

## *From the Quarterdeck*

*by John Ruiz,  
Vice Commodore*

I am saddened with the current ongoing battle: trying to stop the oil leak in the Gulf of Mexico. Grand Isle Louisiana, Barataria Bay and the marshes at the mouth of the Mississippi River are some of the most contaminated areas to date in this ongoing disaster. I hunted and fished for many years in Plaquemines Parish and the surrounding areas. Together, Elaine and I enjoyed the beauty of the marsh—fishing, trawling for shrimp and observing the wildlife that resides there. Through the years, however, I have seen the gradual decline of the marsh wetlands due to hurricanes, tidal erosion and oil field service canals. I believe the current situation will only speed up that process. I am afraid the marshlands that are contaminated with oil will never recover. I recently spoke with a friend of mine from back home, someone I have fished with since we were 15 years old. I can hear the despair and helplessness in his voice. He wonders if anything will ever be the same. I only hope and pray that this disaster is resolved and people whose livelihoods depend on the fishing industry could somehow return to some sort of normalcy.

On a more positive note - in the never-ending battle between boat owners and bugs, I have found something that works. On my Hunter sailboat, I have 5 outside storage compartments located in the cockpit and transom swim platform. These compartments were homes to mud bees, wasps and spiders. I put a citronella candle (un-lit) in the bottom of each compartment, and the scent of these candles is enough of a deterrent to keep bugs out. You can find the candles in all sizes; some even come in little galvanized buckets that keep them from rusting in case they get wet. The ones I have are about ½ of a quart in size. (Now I need to find a spider repellent that works on the bimini.)

On Saturday, June 12<sup>th</sup> we had our quarterly meeting and Italian dinner at the clubhouse. We had a total of 49 memberships sign in. There were no club issues needed to be voted on, so in the absence of Commodore Larry Price, I gave a quick statement on a few things. To briefly recap: the club now has 187 members; the upcoming Novice Regatta is on June 26<sup>th</sup>; and Randall Moore's Youth Program is teaching young people an introduction to sailing. I also talked about the new fans that we installed on the deck just in time for the hot summer weather, as well as the clubhouse floor project (we are currently seeking contractors to bid on the job.) After the meeting, we were treated to some of the best Italian food I have ever had! Many thanks to our Social Directors, **Anna Bustamante & Susan Hooper** and to **all who volunteered** to make the dinner a great success!

*Don't forget the sunscreen!*

*John Ruiz*