



# THE CROW'S NEST

LADYSMITH YACHT CLUB

EDITION: 2026-04 (April)



Photo: Chatterbox Falls, Princess Louisa Inlet, January 2026, by Mark Weir.

Spring is in the air! Fresh from the boat shows, we will review the highlights as we get ready for the upcoming season. The LYC has some terrific events planned this year, along with a mentoring plan to ensure that new members get the best possible introduction to the club.

Laurie and I can't wait to get Northern Comfort underway and hope to see you soon at various LYC rendezvous. The Commodore's Cruise is shaping up to be a very enjoyable event, check out the latest itinerary included in this issue.

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A reminder that I am always on the hunt for interesting *Crowsnest* stories, recipes, destinations, and photos. You can send them to [crowsnest@ladysmithyc.bc.ca](mailto:crowsnest@ladysmithyc.bc.ca)

Gord Coulman, Editor.

# Upcoming Boat Shows

Your last chance to attend a boat show this spring is the BC Boat Show: April 30–May 3, at Port Sidney Marina in Sidney, BC.



## RCM SAR Thank You

Thank you again to the Ladysmith Yacht Club members who participated in RCMSAR Station 29's Pleasure Craft Safety Check (PCSC) student inspections on Sunday, Feb 22, 2026.

The day was successful, and the students had wonderful learning experiences to help them be more active as new Pleasure Craft Safety Inspectors.

If you are interested in a PCSC for your vessel for this upcoming boating season, you can contact us via the website <https://rcmsar29.com/contact/> to set up an appointment.

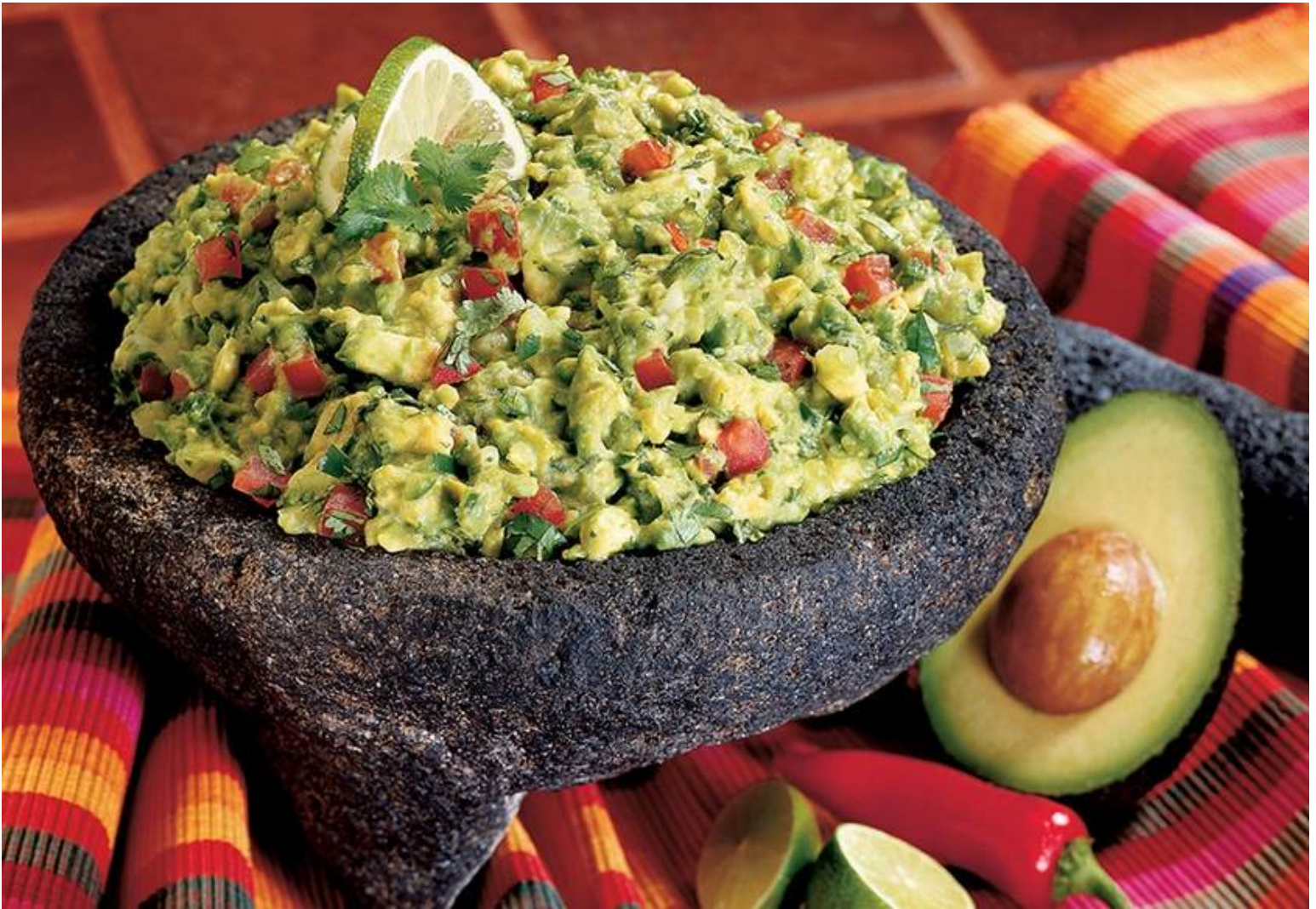
PCSC pamphlets are available at the marina office with more information.

Sue Wisely, Station Leader, RCMSAR Station 29 - Ladysmith  
cell# 604-375-0892  
suewisely@shaw.ca

# Recipe

## Easy Guacamole

Avocados have a lot of uses and they keep for about a week without refrigeration. Once the avocados start to get soft, they are ready for use, and will remain in this state of perfection for another week if you put them in the fridge. Guacamole and nacho chips is a healthy favourite aboard Northern Comfort.



## Ingredients

- One or two ripe avocados
- Bottled green salsa to taste (about ½ cup)
- dash of lemon juice
- chopped fresh cilantro, optionally sprinkled on top

## Instructions

1. Scoop the avocados into a bowl. They should be soft, but still green.
2. Mix in the lemon juice and green salsa. You can use red salsa, but my panel of guacamole reviewers (Laurie, actually) seem to prefer the green. You don't need to get carried away with the stirring - chunks of avocado are fine.
3. Sprinkle the fresh cilantro on top. Alternately, sprinkle a bit of chipotle hot sauce to add some interest. Some people add chopped tomatoes, but hey, it's not tomato dip is it?
4. Serve with nacho chips. Guacamole doesn't keep well, so enjoy it all at one sitting. Anyway, it's good for you. Even better with whole wheat or low salt nacho chips.



Photo: typical green salsa, available in mild or medium

# BC Parks Fee Increase

From the Government of BC news [website](#):

- A new camping surcharge is being introduced for people living outside B.C.
- An increase in visitors and extreme weather has put pressure on BC Parks' most popular locations
- To manage this growth and further invest in park services, the Province is updating camping fees for the first time in more than a decade
- Camping fees will be updated in 59 high-demand frontcountry parks and four backcountry parks, while fees remain unchanged in 388 parks

"Beginning May 15, 2026, non-B.C. residents will pay an additional \$20 flat rate for staying in frontcountry campgrounds, trips to backcountry parks, renting a cabin and **using mooring buoys and docks**. Residency will be assessed by the home address people provide when making a reservation or arriving at a campsite that's first come, first served."

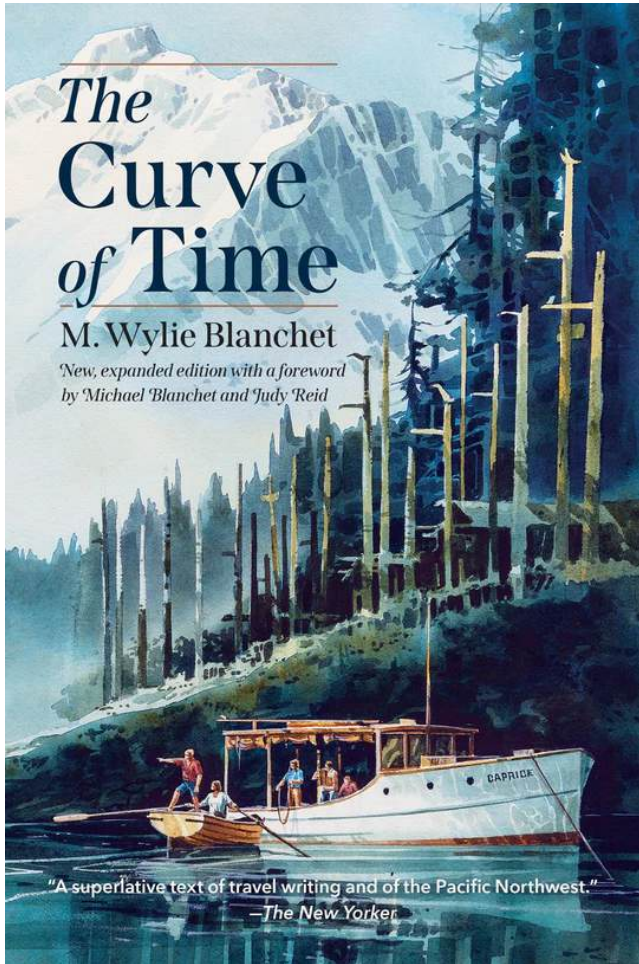
Editor: I hope these additional funds stay within the parks system and will be used for improvements and maintenance. As I interpret it, the increase to the cost of mooring balls for non-residents will be more than double - for example: \$14 per night will now be \$34. Bring Cash...



# Book Review

## The Curve of Time

M. Wylie Blanchet



If you haven't read this iconic BC adventure, you really must. "Capi" (Blanchette) only wrote one book in her lifetime, but it has become an indisputably classic tale of exploration along the BC coastline of the 1920s and 1930s. As a young widow, Capi fearlessly sets out with her five young children and a dog every summer in her small motorboat, travelling far up the coast to meet colourful characters in places like Princess Louisa Inlet, Desolation Sound, and the Discovery Islands. Armed only with a compass, charts, and tide tables, Blanchette navigates a wild and pristine coast that we can only imagine today.

New, expanded version available from [Harbour Publishing](#), \$19.95

# Technical Article

## Glass Cockpit on a Budget

### The problem:

We all love marine electronics. Some will argue, but it is hard to deny how much safer and more predictable boating has become, thanks to innovations such as VHF, GPS, AIS, Radar, autopilot, SATCOM, EPIRB, and many others. The downside of these technologies is cost and complexity. For most boaters, the installation and maintenance of these devices is costly and definitely not a do-it-yourself activity. Different devices and systems are from different companies, so even with standards such as NMEA, there is no guarantee that they will get along with each other and share information nicely. The cost of a fairly modest chartplotter and Radar can easily exceed \$5000. For a “glass cockpit” the cost is in multiples of \$10k.

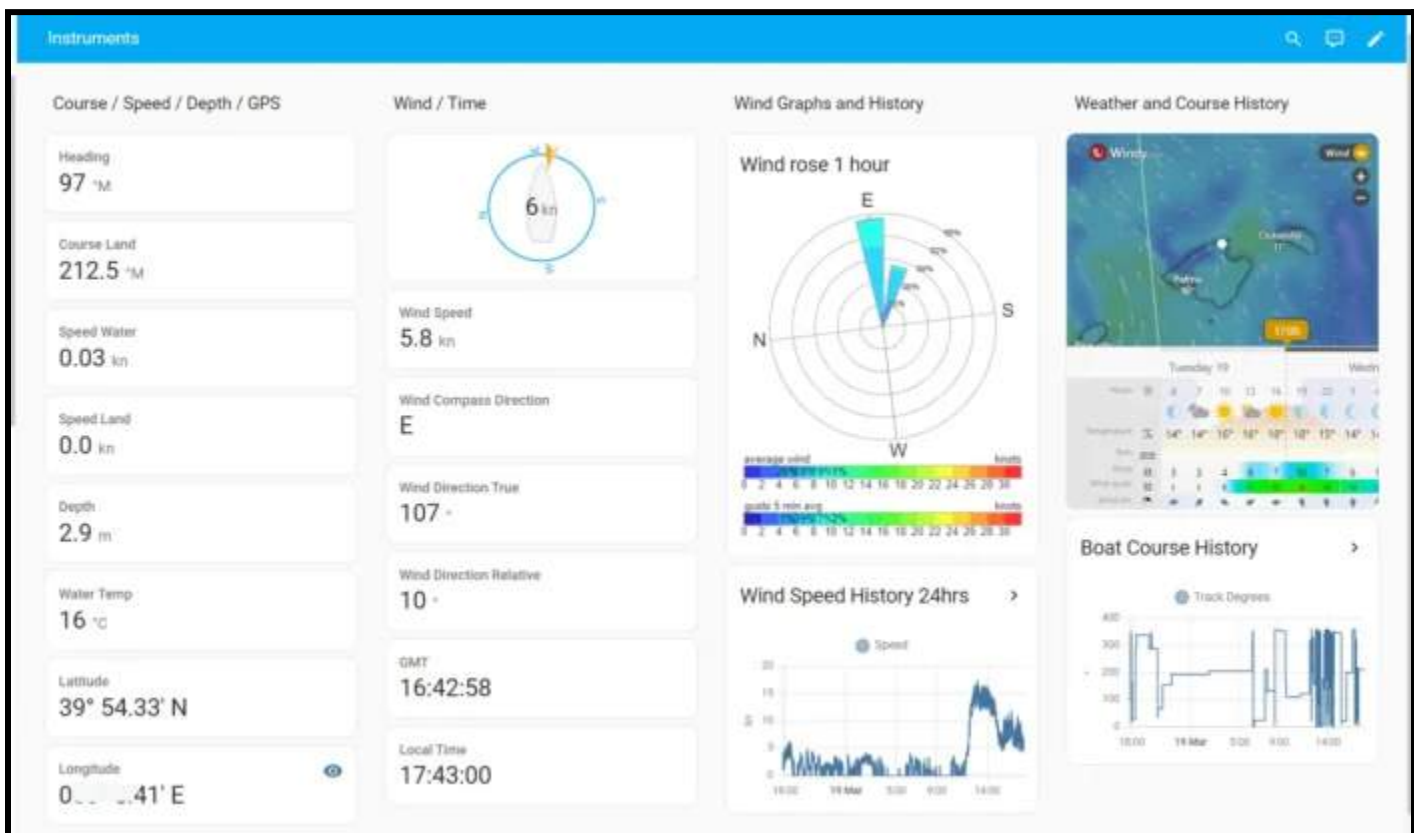


## A possible solution:

Enter [Smart Boat Innovations](#), who claim:

“Using free, open-source software and affordable sensors, our solution turns your boat into a high-tech vessel with cutting-edge features, surpassing commercially available products.”

“Transforming your boat’s monitoring and alert systems doesn’t require proprietary hardware or expensive marine computers. With a Raspberry Pi, a few affordable sensors, and free open-source software, you can build a reliable, expandable central marine computer that integrates navigation data, engine monitoring, solar power stats, tank levels, and even security features — all on a budget. Whether you’re sailing offshore or tied up in a marina, your boat’s key systems can now be monitored, logged, and alerted directly to your phone or tablet.”



## Need an interpreter yet? Maybe this will help:

*Raspberry Pi* - not a dessert unfortunately, but a very tiny low-power computer that is commonly used for DIY electronics projects.



*Open-source* - software that is generally free of licensing costs and can be used and improved upon by enthusiasts.

*NMEA* - a group who publish standards so that commercial marine electronic devices can communicate with each other, in theory at least.

*Signal K* - A data format for marine use built on standard web technologies, suitable for WiFi, mobile devices, and the internet. A Signal K Server creates a central hub for a boat, connecting all onboard devices and systems over NMEA, WiFi, and other marine protocols. Extend the functionality of Signal K Server with hundreds of plugins and web apps from the growing community of developers.

## A Low-Cost Solution:

A company called Orca makes a reasonably priced chart plotter that promises easy integration with other boat systems, including radar and autopilot. The core hardware for Orca starts at about \$800 CDN. A daylight readable display can be added for about \$1500 more, or you can use your own Android tablet.



## Summary:

A value-priced smart boat is possible, but to be successful, you will need to be at least somewhat tech-savvy and be willing to spend the time and a modest amount of money figuring out how to do it.

# LYC Member's Forum

If you have not already done so, please register to use the new Member's Forum. Instructions are below.

Note: It might take a day or two, as Owen and Fiona might not see your request right away. If you have any issues registering, please reach out and we are happy to help. Feel free to post anything related to boating or the club.

## To register:

1. Visit [www.ladysmithyc.bc.ca](http://www.ladysmithyc.bc.ca) and click on *Members Registration*
2. Enter this one-time passcode to request an account: *myLYC*.
3. Enter your information on the account request form and click *Register*. We'll confirm your membership by email and activate your account. This may take a couple of days.

Once registered, you will have full access to the forum and the exclusive members-only part of the LYC website (log in with your personal password and check the "keep me signed in" box for instant access going forward).

If you are unsure if you are already registered, you can try to change your password. If you are registered, you will be able to change it.

If you have any difficulty, just email [forum@ladysmithyc.bc.ca](mailto:forum@ladysmithyc.bc.ca) for assistance. We hope to see you soon in the virtual club-house!

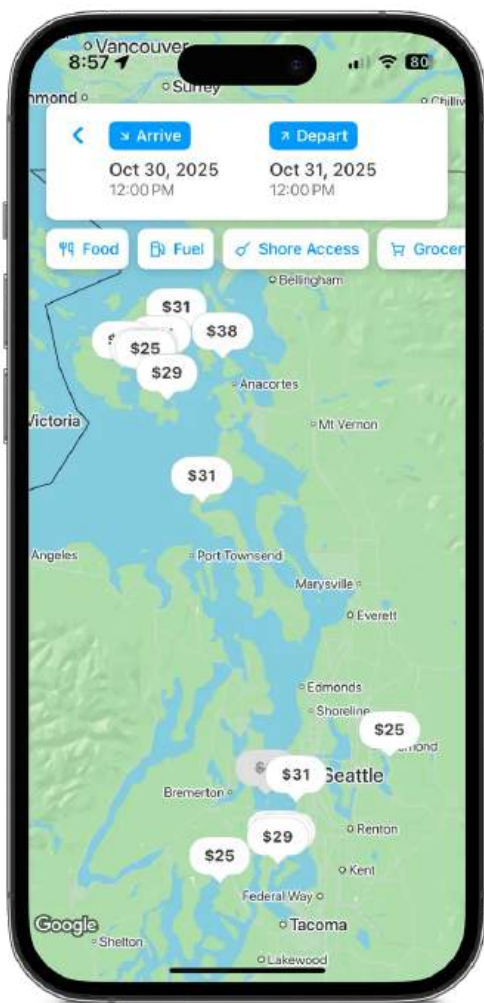
# Moorbuoys App

Paul pointed out this interesting mobile app that makes it easy to find and book private mooring buoys, mainly in the United States, but also in the Gulf Islands.

The app works in a similar fashion to a vacation rental app. The buoy owner can list the buoy and boaters can reserve and pay for it. After payment, the app provides the buoy's GPS coordinates, so the boater can find it.

Public buoys may also be listed, but boaters can't reserve or pay for them using the app.

[www.moorbuoys.com](http://www.moorbuoys.com)



# Destination - Big Bay

When you are heading for the Discovery Islands or points beyond, it is possible to transit the “big three” rapids (Yaculta, Gillard Passage, Dent) all in one day, but it requires precision and planning. Why subject yourself to all that extra stress, when you can make a restful overnight stop at Big Bay?

Big Bay is otherwise known as the Stuart Island Community Store and is a beautiful place to stop for a day or two. The friendly store stocks most necessities, has restrooms including showers, a cosy deck and grassy area, and some nice hiking trails. While lounging about, you can watch the shiny wealthy people fly into the neighbouring resorts in their helicopters and silently pity their undoubtedly stress-filled lives buying and selling companies or performing plastic surgery or whatever.

Big Bay has Gillard on one side and Yaculta on the other, so it was interesting to listen to these behemoths thunder away and feel intense gratitude that we were safely tied up to a dock in a calm bay and nowhere near either maelstrom.



Photo: Stuart Island Community Store



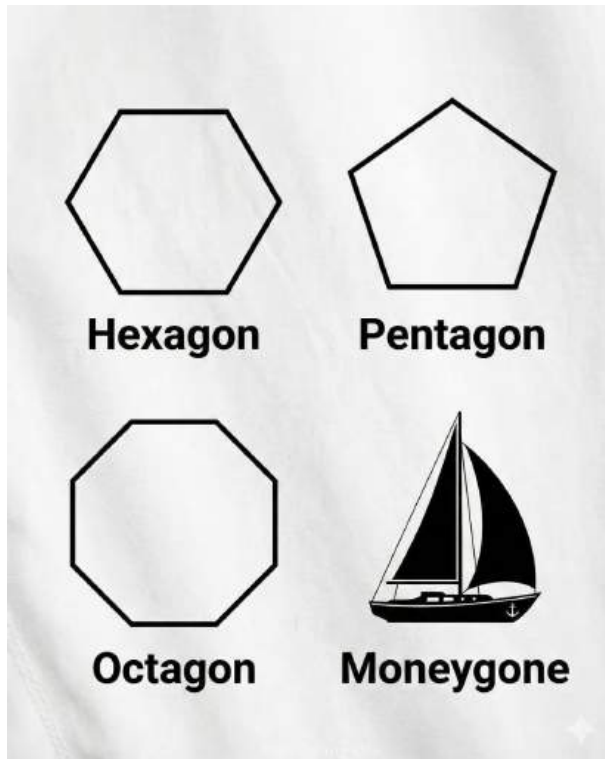
Photo: The community dock with Gillard Passage to the right



Photo: Looking south from the store towards the community docks



Photo: RCM SAR training at the dock. The water was extraordinarily clear. Rich people's cottages in the background.



# Commodore's Cruise

Here is the latest plan for the Commodore's Cruise, from July 12-27th. We are considering doing Roscoe Bay instead of Walsh Cove. We can decide what the group wants to do!

Here is the SUGGESTED itinerary. We are certainly open to other ideas.

The updated itinerary will be kept on the LYC Forum, and sent out to members again closer to the event.

All travel time is calculated at a speed of 7 knots. We will match the speed of the slowest boat in the group.

We can travel as a flotilla, or you can join us at the destinations.

- July 12 Leave Ladysmith and transit Dodd Narrows. 19 NM, 2.75 hours. Fuel in Nanaimo. Mooring Ball or dock at Newcastle Island. Dinner at Dinghy Dock Pub.
- July 13 Nanaimo to Jedediah Island Marine Park. 25 NM 3.5 hours.
- July 14 Jedediah Island Marine Park. Day to explore.
- July 15 Jedediah Island Marine Park to Melanie Cove. 52 NM 7.5 hours.
- July 16 - 17 Melanie Cove.
- July 18 Melanie Cove to Walsh Cove Marine Park. 10 NM 1.5 hours.
- July 19 Walsh Cove.
- July 20 Walsh Cove to Squirrel Cove. 16 NM 2.25 hours.
- July 21 Squirrel Cove.
- July 22 Squirrel Cove to Wiatt Bay (Octopus Islands). Must transit Hole in the Wall at Slack. 23 NM 3.25 hours.
- July 23 Wiatt Bay.
- July 24 Wiatt Bay.
- July 25 Wiatt Bay to Rebecca Spit. 14 NM 2 hours.
- July 26 Rebecca Spit to Tribune Bay. 46 NM 6.5 hours.
- July 27 Tribune Bay Ladysmith. 53 NM 7.5 hours.

This itinerary is subject to change due to weather of course!

We would like an idea of who would be joining us and when. However if you happen to be in the neighbourhood, come for a glass of wine!

Please email to RSVP and indicate (approximately) how long you will join us.

If you have suggestions, please email me at [commodore@ladysmithyc.bc.ca](mailto:commodore@ladysmithyc.bc.ca) or, post a reply on the LYC Forum. A copy of the itinerary is posted there.

We will update everyone on the plan via email in a couple of months, however the Forum will have the most current plan.

We look forward to cruising with you!

Paul, Ruth, Vimy and Juno!



# 2026 Cruising Schedule

**April 24-26:** Thetis Island Marina (Susan)

**May 20-24:**

Maple Bay Marina, May 20, 21 (Carmen)

Mill Bay Marina, May 22

Todd Inlet, May 23, 24

**June 18-21:** Pages Marina, Silva Bay (Carmen)

**July 12 - 27:** Commodore's Cruise to Desolation Sound

This cruise is flexible: you are welcome to join the Commodore for a day or two, or come for the entire two weeks. The final itinerary will be determined by the level of interest and, of course, the weather.

**August 24- 27:** Telegraph Harbour Marina (Mindy)

As per usual there will be “appy” hours, dinners out or arranged, physical activities, games and prizes, maybe some educational presentations and some SURPRISE events.

If you have a new activity you would like to lead, be sure to talk to the person coordinating the event and they can explore the idea. The more people involved the merrier....

Carmen Campbell-Hewitt, 2026 LYC Staff Captain

Mindy Coles, LYC Staff Captain Assistant

**I was recently arrested  
for hiding in a wardrobe.**

**The police asked me  
what I was doing there.**

**“I said “narnia business””**

I just ran a marathon in Sweden.  
I knew I was lost when I crossed the Finnish line.

