

## LAKE MICHIGAN YACHTING ASSOCIATION



### A Tale of Two Boating Clubs

Last year two boat clubs joined the LMYA which had deep LMYA boating roots. Both clubs were previous members some years ago and decided to return to the LMYA to join other boating enthusiasts who embrace our efforts to keep the lake clean and encourage cruising activities.

Their stories are interesting and resonate with other boaters who have joined together for common fun and safety. They don't own yacht club buildings or slips, but their members have formed clubs where everyone knows each other and works together for the common good. Here are their stories in their own words.

#### Oshkosh Power Boat Club

By Weston Radford, OPBC Commodore

Oshkosh Power Boat Club was formed in 1906 to promote boating and organize races as well as teach safe navigation at a time when the waterways were still full of "deadheads." Within the first year, the club purchased three acres of land on the north shore of Lake Butte de Morts. George Rockwell drew up plans for a clubhouse, and before long they celebrated their grand opening with coffee, lemonade, and music on their new phonograph. The club thrived over the next several decades, and was a popular spot for dinners, weddings, birthdays, and whatever other excuses boaters could find to throw their families or out-of-town guests in a boat and head for the docks.

My siblings and I, and countless others, spent a significant portion of our childhood summers at the club. We'd board our 1965 ChrisCraft Commander and rumble north, disembarking on the club grounds to scamper around and consume gallons of Shirley Temples. After serving several generations of Oshkosh boaters, the club eventually had to sell the property and clubhouse around 2000, and went dormant a few years after that. The club was still looked after by the late Mike Castle, and after some thoughtful planning and plotting, he recruited a roster of the sons and grandsons of former Commodores to revive the club. Of that group, four of us agreed to take charge of our historic club, and the OPBC burgee was flying on Lakes Butte des Morts and Winnebago once more.

We've been pleased with our re-launch thus far with a starting membership base of around 35 households, many of whom were returning members from years ago. I had our logo refreshed for the digital age, as the old logos were only in the physical form of coasters. We had our first tie-up in late July at the famed Streich's Point sandbar, our first annual party just a few weeks ago, and are looking forward to planning our summer events.

Weston Radford, Commodore



## The Wisconsin Boating Club

By Katie Kolberg Memmel, Proud Member of the Wisconsin Boating Club

Since our club's founding in 1957, its members have strived, first and foremost, to provide boat-lovers the opportunity to do what they love most—get together on the water and boat! To that end, we promote safety and proper handling of recreational boats, we exchange information on boating equipment and operation, and (my personal favorite) we promote good fellowship within the sport.



While these goals still stand, some things have changed since the early days, starting with the club's name. Originally it was called "The Waukesha Outboard Fleet", since most members owned boats powered by outboard motors. These early founders met on weekends at various southeastern Wisconsin lakes and waterways, to do what boaters do—cruise around, raft together, and picnic. Eventually, they began purchasing larger boats and cruisers, which were powered by inboard/outboard motors. Desired cruise locations also changed, with more ambitious destinations sought. Consequently, in 1975, the club decided to change its name to "The Waukesha Cruise Fleet". One more name change occurred in 2012. We are now called "The Wisconsin Boating Club." While most members do own "cruisers," we are also open to other types of powerboats.

Our family found out about the club in 1997 at the Milwaukee State Fair Boat Show. The WCF club had a booth manned by several of their members who answered our many questions. Up to that point, our family had boated mainly by ourselves, or with a few friends. The club members said they emphasized "safety in numbers". To us, the thought of being with a group of knowledgeable people sounded appealing. They also mentioned they travel together, and listed off some of the same destinations our family had hoped to try—the Mississippi River, the Apostle Islands, and the Michigan side of Lake Michigan, to name a few. With their emphasis on being family friendly, we figured our kids might enjoy having other children to hang around with, if we decided to socialize in the evening with some of our new friends. We decided to join.

Along with all the trips we experience during the boating season, the club also holds monthly meetings from September until June, leaving July and August open for boating. A fall meeting is held to share stories of the fun we've had on our summer cruises. The June meeting consists of our annual picnic which kicks off the summer. Other months might include a guest speaker who has some relationship to boating. During the winter, the year's upcoming cruises are announced, and sign up sheets are provided. We've also taken field trips to locations such as the North Point Lighthouse, the Dennis Sullivan sailing ship, and the Milwaukee Public Museum's display of Titanic artifacts. Whatever comes up or sound interesting, we go.

## Wisconsin Boating Club—Continued

The club has existed now for 67 plus years. Yes the boats have changed, as have the faces, yet one factor remains solid. Boating with a club or group has proved beneficial for both safety and camaraderie. Since we’ve personally been a part of this lifestyle for 27 years, would we recommend anything else?

Katie Kolberg Memmel



## Indiana Activity for 2024

February 2024: Greetings from the south end of Lake Michigan. With above normal February temps everyone is ready for Spring and Summer. On the fishing side, there has been a lot of activity on the Lake. Perch limits are being caught and there are some biggies out there. We have also seen a few record setting Burbot being caught out Burns waterway in Portage. Google “burbot” and take a look at what this fish looks like. It’s a relative of the Turbot, white flesh, mild flavor, but certainly one of the most handsome fish you will ever land.

Regarding our Indiana Clubs, I have contacted each and will continue to update their festivities, concerns etc. Our 4 clubs have many activities throughout the summer season so please check them out to see what each has to offer. Go to our LMYA website, LMYA.net, and explore the site. Under Member Clubs, there is a list of Indiana Clubs and with a simple click you can visit each club’s own website.

Indiana has a very limited Lake Michigan shoreline, just 15 miles, but there is a lot packed into that short distance. A cautionary note; be aware of wind direction at our south end. North winds are generally unfavorable conditions for boating and can be downright dangerous for swimming. Pay attention to warnings posted at various beach locations. Undertow is serious and can be life threatening. Stay informed of weather conditions and when in doubt, don’t go in the water. I look forward to further communication with you. Share your club news and LMYA will help promote each club. Please reach out with any questions and I will do my best to answer your questions or concerns. As we get closer and closer to spring, I wish you all happy days.

Barb Lusco, Rear Commodore LMYA Indiana Region

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