

## *From the Quarterdeck*

The first few weeks of the New Year have been cold and rainy. The rain has brought the lake level up a bit; but, so far, it has been hard to pick a good day in January to sail. I recently spent a cold windy day in the marina. The temperature was in the forties and the wind was out of the northwest at 30 knots, gusting to 45 knots. There were white caps coming over the tire break-water and washing over the walkway on E wing. It was amazing to see the boats dancing in their slips and to hear the wind singing in the rigging of the sailboats.

Taking *Wind Chime* out for a sail was out of the question so, I spent the day walking the docks and checking dock lines. The really scary part, however, was to see some boats secured in their slips with undersized dock lines, and others with polypropylene rope or ski rope, and some boats were tied off with what looked like clothes-line cord. Many boats had no spring lines, evident by the bow of some boats grinding away at the marina walkway. West Marine recommends 3/8" line for boats up to 27'; 7/16" line for boats up to 31'; 1/2" line for boats up to 36'; 5/8" line for boats up to 45' and 3/4" line for boats up to 54'. Dock line should be 3 strand twisted nylon or braided nylon for the best combination of stretch and strength. Never use polypropylene for dock lines -- UV rays from sunlight attack this kind of rope and make it weak and brittle. In addition to the bow and stern lines, also use at least 2 spring lines to keep your boat from moving fore and aft in the slip. Use chafe protection if the dock lines bind on sharp objects such as a toe rail. Check the condition of your dock lines often and replace them before they fail.

Some of us have had the unfortunate experience of taking an unexpected dip in the lake. It is not a matter of *if* it will happen; it is a matter of *when*. You can take a bad fall from tripping on a dock line or a cleat, or miss your step boarding or exiting your boat. This time of year (with a lot of moisture on the docks late at night and early in the morning) slips, trips and falls are things we have to try to prevent. When boarding or exiting your craft, always have one hand free to grab the lifeline, stanchion or some other secure part of your boat. Take note of which boats around you in the marina have boarding ladders that could be used just in case you take a fall in the lake.

There is work going on around the clubhouse and deck. Here are some of the repairs and improvements to the clubhouse which we have on the "to-do-list:" install more shelving in the storeroom\*; replace the shower heads in the ladies showers\*; install some shelving in the shower areas\*; replace the missing rope on the life ring\*; repair the sun screen on the side of the deck; repair the flat tires on the dock carts; repair the shelving in the refrigerator. (\* - These items have been done.)

There are more repairs planned for the clubhouse & deck in the future. We welcome any comments or suggestions. You can email me at [johrui@sbcglobal.net](mailto:johrui@sbcglobal.net) . I would like to thank everyone for their help and support. A special thank you goes to **Susan Hooper**, who has donated a complete up-to-date first aid cabinet to the clubhouse.

*See you at the lake,*

*John Ruiz*