

THE RIVER VIEW VIEWS

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Hello Everyone,

Carol and I had a great time at the Algonac rendezvous; Their Marina had plenty of activities all weekend; Boats decorated in a Halloween theme, cardboard boat races for the kids, Volley Ball, Tug of War, Art Fair, hot sunny weather and we even went with the Binkley's on a motorcycle ride to Harsens's Island. This was the first time in recent history RVYC planned and attended a Labor Day rendezvous outside of Chatham and with 8 boats showing; it proved to be very successful.

October 26th @ 8:00pm will be our Square Dance. Once again it will be held at Lazy J Ranch in Milford and again Jon & Pat Jordan will be supplying the Sloppy Joes, if possible bring a small dish to pass, admission fee is \$20.00 per person and we need everyone we can get, so bring all of your friends and a few other people's friends too. We ask that you pay prior to the event so that we can have an accurate head count. In order to make your payments you can (1) mail a check to RVYC's treasurer and P/C Ron Sherman, (2) give your money to any bridge member, (3) Jon Jordan will come to your house and pick up the money or (4) pay at the door. If you plan to

pay at the door we would appreciate it if you let a bridge member know beforehand.

RVYC's October meeting is very important! So please take time out of your busy schedule to attend. As in every October meeting we will have Nominations and a Bake Sale/Auction. If you plan to run for a position on RVYC's board and cannot attend this meeting, please let a Bridge member know. Our 2008 Bridge will be; Joe Bacile as Commodore and Edward Pritchard as Vice Commodore. Rear Commodore, Secretary, treasurer and directors all need to be elected. Fleet Captain, Newsletter Editor and Sunshine person are voluntary. So once again please take the time for this meeting and don't forget extra cash, baked goods, food, snacks, a bottle of Classic, or any consumable that can be auctioned for "Fun's Sake".

Commodore,
Dave Passmore

From the Vice,

September is here already, what a fast summer! The Algonac rendezvous turned out great. The marina had a Halloween party going on and it was fun to see the little kids and decorations all over the place. We were behind Goldilocks who was dressed by Fredrick's of Hollywood and that was fun also.

This month is the Progressive Dinner at Belle River. We have an entrée to prepare and the next morning, a group breakfast featuring boiled omelets. Everyone is contributing to the breakfast and I hope the eggs are not too runny.

October starts out with the nominations of officers and bake sale at the Friday meeting on October 5th. The next day is the Haul Out Party at 4PM. Bring a dish to pass as usual.

Bowling starts on October 13th. Call fleet captain Herb for details.

The annual Square Dance is on October 20th at the Lazy J Ranch in Milford. BYOB and a dish to pass. This event starts at 7PM and is always a hoot.

Coming up in November is the election on the 2nd and the Northville Downs race and dinner on the 17th. Hope to see all of you at these events

Vice Commodore Joe Bacile

From the Rear

Peche Island – gateway to Windsor? St. Clair? Nowhere? This little island lies in Canada just off shore in the Detroit River east of Belle Isle. It is best known as a no wake area forcing hundreds of unsuspecting boaters to pay fines based on Ontario archaic and confusing laws surrounding customs check-in, liquor display and consumption and head requirements. Possibly you've noticed it as you come up on plane, trying to avoid anglers bent on trolling in the shipping channel, on your way to Belle River, The Cove and other exotic Canadian ports, and wondered what's over there? Nothing. Older readers may remember when the island was supposed to be developed into everything from a swanky housing development to an amusement park and wonder why all these plans fell through.

According to descendants of the French family, which once settled the island for almost 100 years, there is a good reason why Peche, or Peach Island, remains a virtual wilderness in the middle of an urban metropolis: it has a curse on it.

A treaty with the Indians was accomplished in 1790 for lands in the western Ontario peninsula, but it excluded Peche Island possibly because the Ottawa's, Chippewa's, Pottawatomie and Hurons who signed the treaty wished to retain the island for a potential gambling casino. The first permanent residents of the island, unaware of the casino development plans, was a French Canadian family named Jean

Baptiste Laforest. Apparently they shared the island with a group of local natives who ran a distillery on the western portion, keeping the eastern side for themselves. According to Laforest family legend, Jean bartered with the natives to gain ownership of the island, closing the deal with the exchange of some livestock. The Laforest family lived on the island confident of their ownership for almost 100 years.

Hearing of the island's experience with malt liquor, Hiram Walker's sons purchased the property as a storage facility for a newly formulated whisky they planned to age for 12 years. LaForest descendants challenged the deal. The Supreme Court of Canada gave the Laforest a one-third share of the \$7000 that Walker's sons paid the estate. When the senior Laforest died in September of that year a group of Walker's men forced their way into Rosalie's home and made her and the oldest boys sign the deed over to the Walkers. "They [Walker's men] threw \$300 on the table and told Rosalie to be out by spring."

When it was time to leave, Rosalie got down on her knees and cursed the Walkers and the island. "The 12 year old whisky will be a big hit but no one will ever do anything with the island!" were her apparent words.

Walker built what has been described as a 54-room mansion. He buried hundreds of whisky barrels, put in an orchard, and built a green house to cultivate flowers. He also put in a golf

course, stables, a carriage house and he installed a generator for electric lights.

Hiram was quite ill while he worked on his Peche Island project, suffering a minor stroke and died before completion. Willis Walker, a lawyer who had handled the purchase of the island, died soon afterwards at the tender age of 28.

Elizabeth Buhl Walker sold the island to the Detroit and Windsor Ferry Company in 1907. At that time, the president of the company, Walter E. Campbell stated that the island would be made into "one of the finest island summer resorts in America. Mr. Campbell apparently died in the home on the island that same year.

Needless to say, nothing ever came of Campbell's plans to create a park on the island.

Although the island still legally belonged to the Detroit, Belle Isle and Windsor Ferry Company and after 1939, to its successor the Bob-Lo Excursion Company, the island remained deserted except for American boaters beaching their boats on the south side.

Other proposals for the island followed quickly but nothing concrete happened until 1962, when Detroit lawyer E. J. Harris purchased it. His plan included dredging the canals and creating a ski hill and protective islands.

A few years later, Sirrah Ltd. purchased the island and its water lot. Sirrah planned and actually began work on an extremely elaborate park area for the island. He constructed several buildings and sewage, electricity, water and telephone were connected to the mainland.

Sirrah declared bankruptcy in 1969 also losing the 50-acre Greyhaven estate in Detroit. R. C. Pruefer of Riverside Construction purchased the island around that time with the view of developing it into a residential area or commercial recreation park that would have included a marina but due to financial restrictions and other commitments, was forced to sell the island.

Currently the island is a Windsor municipal park, and the city has no immediate plans to develop it, apart from bathroom facilities. Other than part of the foundation of Hiram Walker's home, a bridge, some dried up canals and piles of old whisky barrels here and there, it is pretty much the way it was before the Laforets were forced off the island. Did Rosalie's curse come true?

R.C. Pritchard

From The Fleet Captain:

We are nearly into the fall season of 2007. Does anyone know where summer went? I was just warming up to the idea of boating things to do when the temperature(s) dropped like a rock. I guess that's life in the mid-west. I really love this time of year. Autumn boating at it's finest in Michigan.

As for those of you who will be hauling out your boat, don't forget to polish up the ole' bowling ball. The regular season begins on October 13, 2007 at Hartfield Lanes located on 12 mile road in Berkley, Mi. The practice time begins at 5:30pm and bowling for score starts at 5:45pm.

Also remember the annual square dance on October 26, 2007 at the LAZY J RANCH in Milford, Mi. Calling begins at 8:00pm sharp. Bring your friends and relatives .The more the merrier out on that dance floor. The Jordan's will be providing sloppy joe makings. Side dishes and hors d'ouvres will be welcomed.

I'll end this with a quote from W. C. Fields:" If at first you don't succeed, try again. Then quit. No use being a damn fool about it."

FC Herb Alfaro

October Birthdays

Dave Hall – 7
Mary Gavin – 9
Jack Kingston – 10
Ed Murphy – 16
Mary Lou Payette – 20
Ray Brown – 27
Ken Armstrong – 30
Gracie Spicer – 31

October Anniversaries

Dan & Jill Martyka – 2
Jeff & Beverly Niermann – 10