get together with the Maine club in Scarborough Maine. The privately owned pond is a wonderful site, with clean water and a big beach. (It is in a great location for a joint event, being about halfway between Boston and Rockland, ME.

We had a good turnout again this year-- with 35+ boats and 15+ skippers. MMC members in attendance included Charlie Tebbetts, Tim Logan, Glenn Williams, Bill Michaels, Bill McKeon, Bill Gibson III, Jonathan Eno, and Bruce Murray.

This year, we had some outside help-- There was a minor collision between a sailboat and Glenn's USCG Buoy Tender. The crane on Glenn's boat got snagged in the sailboat's rigging, and went overboard. Fortunately, one of the visitors, Crystal Gewlas was there. She spotted the crane floating off....



Crystal came with her parents and her children to watch the event but saved the day by wading in to retrieve boats and parts after the unfortunate mishaps on the water! We cannot say enough about her kindness and enthusiasm

- thank you Crystal!

And to top it off Crystal's children and their young friend all tried their hand at running a tugboat and immediately proved themselves as excellent Captains. It was a most enjoyable time for everyone!



Above: Tim Mayer's Fort Valley. Tim uses a converted nebulizer to generate the cloud of "smoke" that is really just water vapor. Tim says it was a lot less mess than using the more traditional oil-based smoke units.... (Richard Shapiro photo.)

Below: Jonathan Eno's HMS Bluebell, a 1/48 scale Flower-class Corvette. It is the Graupner Ready to run model, with a number of improvements made by him. Jonathan said he thinks he got the last one available of this model when he picked it up- he hasn't seen one for sale since.






Above: Jonathan Eno's big Elco 80 foot PT Boat looked great at speed! (Photo by Bill M.)

Below: Glenn Williams' 1/96 scale Buoy Tender USCGC Willow. (R. Shapiro photo)



Richard Shapiro, from the Maine club, sent Tim Logan over a dozen great photos of some of the models that day. My apologies to the builders – I was too busy having fun to capture all the names of who brought what!

Here are some examples-- the rest are on the club Facebook page.... 





Bonnie's First Boat

By Blaine Russell and Ken Valk

This is a story about how two old model boating geezers assisted a young lady through her first build of a model power boat.



But the focus of this story is to emphasize the importance of a newcomer's first boat. Its build, finish and performance are critical and often determine if one stays or gives up on our hobby. I'm Ken and this is my side of the story.

Out of the blue in March 2017, I got an unusual call from Bonnie asking, "Where do I find a model boat and learn how to run it?" She had seen "these cute little boats" running on Spreckels Lake in San Francisco and wanted to learn more about them. I was taken back and had to ask, "Bonnie; How the heck did you get my name?"

"Oh, you were listed in the "Ask the Experts" on the website of the San Francisco Model Yacht Club. I later learned the San Francisco Club had developed the program to help newcomers into our hobby and fellow boaters with problems. And the program has been very successful for them.

I've never considered myself an expert. And now, after moving from San Francisco and living in Washington State, 750 miles away, really wondered if I could be of any help.

During our initial conversation I learned Bonnie was far-more interested in "Building" rather than buying an off the shelf, ready-to-run boat. And insisted she wanted to "use her hands". Bonnie was a college student going for her master's degree in chemical engineering. But with all her education, she, and others of her generation, were not taught to use their hands except for using computers.

That opened my eyes. Many millennials like Bonnie have little training or exposure to our old traditional trades and crafts. With no building or experience using hand and power tools, I figured her first boat should be a kit.

"Ok Bonnie, two types of boats, sail or power, what's your preference?" No doubt she wanted power and high speed. I suggested "how about an electric power boat but with a slower scale speed"? There was some hesitation, but Bonnie agreed to the compromise, scale power for her first boat and faster speeds in the next model.

And with no experience building or using tools I felt a "mentor" to help guide her, would be essential to make her first build a successful one! Over the phone, with only now and then assistance, just would not cut it. That's when I thought of my good friend Blaine Russell. With his superior modeling skills, patience and calm I felt Bonnie could succeed. Thankfully he agreed to take the job on.

Blaine and I formulated a game plan. Her first build had to be a success, hit the water, and perform well to develop her confidence. We both agreed, the old, out of production, Midwest Maine Lobster kit was the best choice.

Why that specific Midwest kit? Because it uses "Plank on Frame" construction. A primary method of building kits and full-size craft. Learning plank on frame would help Bonnie later advance on to constructing other more complex models from plans, i.e., scratch building.

Many kits end up as trash because of poor instructions. But Midwest's "Success Series Book of Instructions" were written in simple, concise, and easy to understand terms. And their good photographs show the building sequence we felt would be Bonnie's best chance of finishing the boat.

The long search for a 30" Midwest # 964 Maine Lobster Kit began. We quickly learned they were now collectors' items. Midwest had discontinued kits years ago and the old #964 was now a "rare find".

Blaine finally located one on E-Bay listed as "Still in The Box" and immediately called me. After hanging up, I tried to call Bonnie that evening only to get her answering machine. I left the message "Get that boat now"!

But then on 2nd thought, knowing the kit would sell fast, I contacted the seller. I offered him the full asking price, no negotiation, and would pay the shipping. Offer accepted and he'd ship it to Blaine. The next day Bonnie called almost in tears. "I called and he told me it's already sold". I decided not to tell Bonnie I had bought the kit. First wanted to determine if the kit was in buildable condition. Online buying is often a risk. But when it finally arrived Blaine carefully inspected it and found it was in near perfect condition.

In late April 2017, we met and showed the kit to Bonnie. She loved it. Below is Blaine's story of the build. By far, the most important part of the article.

Blaine's Story

Over the years I have helped many folks build RC boats and airplanes. But never considered me a mentor. On our initial meeting I showed Bonnie a Cranberry Island Lobster Yacht I had built. It gave her a better perspective of the size and type of hull we were going to build. She loved the look of the new kit, so a time was set to get started with the project. This is Bonnie's first visit to the model boat shop.



The thing to remember is it took six + years to complete this project! A far longer road with many twists and turns which no one expected.

Bonnie had time, but my workshop was a 50-mile trip, one way. So, every hour of each meeting had to count. From the beginning we knew it would be a big commitment for her. But I made certain Bonnie understood that "She would not fail on my watch". After her first visit she went home with the book of instructions to look over the details of the build. Out of all out there, the Midwest kit was one of the best for beginners. Too bad Midwest no longer makes kits.

I won't bore you with all the building details. Rather show photos of Bonnie doing the actual work to highlight the project. But using hand and power tools like those we commonly use in our hobby builds had to be part of the learning process. And how to "use tools safely" also brought a new element to the project. As seasoned modelers we just take these things for granted.

Another hurdle was the types of materials we commonly use. Glues, resins, and putties, routine in our hobby, each require special techniques of application we have developed only from trial and error. Bonnie learned all about the holding power of CA Glues after many stuck and sticky fingers and to keep it only on the joint. I know because my own fingers were stuck together trying to hold parts until she learned the technique of good gluing. Lesson: Keep plenty of CA cleaning solvent on hand for newcomers.



As the project started to resemble a lobster boat her eyes lit up. Individual components in the kit began to make sense. So many pieces, but each for a specific purpose. The building process was now becoming far more understandable to her. She was building and creating with her hands. The basic build took a little over a year to complete. Not finished by any means.

Things started to change in her life and the road of twists and turns began. She earned her masters' degree and was now searching for a job. But the new job consumed even more time and commitment. Then Covid hit and the building came to a full stop. It was hard to get back on track. But with masks and social distancing, work finally resumed. Bonnie was able to finish some small detail parts. Yet, another twist. With her engagement and pending nuptials, smaller times were allotted to finish, fiberglass and prime the hull now. But Bonnie hung in there to learn all about the art of sanding, re-sanding, puttying, patching and more re-sanding.



Suddenly, four years into the build the beautiful wedding invitation arrives. My wife Margaret and I attended her wedding. It was a beautiful ceremony and we loved meeting her family. Now with all that going on it was now time for me to sit back and wait for Bonnie to find the time to continue the build. Not a good time to push the build.

Now in our sixth year of the build, Bonnie was able to get up a couple of times to do a little more to the boat. But still months between visits. On one of the visits earlier this year, she popped the news. She was expecting a baby boy in October 2023. The boat is so close to the finish line. Paint and a clear coat needed to be done. And knowing it could be years before she might finish the model, I took over the final finish for her.

Not an easy decision, because all the building done at this stage was done by her. I was the mentor; she was the builder. But to meet the Baby Deadline I wanted to get the boat into her hands and ready for sea trials.

On August 7th, Ken and I joined 10 other friends and model boaters in San Francisco to christen the new "Bonnie Y". Spreckels Lake, where the idea for the model boat originated, was chosen for the event. Folks who had followed the long six-year build came out to enjoy the new Lobster Boat. Bubbly was poured and the bow of the Bonnie Y was sprinkled for good luck and long life. Bonnie was at the helm for its first run. "Here's a few shots of the finished "Bonnie Y".





These pictures tell the story best. Her big smile says it all.
The group at the lakeside launch.

But one last shot. Bonnie got her wish! Ken agreed to the “Compromise of Scale-Speed”. But I sure didn’t!
Bonnie now has the “Fastest” Lobster Boat on Spreckels Lake. Here’s the proof.



It all worked, the boat ran well, and I felt like a proud papa. I will miss her coming back. She is more like a daughter to Margaret and me now! And now her new life begins. Some asked if I would do it again? You bet I would! Our hope is Bonnie will have many good memories of the project that last a lifetime. Maybe even use some of her newfound skills. Must say the last six years were the best part of the project. Thanks for reading.

Many thanks to all who were there and the great work of the photo crew. The story could not be told without them. We must keep our legacy going and share our knowledge with the young who want to learn and keep our hobby thriving.

Happy Boating to All. Blaine and Ken





Fun Float – November 5th

By Robert Osmond — The Bilge Pump

Photos by Steve Sunich and Robert Osmond

There were five smiling skippers running their boats under clear skies with no wind at the Seattle Yacht Club's moorage docks.



Dave Green was sitting in his new tall stable chair (not the 3 legged 10" high milking stool he usually has) running his Cruiser built with two beautiful 1950 vintage top of the line electric motors and his small Moran Tugboat.



Klaus Bellon, running his varnished runabout, my orange springer with a GoPro on the front, and my Pacific tugboat.



Steve Sunich was running his beautiful scale copy of his yacht located on the Yacht club moorage docks, and his US Navy tug. He also had his neighbor's boy, Weston, running a Canadian logging boat that Steve purchased and set up for him to run.



I was running my Pacific and my orange springer with a GoPro on the front. (See on the water photos). This is working very well. I just link it with my I Phone and then run the boat. When I want to take a photo or a video, I just pick up my phone. The screen immediately wakes up the GoPro and shows me what it is seeing, then I click on a photo or a video. They are very high-quality images. (They have been reduced to publish in this newsletter.)

We had a great time, and the weather could not have been nicer. ⚓



USS Constellation – CC 2 (a Lexington Class battlecruiser)

Short Progress Report

By Russ Wick, (updated November 2023)

In lieu of the next part of my narratives on the Design and Construction of the USS Constellation CC 2, the following is a short "Progress Report" regarding the model

Post re-fit "sea trials" were conducted 30 Aug 2023 at 1200 hours CDT in the large "testing basin" located in our back yard. This venue was selected due its crystal clear water and relatively shallow depth which would facilitate recovery of any "equipment" that might be washed overboard during trials. (This actually happened)



The purpose of these trials checked water tightness of the hull during prolonged immersion (more than 3 hours with no leaks or seepage), ballasting, trim, stability, and maneuvering. This was also the first time that the full superstructure was fitted onto the hull as well as main battery, secondary battery, and 40mm quad AA battery.

The 20mm AA gun tubs were positioned based on research of other USN battleships of WW 2 era.

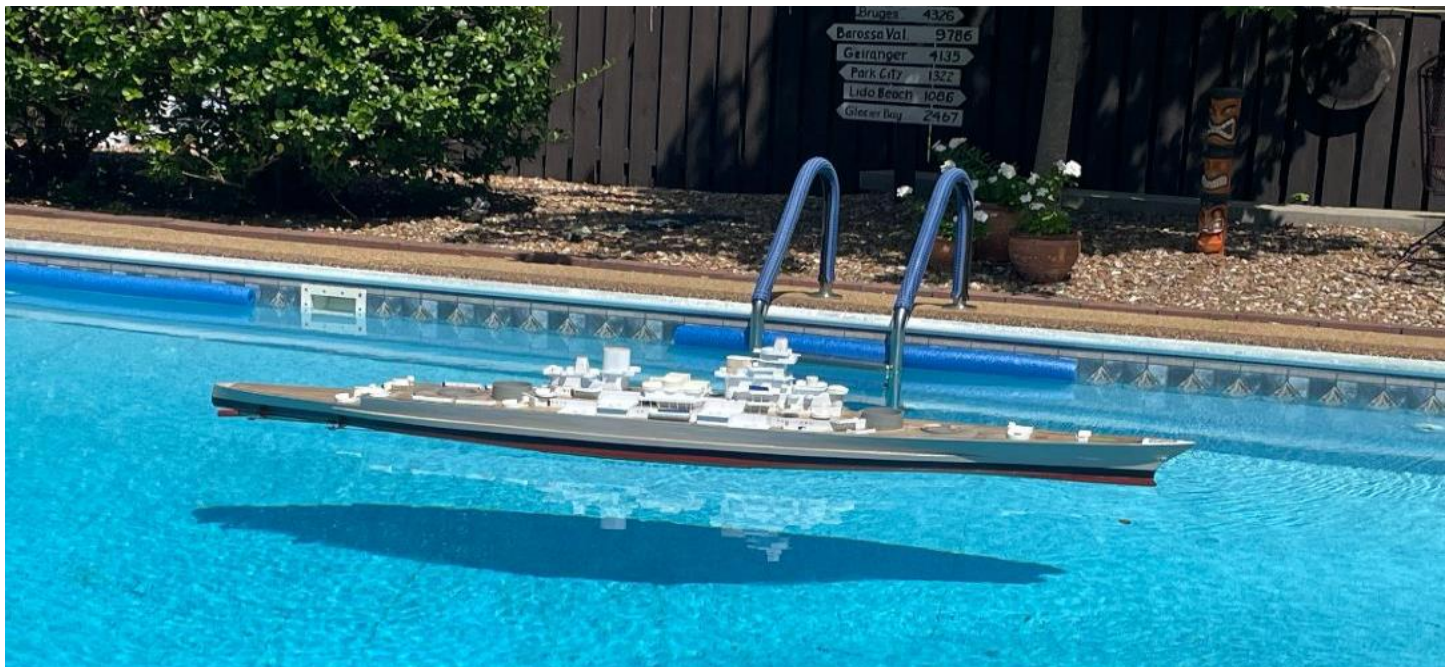


The "Hull" weighs about 35 pounds empty but includes fixed ballast at fore and aft ends drive motors, props, and shafts. Removable ballast and trim weights consist of 8 six volt batteries at 4 pounds each, approximately 40 pounds of lead blocks in 1.2, 1.0, 0.5, and 0.4 pound increments. These are essentially decoy duck weights cut into blocks that fit between the hull stations at locations determined by previous trial and error experiments.

The main battery turrets and guns weigh a little over 2 pounds per turret and include counter weights to offset the weight of the gun barrels when turned 90 degrees port or starboard.

When assembled, the model was well balanced and rode at the designed waterline of 32 scale feet (4 inches) at 1/96 scale. The model is 9ft. 3in. long and has a beam of approximately 14.5 inches.

Unfortunately, maneuvering trials needed to be postponed due to a "glitch" in the RC - ESC control unit, so tests were all static. A board of inquiry has been convened to determine the cause of the RC controller problem and necessary remedial actions.





As "designer, constructor, and captain" of this vessel, I enlisted the aid of several specialists and seaman recruits to help with this exercise. Attached are a few photos of the ship during tests and members of the motley crew. The ship's mess provided beer, freshly grilled bratwurst, and fixings to the crew upon completion of their assigned duties.

Russ Wick



The Shipyard

Right: Bill Murry's
Row Boat



Below: Left to Right Blaine Russell's Timeless and Bob Pearsall's Vagabond



Left:
Bill Dion's
African Queen

Event Schedule

2023 / 2024



Sub Com East

Winter Fun Floats October thru April

Second Sunday of the Month

Shrewsbury YMCA

100 Constitution Ave Shrewsbury, PA 17361

That's right, it's time again to dust off those subs, ships, and transmitters! We'll be at the Shrewsbury, PA YMCA second Sunday of the month, from October thru April. The pool will be open for us at 10:00, and we run until 1:00. Following the run time we'll adjourn to a local restaurant for lunch.

1. **SCALE** electric power only. No steam, gas, etc.
2. **NO FAST ELECTRICS.** If your boat cannot be operated in a safe manner among possibly 10 other ships plus submerged submarines, please leave it at home.
3. The cost of the pool rental is split among the captains. This usually works out to between \$7 and \$10 each. Spectators are always free.
4. Beginners are not only welcomed, but encouraged. We love nothing more than being able to mentor someone just starting out in the hobby.
5. Bring your kids / grandkids! A number of our group have kid friendly boats that they are most willing to allow the youngsters to run.

Contact: Jim Butt 8 Nittany Ct. New Freedom, PA 17349

With the beginning of the 2024 year we are encouraging all of our clubs and members to continue to send their calendar of events as they get finalized for the upcoming season. The due date for the March issue is late February.

Email : bobkost@verizon.net with the details.

2023 SSMANA Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Telephone: _____ **Cell:** _____

Email: _____

If this is a renewal, what is your Membership Number? _____

Are you a member of a local club? **Yes** _____ **No** _____

If so, what club? _____

Please indicate what types of ships interest you (mark all that apply)

Military _____ Fast Electric _____ Pleasure _____

Coast Guard _____ Civil War _____ Submarines _____

Work Boats _____ Paddle Wheel _____ Sail _____

Type of construction you do (mark all that apply)

Kit _____ Scratch _____ Partial Kit _____ R-T-R _____

Type of power you use:

Electric _____ Steam _____ Wind _____

Dues are \$32.00 for individuals; \$35.00 for family memberships

Please make check payable to **SSMANA** and send to:

Mr. Heinz Ricken
SSMA Clubs/Membership Director
514 Cranford Avenue
Cranford, New Jersey 07016

**Scale Ship Modeler's
Association
of
North
America**
WWW.SSMANA.ORG



**Photo from
Childrens Lake
Boiling Springs PA
October 2023**