



THE CROW'S NEST

LADYSMITH YACHT CLUB

EDITION: 2026-07 (July)



Photo (above): Arrrh! Pirates!

I hope everyone enjoyed June, along with the numerous LYC events, including the Pirate Parade and Rendezvous at Silva Bay.

July brings the Commodore's Cruise to Desolation Sound, which Laurie and I would love to attend, but family responsibilities are keeping us at home for now. If you haven't made your reservation for Telegraph Harbour in late August, now is time to do it; this fun event is a great way to mark the end of a great season of boating.

- [Monthly Social Barbeques](#)
- [Club Cruise](#)
- [Pirate Parade!](#)
- [Destination - Silva Bay](#)
- [Recipe - Prawn and Avocado Salad](#)
- Book Review - [LYC Member's Handbook](#)
- [Technical - Composting Toilets](#)
- [LYC Member's Forum](#)
- [A three hour tour? Telegraph Harbour](#)
- [Commodore's Cruise](#)
- [2026 Cruising Schedule](#)

A few notes:

The Mañana Marina now has a fuel dock! It is open 0900-1800, seven days per week. Gas, diesel, and "high speed" diesel (although I doubt it would make my sailboat any faster).

Errata: In the May *Crowsnest*, I listed an incorrect phone number for White-Light Marine (Tim Hornett). It should be 250-921-5220. Sorry Tim!

Barbra King of the Ladysmith RCMSAR asked me to remind LYC members that free pleasure craft safety checks are available year-round, not just during planned events. You can book an appointment via email:

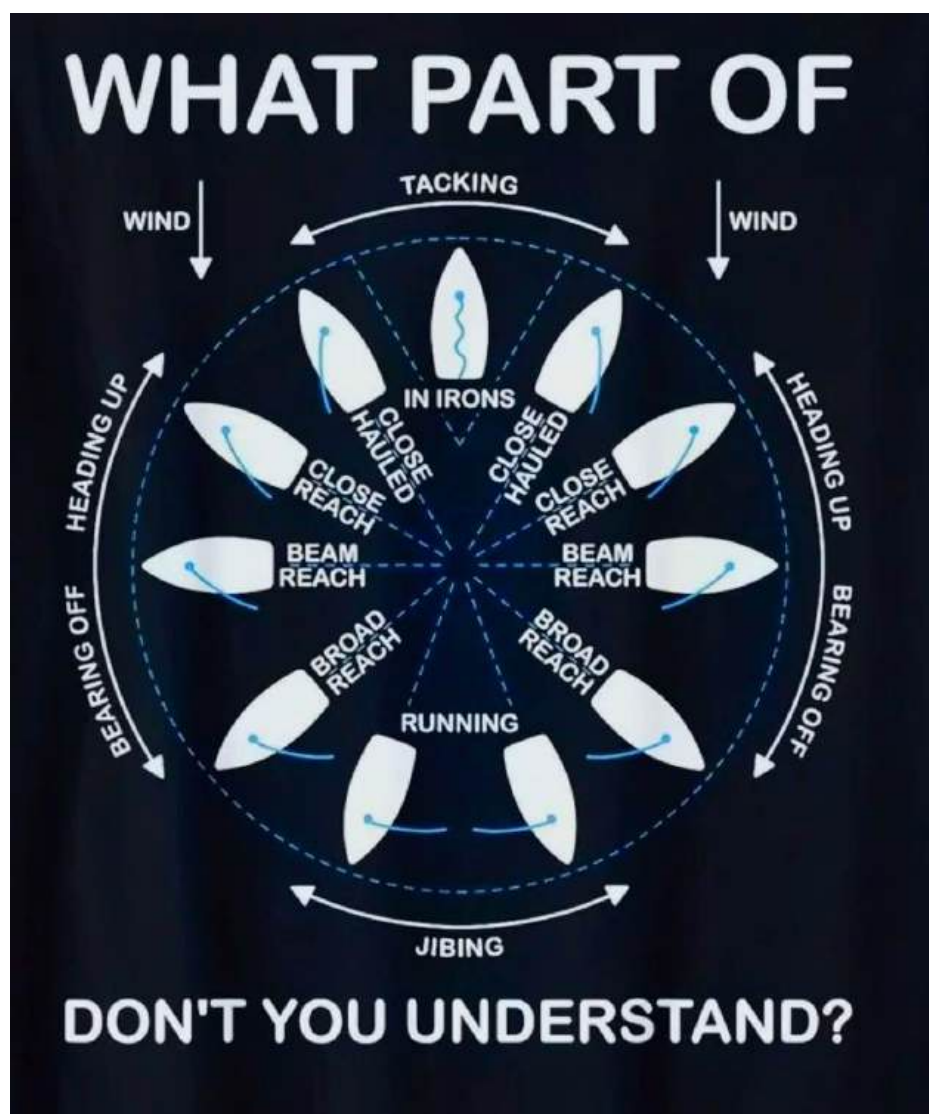
PCSCstn29@gmail.com

If you are a Facebook user, take a look at our recently revived LYC page, courtesy of Marcy Horswill. The easiest way to find the page is to search “Ladysmith Yacht Club” from within Facebook.

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

Gord Coulman, Editor.



Monthly Social Barbeques



Photo: The May 29 barbeque with 16 members around two picnic tables with a remarkable turnout from E Dock.

Barbeques are held on the last Friday of the month: July 31, August 28 and September 25. These are informal barbecues, just bring your own food, drink, dishes and cutlery and meet at “Roy’s Place”, under the big tent at the marina. It’s a great way to meet fellow club members for some informal conversation in the marina surroundings.

Jeff Reichert
M: (306) 229-8332

Club Cruise

The Club Cruise during May went to Maple Bay, Mill Bay, and Todd Inlet. The Maple Bay stop included the awesome looking paella dinner. I will now torment you with photos of the delicious paella!











Photo: What are these people doing?



Photo: ah, I get it now.

Pirate Parade!

Piracy at Silva Bay!













Photo: a scurvy crew of pirates!



Destination - Silva Bay

Silva Bay is a fun place to go, and although it has been through a lot of changes in recent years, the Gabriola Island community has been rallying around their beautiful natural harbour in an effort to make it the maritime hub of the Island and welcoming to visitors and residents alike. Last December, the marina hosted its first annual boat light festival with food trucks and local vendors.



Located on the eastern shore of Gabriola Island in British Columbia's Gulf Islands, Silva Bay is a sheltered harbor with a deeply multicultural heritage. Originally inhabited by the Snuneymuxw First Nation, the bay was named after John Silva (born Jacque De Almeida), a Portuguese fisherman who settled and farmed the area in the 1880s. Its history is defined by several distinct chapters of industry and community:

First Nation and Early Settler Roots

Long before formal settlement, the bay was heavily utilized by the Snuneymuxw. During the late 1800s, John Silva preempted land around the bay and married a Cowichan woman, Louisa, creating deep local roots.

Sunrise Sawmill and Japanese Settlement

In the early 20th century, the bay became a thriving multicultural community. Japanese immigrant Yoshimatsu Shinde arrived in 1918 and built the Sunrise Sawmill, which provided major employment until it was destroyed by a fire in the 1920s. Families like the Koyamas subsequently operated floating fish camps and stores.



Photo: the Koyama's fish camp and store.

Internment and WWII

In 1942, Japanese-Canadian residents (including the Koyamas) were forcibly uprooted from the coast. Their property and businesses were seized and sold by the government.

Shipyard and Post-War Boom:

Following World War II, Norman Sear and Les Withey launched the Silva Bay Shipyard. The bustling yard built fishboats, yachts, and patrol boats for the Royal Canadian Navy. It served as the largest employer on Gabriola Island through the 1950s and 60s.



Photo: Withey's Shipyard

Modern Marina & Resort

Sites like the former Koyama fish camp eventually transformed into Pages Resort and Marina, while the shipyard continued to operate as a hub for marine repairs and boat storage. Today, Silva Bay is known primarily as a picturesque gateway for boaters navigating the Salish Sea and as a prime spot for overwintering vessels.

Arriving

Getting to Silva Bay from the Strait of Georgia is pretty easy, either through the passage between Vance Island and Gaviola Island from the north, or Commodore passage to the southeast. In either case, vessels must pass through a narrow opening near Shipyard Rock, a drying rock between Vance and Tugboat Islands. The passage is marked by a green buoy (port hand lateral beacon, to be precise). Once in the bay, be mindful of the seaplane taxiways, which are no-anchoring areas. Anchoring can be challenging, due to the number of boats and private mooring balls.

Arriving from the west (Pylades Channel) requires a transit of Gabriola Passage, a narrows between Gabriola Island and Valdes Island. Currents in the passage are not particularly scary, but can run upwards of 6 to 8 knots during larger tides. In all cases, planning to arrive at or near slack will ensure an effortless passage. On the west side of the passage, Wakes Cove is a popular but well-named anchorage. Wakes Cove Provincial Park has a public dock and hiking trails. On the east side, Kendrick Island is a nice place to anchor - the West Vancouver Yacht Club has an outstation here.



Photo (2025): Kendrick Island on the left. Squatchy was entranced by bird visitors.

Recipe

Prawn and Avocado Salad

Prawns are great prepared in the simplest of ways (steamed), but give this recipe a try and you won't look at them in the same way again. You already know that I love avocados - they're also extremely good for you - so what if we combined these delightful ingredients? Pure magic, that's what.



Ingredients

- 1 pound of cooked and prepared prawns. Don't cook them too much, just until they are pink. Remove the shells.
- One or two ripe avocados, diced
- 3 C diced tomatoes, whatever kind you have onboard
- 1/3 C chopped cilantro (or parsley if you hate cilantro)
- 1/4 C diced onion, red preferred, but whatever you have is fine
- 1/2 C feta cheese, or whatever cheese you have, crumbled
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 Tbsp lemon juice
- 1 1/2 tsp minced garlic
- 1 tsp chipotle or jalapeno pepper, mince fresh or use a prepared sauce (adjust this to your own taste)
- black pepper (to taste)

Instructions

Pay close attention here, this is complicated: mix it all together in a bowl and serve. That's it!

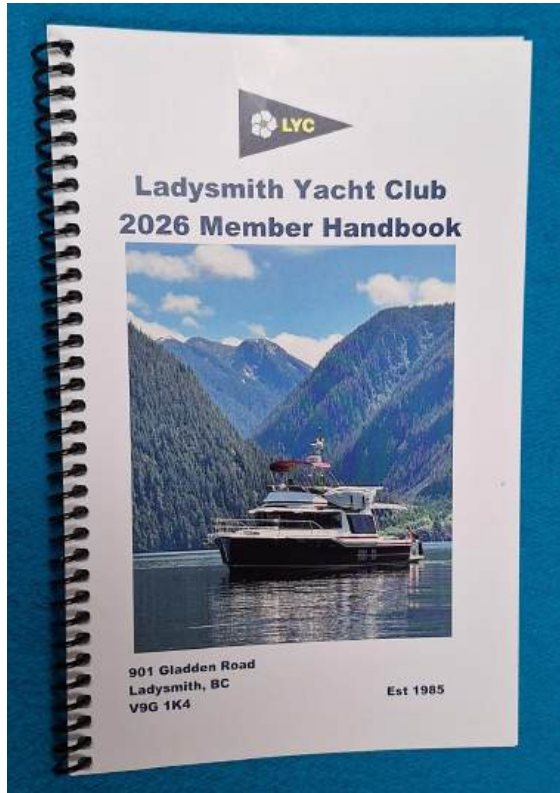
This salad won't keep well, so eat it all. I doubt this will be a problem.

Do you have a boating recipe to share? Include a photo if possible and send it to me: crowsnest@ladysmithyc.bc.ca

Book Review

LYC 2026 Member Handbook

Owen Thistle and Fiona Curthoys



Let me admit first of all that I am not an unbiased reviewer, particularly when it comes to the LYC, but this year Owen and Fiona have truly knocked it right out of the ball park. The Member Handbook provides indispensable help to LYC members, allowing us to stay in contact with each other, find out about events and cruises, reciprocal mooring, and even “quick references” for signal flags, sound signals, lights, and marine laws. All of this information and a lot more is presented in a clear and organized way, punctuated by colourful adverts from our many sponsors and a photo gallery from the club’s 2025 events. Many thanks to Owen and Fiona for the countless hours of compilation and editing that went into the guide’s preparation.

You should have a copy in your hands right now, as they were handed out or mailed during May. The price? Included in your membership. Enjoy!

Technical - Composting Toilets

I know this is kind of a crappy subject, but I think you will find it interesting, if you can hold your nose for a moment. Seriously though, composting toilets are gaining popularity amongst boaters, overlanders, and cottagers too. Indeed anywhere that a conventional toilet can't be used. You might say "why bother? I've got a perfectly good marine toilet that has been used for decades". Hold that thought, and I will give you some good reasons, some of which are derived from my own experience aboard Northern Comfort, where a composting toilet was one of the first changes I made to my boat. Composting toilets aren't complicated - I made my own from a hardware store bucket, a stainless steel bowl from the dollar store, and some marine plywood scraps.



Photo: Nature's Head

How they generally work:

First of all, "composting toilet" isn't entirely accurate, unless you are at a cottage, where you might truly compost the solids. A more accurate description would be "liquid separating toilet", since it works by separating the liquids and solids,

thereby preventing the formation of sewage, which is the nasty stuff you get when they are mixed, for example in a holding tank.

Why bother separating these things? Because sewage stinks, whereas the separate liquids and solids don't. Plus, they are easier to dispose of separately. If you have ever dealt with a plugged macerator pump or a joker valve in a marine toilet, you know what sewage is, and why it should be avoided!

How they specifically work:

There are two holes in the toilet bowl. Pee goes in one of them, poop and any other solids (paper, napkins, etc.) in the other. Don't put the wrong thing in the wrong hole - clean up immediately if you do (this is probably good general living advice). After you use the solids side, cover up your deposit with a handful or two of the compost media. The media could be sawdust, but we use small pet bedding. Pet bedding is made from recycled paper and is commonly used in hamster cages or for other small animals. Pet bedding comes in compressed blocks that are cheap and easy to handle.

When the liquids (urine) container gets full, it needs to be dumped. On a boat, this is easy. Remember, you are not dumping sewage, only urine, which is almost entirely water. Alternatively, urine can be easily stored and dumped later, offshore or into a municipal sewage system via any toilet. It is a good idea to have a couple of extra liquid tanks for your composting toilet, especially if you are travelling to Washington, where they have stiff regulations.

The solids container accumulates more slowly and will usually go a couple of weeks or more without needing to be emptied. Amazingly, it does not smell. Some composting toilets have a little ventilation fan that constantly draws air to the outside. Mine doesn't, and I just leave the head portlight open. The head also has a dorade (vent). Some composting toilets have a crank mechanism that mixes the solids with the media. After you go, you add a handful of media and give the crank a few turns. Disposal of the solids is easy - dump into a garbage bag and then into a municipal dumpster. For longer trips, I use a hardware store bucket and lid, which I store in a lazarette. Even this longer storage doesn't smell.

Benefits:

- Longer stays at marinas and anchorages are possible without worrying about a full holding tank. In Canada, pump-outs can be hard to find.
- No sewage is dumped in sensitive marine areas (I know this also applies to correctly used marine toilets, emphasis on “correctly used”).
- Mechanical simplicity and durability. No thru-hulls, macerators, valves, hoses, tanks, etc. This really is a huge advantage.
- When the composting toilet is empty, it really is empty. No “boat smell” from nasty old hoses and holding tanks.

Drawbacks:

- Guests onboard need a detailed briefing. I guess this applies to marine toilets as well. For both sexes, liquid accuracy is required, which takes a bit of getting used to. Men need to sit, which is probably better on a moving boat anyway.
- The system needs to be actively monitored, especially to ensure the liquids don’t become over-full. Again, this applies to marine toilets too. A new toilet from Air Head called the Tejo, enables the use of a separate holding tank for liquids, greatly reducing the drudgery of this task.
- Emptying the solids is a 15 minute job vs. just opening a thru-hull and turning on the macerator.

Costs:

One of the more popular models, the self-contained Nature’s Head, costs about \$1500 CDN, including shipping. Another marine grade composting toilet is called the Air Head, which is the one sold by Harbour Chandler, about \$1850 CDN. There are several other manufacturers, some cheaper but perhaps not as well suited to boating.

For comparison, a Jabsco marine toilet ranges from \$300 (manual) to \$800 CDN (electric) for the toilet only. Add hoses, macerator, thru-hulls, holding tank, deck fitting, Y-valve, wiring, etc. to that figure.

Conclusions:

Composting toilets are not for everyone, but are well worth consideration, especially for boaters who like to stay in their favourite marinas and anchorages for longer periods. An ideal time to consider a composting toilet is during a refit, or when your marine toilet system needs an expensive overhaul.

I recently read a poll on social media asking: “what is the best upgrade you made to your boat?” A great many respondents identified their composting toilet as number one (pardon the pun).

If you boat in Washington, it is illegal to discharge any sewage overboard, so despite the greater availability of pump-outs, a composting toilet has a clear advantage.



Photo: My DIY plywood and bucket composting toilet. Yes, I had a lot of time on my hands during the pandemic.

LYC Member's Forum

If you have not already done so, please register to use the new Member's Forum. It might take a day or two, as Owen and Fiona might not see your request right away. Feel free to post anything related to boating or the club.

1. Visit 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 for assistance. We hope to see you soon in the virtual club-house!

A Three Hour Tour - Gilligan's Island

At Telegraph Harbour, we are having a “Gilligan’s Island” themed Rendezvous, a light-hearted gathering inspired by the spirit of Gilligan’s Island, where castaways come together in a playful, tropical “marooned but making the best of it” setting. The rendezvous blends adventure, teamwork, and humour as participants explore island-style activities, and dockside storytelling...



Every great island adventure needs a crew! We invite everyone to channel their inner castaway and come as a favourite Gilligan’s Island character — Be the Skipper in a captain’s hat, Ginger in glamorous island style, Mary Ann in farm-girl gingham, the Professor with a clipboard of “scientific discoveries,” or Mr. & Mrs. Howell dressed for yacht-club luxury marooned at sea! Costumes can be simple, silly, elaborate, or just tropical-themed — Hawaiian shirts absolutely count.

Participation is completely optional... but highly encouraged for maximum island spirit! We have put together a full schedule of island-style adventures that you won't want to miss

If you feel the call of leadership on your deserted-but-delightful island, please let Mindy know at mindycoles@shaw.ca or [250-802-6682](tel:250-802-6682) if you're able to captain one of the group activities listed below. Without a brave volunteer stepping up, that particular island adventure may remain shipwrecked on the planning table.

Marina and Reservations

Gilligan's Island Arrival date and time: Aug. 24, 2026 - after 1pm

Departure date and time: Aug. 27, 2026 - by 11:00 am.

To attend a rendezvous at Telegraph Harbour Marina **you must book online** rather than calling the marina. You will see "Ladysmith Yacht Club 2026" as a rendezvous option if the date(s) you are reserving for includes one or more of Aug 24 through Aug 27, 2026.

Telegraph Harbour will save dock space for the Club until August 3rd so please reserve online at your earliest convenience.

<https://app.telegraphharbour.com/book-select>

Have a great Rendezvous!

Mindy Coles- assistant to LYC Staff Captain

Questions: Contact Mindy Coles by email at

mindycoles@shaw.ca or by phone at [250-802-6682](tel:250-802-6682)

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 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: Club Cruise**~~

~~Maple Bay Marina, May 20, 21 (Carmen)~~

~~Mill Bay Marina, May 22~~

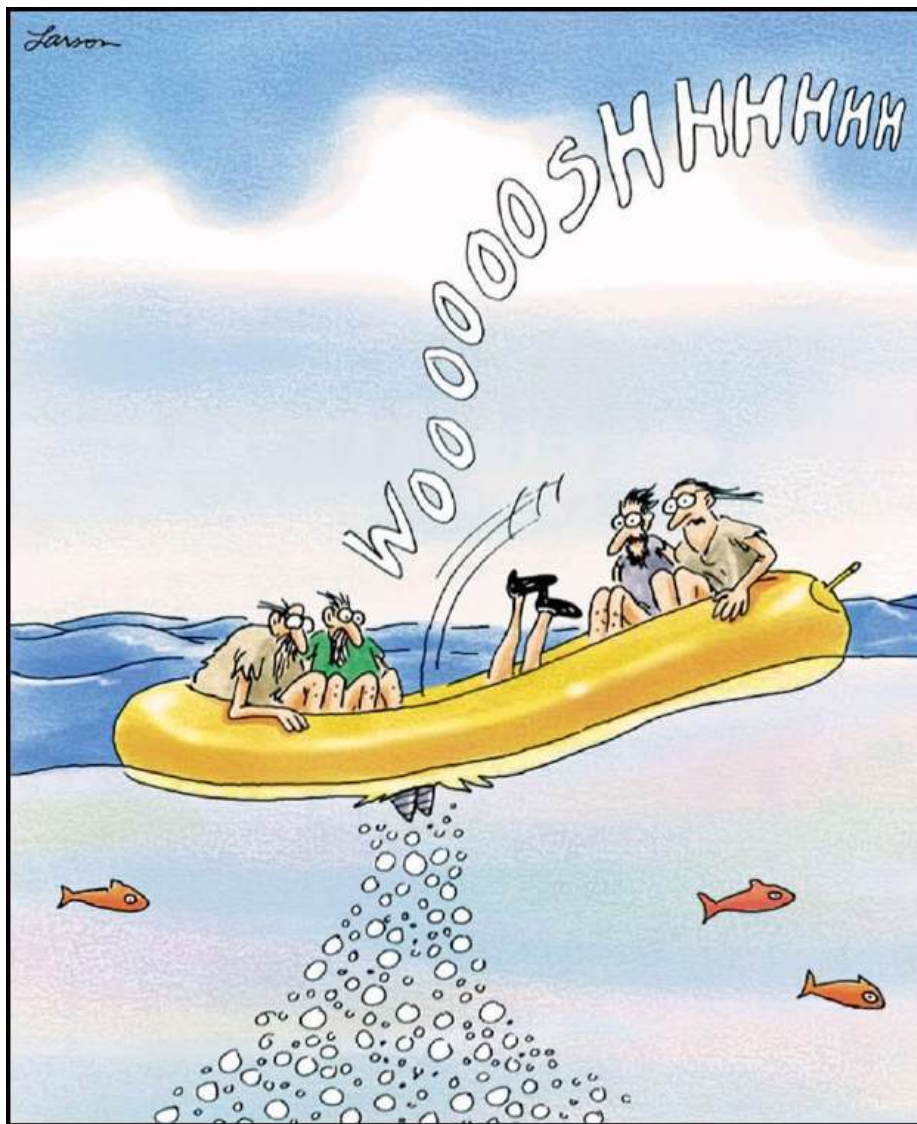
~~Tod Inlet, May 23, 24~~

~~**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)



To the horror of the lifeboat's other members, Madonna loses her balance and falls on her face.

