



July 2026

Commodore's Corner, Matt Birckbichler



From the Commodore: A Club Powered by Volunteers

As Commodore, I have the privilege of being the one who writes this column each issue. The truth is, though, very little of what happens at BCSA has anything to do with one person. Our club runs because of the countless hours our members volunteer behind the scenes. Boats don't launch themselves, socials don't magically appear, and contrary to popular belief, the grill doesn't clean itself.

This season has been a great reminder of that.

Our Social Committee has kept the clubhouse and marina full of activity, from Walk the Dock and the Luau to the events that simply give us an excuse to gather around good food and better company. Jennifer and the folks that volunteered have done a fantastic job creating opportunities for members to spend time together both on and off the water. I don't know how they keep convincing us we need more desserts, but I fully support it.

Jeff, our Cruise Committee has continued to give us reasons to untie the dock lines. Whether it was the Bat Cave cruise or the many informal outings that seem to come together whenever the weather cooperates, these events remind us that some of the best memories are made after we leave the slip. After all, our boats were built to sail, not to become very expensive dock decorations.

Shout out to Susan Wilson. She partnered with the Girl Scouts for a sailing at camp. It took planning, preparation, and a handful of volunteers willing to share their time and experience. Thank you to Susan and everyone who helped introduce a new generation to the joy of sailing. Hopefully, we inspired a few future BCSA members along the way.

I'd also like to recognize Miranda Roberts for organizing a sailing team-building event for her coworkers. It was another opportunity for BCSA to share our passion with people who may never have stepped onto a sailboat before. Thank you to all of the volunteers who donated their boats, their time, and their patience to make that day such a success.

Of course, those are only a few examples. Throughout the year we've had race committee volunteers setting marks, instructors teaching new sailors, members maintaining our Catalina 22 fleet, people working behind the scenes on communications, membership, and the clubhouse, and countless others who quietly pitch in whenever something needs to be done.

Volunteer work often goes unnoticed because, when it's done well, everything just seems to happen. But I can assure you that's not the case. Every successful social, cruise, race, class, and workday represents hours of planning and a willingness to give back to the club.

To every committee chair, every volunteer, and every member who's hauled equipment, cooked a meal, cleaned up after an event, driven a safety boat, taught a class, or simply raised their hand when help was needed, thank you. Browns Creek Sailing Association is stronger because of you.

And if I've forgotten to mention someone, don't worry, I hear the Commodore gets exactly one "I can't believe you forgot..." coupon per newsletter.

Fair winds,

Matt Birckbichler

Commodore

Browns Creek Sailing Association



July

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Social Chair, Jennifer Birckbickler



Commodore and Commodoreess



Stupid Hat Guy



Wilsons with Magnificent Mojitos

Our Walk the Dock & Luau was a wonderful success! Thank you to everyone who came out and joined the fun. It was a great evening filled with delicious food, laughter, and good company.

A special thank you goes out to everyone who decorated their docks and boats. Your creativity and hard work helped make the marina look festive and welcoming. The decorations were fantastic, and everyone enjoyed strolling through and taking in the tropical atmosphere.

Now it's time to get ready for our next event!

Annual Slip 'N Slide Party

Saturday, August 8

Starting at Noon

Bring the whole family and especially the kids for an afternoon of splashing fun! We'll be firing up the grill with hot dogs for everyone, and if you'd like, feel free to bring a side dish to share.

We hope to see everyone there for another fun-filled day at the marina. Don't forget your swimsuit, towel, and your sense of adventure!

Jennifer Birckbichler

Social chair



★ **BACK** ★

TO
SCHOOL

BASH

SLIP N SLIDE!

WE WILL
GRILL
HOTDOGS!



★
EVERYONE
BRING
A SIDE!



STARTS AT

NOON

AUGUST 8TH

Membership Chair, Elizabeth Starnes

Welcome to all new members joining BCSA the past few weeks! We hope you will join us for our various activities even if you don't have a boat. One of the best ways to learn more about sailing is to hang around on the weekends and hop on a boat for a cruise around the lake!

We have socials, races, work days and lots of impromptu gatherings and sails around the lake. Look on the brownscreeksailingassociation.org web site or like us on Facebook to see what is happening!

We have 31 new members on our roster so far this year. If you see a new face, or boat, make sure you welcome them and encourage everyone to join in BCSA activities.

👉 *Membership benefits:*

<https://brownscreeksailingassociation.org/membership/>

👉 *BCSA Membership Application:*

<https://brownscreeksailingassociation.org/browns-creek.../>

Membership, Elizabeth

Race Chair, David Chadwick



The BCSA 2026 Racing Program is underway! Our racing schedule for 2026 is published on the BCSA website [Calendar](#) and the schedule for the remaining races in our Spring Series is included below. Please read the schedule carefully as we have some races on Saturdays and some on Sundays. The start time for our club races also varies during the year and changes from 2pm to 3pm as the days get longer.

The Spring Series has ended. The Results are attached.

We need race officers to run our scheduled races and we kindly request that sailors who are interested in racing contact me at drchadwi@yahoo.com to fill out our schedule of Race Officers.

BCSA Race Schedule April-July 2026								
Event Name	Race Class	Race Type	RC PRO	RC Assistant	Day	Date	Skipper's meeting	Race start
Fall Series #1	Series	Buoy			Sunday	8/9/2026	1:00 pm	2:00 pm
Fall Series #2	Series +Juniors	Pursuit	TBD	TBD	Saturday	8/22/2026	1:00 pm	2:00 pm
Fall Series #3	Series	Buoy				9/13/2026	1:00 pm	2:00 pm
Fall Series #4	Series	Pursuit		N/A	Sunday	9/19/2026	1:00 pm	2:00 pm
TVCC	Regatta	Buoy	TBD	TBD	Saturday/ Sunday	9/26-9/27	1:00 pm	2:00 pm
Fall Series #5	Series (Final)	Pursuit		N/A	Sunday	10/4/2026	1:00 pm	2:00pm
GRR	Regatta	Endurance			Saturday/ Sunday	10/10/2026	10/9 6:00pm	10:00 am

Racing Events, Results, and the Master Schedule can be found at:

<https://brownscreeksailingassociation.org/wordpress/racing-events/>

BCSA Spring Series 2026		3/22/2026	4/19/2026	5/2/2026	5/16/2026	6/14/2026	6/20/2026	7/11/2026			
5 race days sailed		Buoy	Buoy	Buoy	Buoy	Pursuit	Buoy	Pursuit	No of race days sailed or RO	8 for DNS for a day	
Keelboats				No race			No race				
			12-18mph NW	12-18mph SW	N 1-4		w 0-2	W5-10			
Skipper	Boat	Day 1	Day 3	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8			Total Points best 3	Place
Greg Bennett	S2 6.9	8	8	RO (2)	1	1	x	3	5	5	1
Burch Starnes	S2 6.9	1	8		3	8	x		2	12	5
J Eardley	Hunter 28	2	8		4	8	RO (2)	4	4	8	3
Matt Birklbacher		8	RO (2)		RO (2)	8		8	2	18	7
A. McCarver	Catalina 22	8	8		5	4		(2 - M24)	3	11	4
Ed Hurst	S2 6.9	8	8		(2 - Elliott)	2	x	1	3	5	2
Andy Myrick	Seaward 22	2 (RO)	8		8	3		8	2	13	6
7 skippers											
Dinghies										10 for DNS for a day	
David Chadwick	RS Aero 9	10	1		1	1	x	10	3	3	1
Monty Williams	Flying Scott	1	10		2	10	x	10	2	13	3
Brian?	Hobie 16	10	10		10	10		1	1	21	6

[illegible]

Cruise Chairman, Jeff Wilson



Cruise Updates:

July was a bit of a bust between scheduling issues, weather, and a backup contingency not working out. But fear not we have plenty planned for the rest of the season!

August - We will reschedule Rock the Lock for the August cruise, we will leave from Browns Creek somewhat early on Saturday, go through the Guntersville Dam and cruise down to Paint Rock on the TN River to hang out, have lunch, and all that. Then we will head back through the lock up to the lake, if some folks need to get back to the marina they can do that, and anyone else interested in an overnight stay can raft up for the night and then return on Sunday. Current target dates for this is Aug 15-16.

Sept - Hoping for a longer cruise up to Goose Pond for the Second Annual Browns Creek Open Golf Scramble! This will involve cruising up likely on a Friday evening, probably have dinner at the restaurant that evening if time allows, likely staying in transient slips overnight and then golf on Saturday! I checked in with the marina there, they said they charge \$1/ft for transient slips with 50amp power and water.

Goose Pond can also provide us transportation to and from the golf course. If folks need to return after golf they can do that, but if some are up for it I am leaning towards staying another night and making a whole weekend of it!

Cruise Committee, Jeff Wilson.

2026 Board and Committee Chairs

Officer	Position	Officers Flag	E-mail
Matt Birckbichler	Commodore		mattyb8562@gmail.com
Ross Crutcher	Vice-Commodore*		
Dallas Mayo	Secretary*		Shenanigans770@gmail.com
Margaret Hurst	Treasurer*		margo.hurst23@gmail.com
Dave Chadwick	Race Committee		chris@edwards.pub
Charles Nixon	Member at Large*		
Jeff Wilson	Webmaster		jeffrey.wilson007@gmail.com
Jeff Wilson	Cruise Committee		cruise@brownscreeksailingassociation.org
Jennifer Birckbichler	Social Committee		JBirckbichler@gmail.com

Zack Lawson	Education Chair		zackbuffet@gmail.com
Elizabeth Starnes	Membership		ESTarnes245@gmail.com

*Voting Member

BCSA Treasurer, Margaret Hurst

BCSA has had a great year so far with several successful cruises and social events. Please remember to welcome any new faces you see around.

Additionally, there has been a lot of rental activity with the Catalina 22s, especially from this year’s sailing class members. It is wonderful to see new members getting involved and practicing their sailing skills.



Margaret aboard Escape

As a reminder, we offer several payment options, including cash, checks, or PayPal via the club website. When paying by cash or check, please be sure you specify the purpose of the payment and the name of the sender. This information ensures that all funds are credited to the correct committees. These payments may be placed in the lockbox on the clubhouse porch which I will retrieve and process. I have also placed envelopes for your convenience in the mailbox above the lockbox.

Additionally, if you have a reimbursable club expense, please provide an invoice or store receipt for audit purposes.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at margo.hurst23@gmail.com.

Best regards, Margaret Hurst, Treasurer

There's been lots of stuff happening at BCSA. NASM has been investing in new docks as funds become available. You can see this on the approaches to 500/600 docks and 300/400 docks. The price of the materials is many times that of the treated wood available to us in the past.

As Construction continues always be aware that some uneven surfaces may be present. We're trying to upgrade without limiting access to our customers. For this reason, construction usually happens Monday through Thursday to take advantage of low usage periods.

Your patience is appreciated.

Knots and Such

During the upgrade process, not unlike periods of extreme high water, we sometimes have to move some boats. Utilizing proper cleat knots makes our effort easier.

The proper way to tie your boat leaves some room for movement of the boat within the slips limiting the strain on the boats fittings as well as unnecessary strain on the piers. Always have spring lines and employ proper cleat hitches.

Do Not tie the lines to the outer pilings higher than necessary. The higher you tie the greater the moment on the piling base. We are only able drive them so far. If you tie at the top you risk pushing them over and consequently loosening the connection to your boat.

The internet is full of knot tying videos and diagrams. One such video is:

[Boating Knots by Grog | Learn How to Tie Boating Knots using Step-by-Step Animations | Animated Knots by Grog](#)

The site depicts a Halyard Cleat Hitch as well as a Dock Cleat Hitch. Although they are essentially the same, the Halyard cleat Hitch is perfectly adequate and preferred.

The thing about correctly tied Knots is that they do what they are intended for and they are easy to untie.

Also, when your leaving the pier, disconnect from the docks power equipment first, then the boat. This will help reduce the risk of water around the dock being energized which could lead to an electric shock hazard.



Do not swim at the docks or near any boathouse or Marina. If you have a need to get in the water, we will disconnect our power system for you.

A Few definitions:

AHOY-Derived from the ancient Viking battle cry Aoi, “Ahoy!” is the traditional hail or greeting used between ships

Bugs-Nickname for a dirty, slovenly seaman, who was himself considered a “bug trap”.

Carry Three Red Lights-Reeling drunk, from the maritime signal of three vertical lights in a row, indicating a vessel is not under control.

Cross Girl-Harlots who specialized in befriending lonely sailors in order to run off with their money.

Placing Coins beneath the Mast-coins are traditionally placed under a ships mast prior to being stepped as payment to the gods for good luck and favorable winds.

Roundabouts- Eggs or cackleberrys. It is bad luck to mention Eggs on board.

Skylarking-Rogish merrymaking.

One of our former Commodores, Don Moser has developed some really nifty Software for an on-line weather station at the marina. You can see the local conditions giving you a better idea of the conditions. Save the expensive gas-Know before you Go!

BCSA MARINA WEATHER STATION



Stay informed before you set sail!

Our on-site weather station—located right on the docks—provides live local data including:

- **Wind speed & direction**
- **Temperature & humidity**
- **Barometric pressure**
- **Rainfall and more**

Whether you're racing, cruising, or just checking conditions, get the most accurate forecast available—straight from the marina.

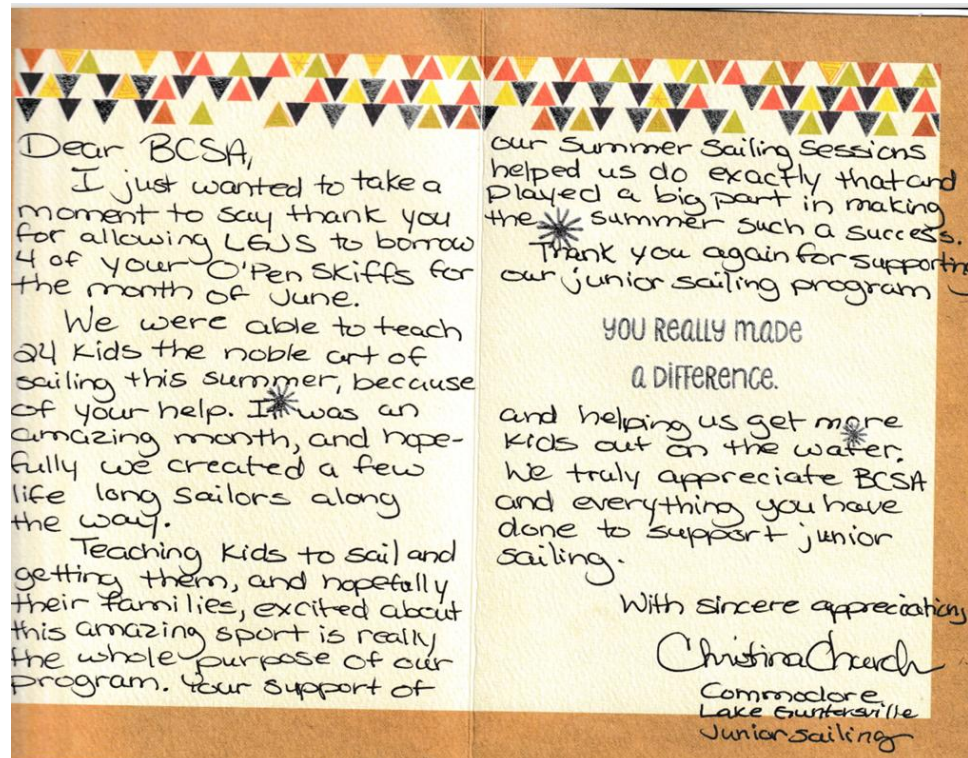
**VIEW LIVE
WEATHER
DATA**



BCSA is different from most Sailing Clubs in that our constitution states that our purpose is to promote Sailing. Most club's constitutions state something about sailing and other interest of their members.

I believe our interest is somewhat more altruistic. But, that's how we roll!

We have been supporting Scouting groups as well as other youth groups through the years. Recently we loaned some of our Bic Dinghy's to our neighbors across the Lake.



Classified Ads-Note: the ads are posted as a favor for BCSA members and friends-The organization cannot guarantee the condition, fitfulness, or completeness of any item nor service-Caveat Emptor, Let the buyer beware. BCSA does not make a business of this.

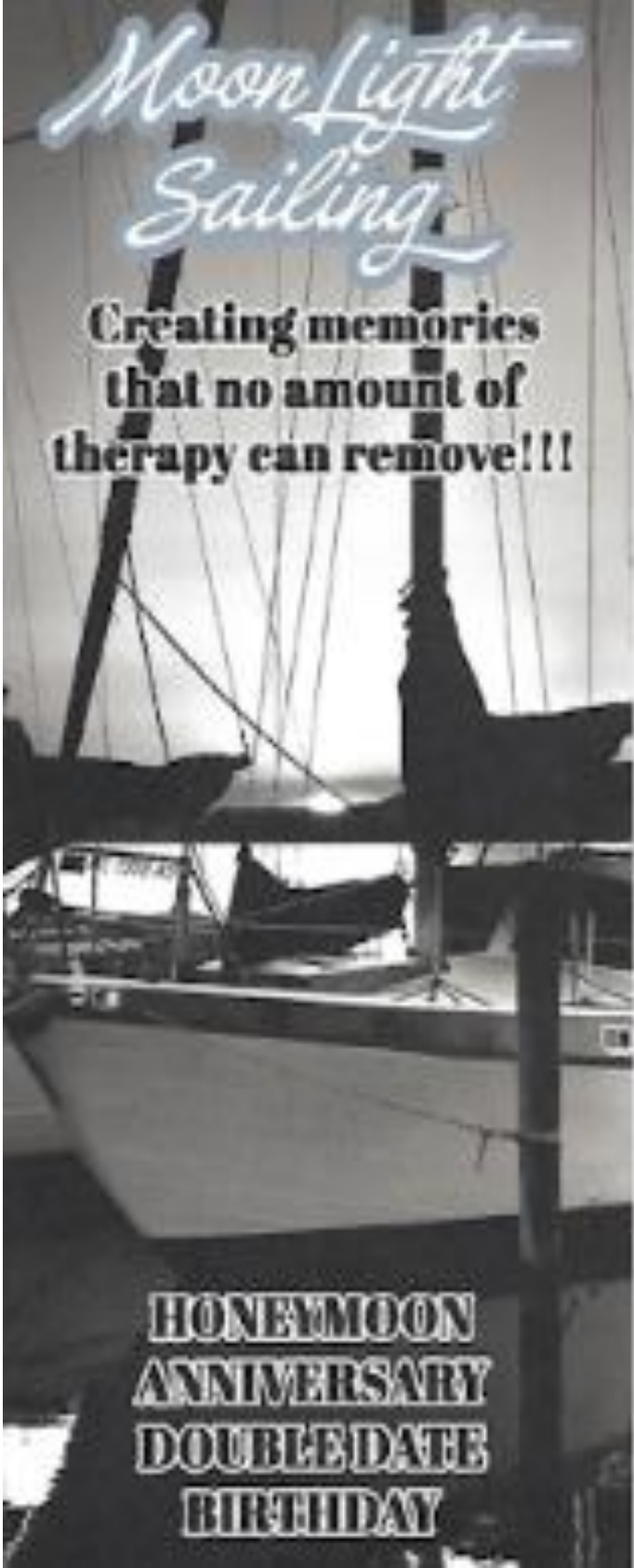
**PARTY
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"LIFE WIDE OPEN"



Moon Light Sailing

**Creating memories
that no amount of
therapy can remove!!!**

**HONEYMOON
ANNIVERSARY
DOUBLE DATE
BIRTHDAY**



Itinerary

***0-5 knots of wind
Motorsail & kill motor to enjoy
the silence of sailing.
everyone gets time at helm**

***5-10 knots
Sails up ASAP.
everyone gets time at helm**

***10-15 knots
Sails up ASAP.
everyone gets time at helm**

Moon Light Sailing

**256.612.7529
CALL FOR PRICING**

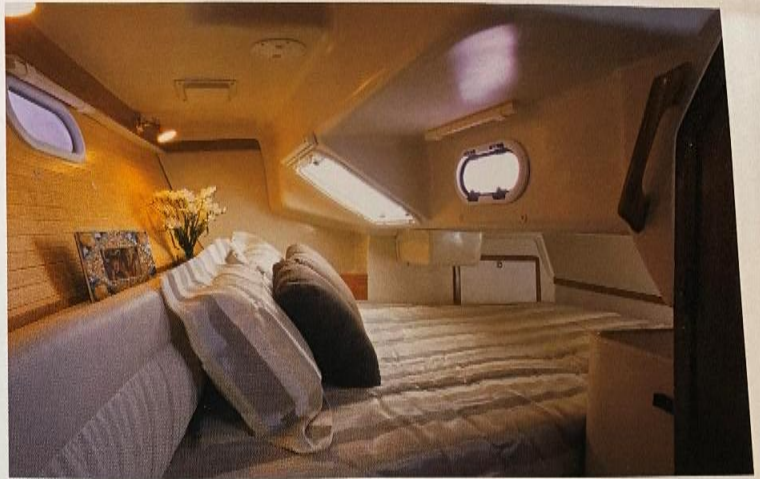
**FOR SALE
2001 CATALINA 32'
WING KEEL**

Dreamboat

**Well Maintained Racing Cruiser Sails,
Rigging and Systems in Excellent Shape. For
Complete Features -Call 256-759-2290**

\$62,000





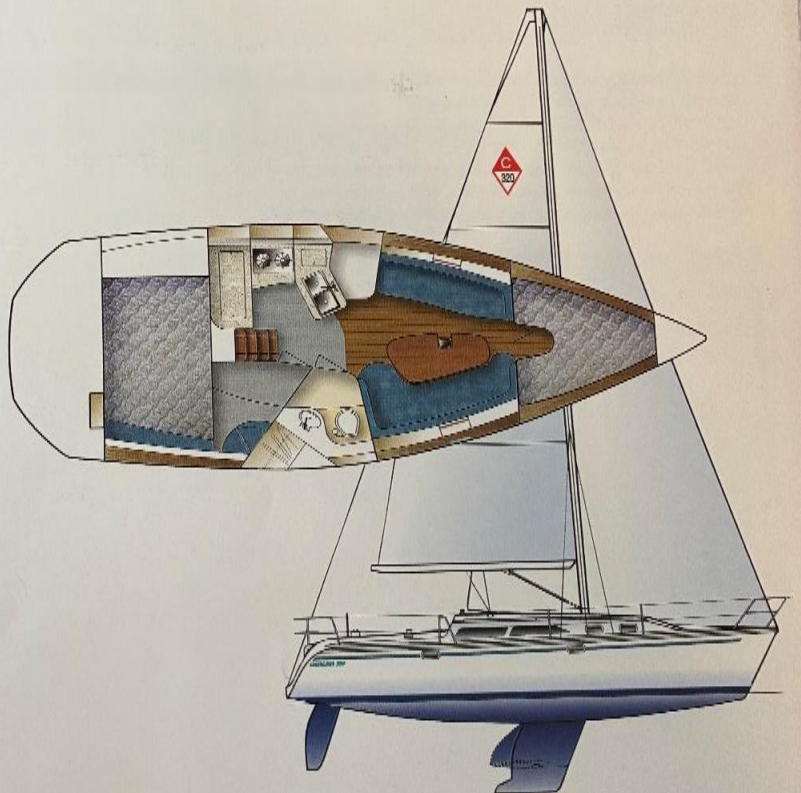
Catalina 320 Principal Specifications

Length Overall	10.44m	34' - 3"
Length of Hull	9.91m	32' - 6"
Length of Waterline	8.53m	28' - 0"
Beam	3.58m	11' - 9"
Draft	Fin Keel	1.91m 6' - 3"
	Wing Keel	1.32m 4' - 4"
Ballast	Fin Keel	1814kg 4000 lbs.
	Wing Keel	1996kg 4400 lbs.
Approximate Weight		
	Fin Keel	5126kg 11,300 lbs.
	Wing Keel	5307kg 11,700 lbs.
Engine	Diesel	3 cylinder 27 HP
Sail Area		
(100% foretriangle)	48.40m ²	521 sq.ft.
I	13.28m	43' - 7"
J	3.76m	12' - 4"
P	11.58m	38' - 0"
E	4.04m	13' - 3"

All measurements are approximate and subject to change without notice.

Catalina  **Yachts**

21200 Victory Blvd., Woodland Hills, CA 91367
 Phone (818) 884-7700 • Fax (818) 884-3810
<http://www.catalinayachts.com>



1982 Capri 25

1982 Catalina Capri Hull # 306

2014 Tohatsu Outboard 4HP

Full set of sails including symmetrical spinnaker and pole

All lines run to cockpit (all halyards, reef line, boom vang, cunningham, and outhaul)

Sinram TP10 Tiller Pilot

Asking \$3500

JohnBuckley107@gmail.com



1981 Capri 25

5 horsepower Yamaha

Loaded with Sails

Loaded with Race Gear



\$2500. 256-683-8948

SAILBOAT RENTAL



\$50 per day

Boats must be returned by dusk.

RENTAL INFO:

- Approval from a board member is required
- A waiver must be signed
- Boats must be inspected
 - Before and after
 - Safety gear

Questions? board@brownscreeksailingassociation.org

**PAY RENTAL
FEE**





Guntersville Lakeside Crafts Guntersville, AL

Thank you for purchasing your sign from Guntersville Lakeside Crafts. You will enjoy the conversations around this piece of art. Whether you hang it in your house, boathouse, or any outdoor space it will get attention from anyone who sees it. These signs also make great gifts for our lake friends because they are unique, and custom made. All signs produced by Guntersville Lakeside Crafts have three coats of an exterior high-grade paint for each flag block. The blocks are attached with stainless steel screws and framed signs are assembled with stainless steel nails. This makes them suitable for a salty environment.

Below is a key for decoding your sign.

INTERNATIONAL FLAGS AND PENNANTS					
ALPHABET FLAGS			NUMERAL PENNANTS		
Aita		Kilo		Uniform	
Bravo		Lima		Victor	
Charlie		Mike		Whiskey	
Delta		November		Xray	
Echo		Oscar		Yankia	
Foxtrot		Papa		Zulu	
Golf		Quebec		SUBSTITUTES	
Hotel		Romeo		1st Substitute	
India		Sierra		2nd Substitute	
Juliett		Tango		3rd Substitute	
			CCCCC (Increasing Pointed or Squared Point)		0

Again, thank you for your purchase! Contact us at glc4001@gmail.com for any ideas or to provide feedback on your purchase! You can also contact us by phone at 256-508-5255.



Gunter'sville Lakeside Crafts
Gunter'sville, AL

History of nautical flags

Nautical flags were invented in the mid -17th century as an international code system used for two ships to signal each other or for a ship to signal to shore. They are also called signaling nautical flags. Using a group of different colored flags, shaped flags and markings each one has a different meaning. The flags can be used alone or in combination with another flag.

Nautical flags are made up of 26 square flags (which represent the letters of the alphabet) along with 10 numbered pendants; one answering pendant and three substitutes or repeaters. At sea, only a few flag colors are easily recognized, these are: red, blue, yellow, black, and white and they cannot be mixed indiscriminately. For easy recognition nautical flags are either red and white, yellow and blue, yellow and black, blue and white, black and white along with plain red, white and blue.

Nautical flags and the knowledge of their meanings are valuable on the water in case of danger or breakdowns in other communications systems such as radio. One-flag signals are urgent or common signals.

- Two-flag signals are used mostly for distress and maneuvering.
- Three-flag signals are for points of the compass, relative bearings, standard times, verbs, punctuation and also general code and decode signals.
- Four-flags are used for geographical signals, names of ships, bearings, etc.
- Five-flag signals are used to relate time and position.
- Six-flag signals are used to indicate north or south or east or west in latitude and longitude signals.
- Seven flags are for longitude signals containing more than one hundred degrees.

There are also flags used in nautical racing which signal to the competitors what they are supposed to do.

Eight Bells-On a Ship, Time is measured in Bells. A Bell is 30 minutes. A Sailors Watch, the time a sailor is on Deck, is 8 Bells or 4 Hours. When a Sailor passes on, it is said in that context that; “8 Bells, his watch has ended”. You might also see the expression that they have “Crossed over the Bar”.



Jim Batson was BCSA’s First Commodore.

When I was ten years old, my father bought a Star Boat at Browns Creek. He would go off racing with his boat partner, and unfortunately, I would get left behind to swim at the dock as the Star had a crew of two. Jim Batson took me along on a Race Day on his Columbia 23, which at the time was a really choice boat.

He was a young man, highly intelligent, a little coarse on the edges as young guys are. He liked Budweiser and big Fat stinky cigars he said was to show him the wind direction.

That day, he won the race. I’m sure I had nothing to do with it. I was probably along to add weight. I had gotten to steer the Star Boat some. But I think that the excitement of winning that Race on Jim Batson’s Boat kindled my love and lifelong obsession for Racing. I’m forever grateful.

ED

**James Lucian Batson Jr, Ph.D.
February 13, 1936 –June 5, 2026**

James Lucian Batson Jr., beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, teacher, mentor and friend, passed away peacefully after a brief illness at the age of 90. Born in Steubenville, Ohio, Jim was the son of James L. Batson Sr. and Bertha Mae (Cummings) Batson.

He grew up in the Piney Woods area of Alabama on the family’s Concord Farm alongside his younger brothers, Dorman and Ted. His remarkable life-story began at eighteen months old, crawling on the tracks behind his house, he was hit by a train and pulled out by his mother. There are not enough words to describe his lifelong determination, persistence, and unyielding pursuit of any goal he set his mind to. Early on he faced what would seem to most significant obstacles and lack with a creative and positive response always finding a way. Although he lived in the country and being the oldest had many chores and responsibilities, he found a way to do more. His mother wanted him to put that energy into music and art, but he had other ideas. In addition to being driven, he had an innate, natural ability to use his hands and was good at figuring out how to do something with his mind.

Jim came of age with a deep curiosity and a strong work ethic forged early in life. As a young man, he delivered newspapers by bicycle, helped farm ten acres with his family, and taught himself skills that would define a lifetime of craftsmanship and achievement. He loved to read (Jack London being his favorite) and entered the Boy Scouts as soon as

he was old enough later earning the highest and most prestigious designation of Eagle Scout. At Hueytown High School he lettered in baseball, basketball and football and he excelled in math, chemistry, physics, and botany. He bought his first car and taught himself how to rebuild the engine, earning him a job as a part-time mechanic. He epitomized working smarter than harder and learned that lesson early on when digging septic tank lines and deciding after two weeks there “was a better way so I looked in a book and found that Aeronautical Engineers got paid the most.”

It would be a mistake not to add that his first chore began with a knife, or more precisely an axe, chopping firewood for the family wood stove. In December of 1952 he was inspired by a Popular Mechanics article about Bo Randall and how he made knives. He fashioned his first knife in his uncle’s workshop and his mother’s kitchen. About this time the Iron Mistress came out and that is when he said “I became a lover of Bowie Knives.”

In the fall of 1954, he enrolled at Alabama Polytech Institute, now Auburn University and was accepted to the co-op program at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama living at the boarding house of “Ma Miller’s”. As a co-op, he worked on the Honest John and Little John Rockets as a Test Engineer and fired rockets in White Sands, New Mexico. While in New Mexico, he fought in the 1957 Golden Gloves learning a lesson that fighting was not for him.

Jim, or Batson as he was known, devoted 33 years of service to Redstone Arsenal; he managed and conducted original research on free flight rockets; worked on the Shillelagh anti-tank weapon and the Law Rocket development; worked in the MLRS’s Project Office from its inception, a weapon system that would later earn the nickname “Steel Rain” during Operation Desert Storm; was test manager for the Pershing Rocket Program; and finished his career in the “Skunk Works” or fondly called Prototype Engineering. Many of the rockets he saw go from “cradle to the grave.” He took quite pride in work that served his country and made a lasting impact. He received his master’s degree from Auburn in 1967 in Aerospace Engineering. During his master’s program, he sailed the Olympic class sailboat called the Flying Dutchman and competed in the pre-Olympic trials. In 1972, he received his Ph.D. in Aerospace Engineering at the University of Texas and then skippered a cruise sailing across the Gulf Stream to the Bahamas 5 times.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Jim’s greatest passion was the forge. In 1978, he became the hardware supplier to build the wrought ironwork for what is called Constitution Village in Huntsville, Alabama. A blacksmith and knife maker, he studied under legendary craftsmen including Frances Whitaker and Bill Moran. He earned the prestigious Master Bladesmith designation from the American Bladesmith Society and co-founded the Alabama Forge Council. Jim served as President of the Artist-Blacksmith Association of North America and taught for 30 years at the John C. Campbell Folk School in Brasstown, North Carolina among others. He also founded the Batson Bladesmith Symposium now held at Tannehill Ironworks in its 38th year bringing together knifemakers new and old. He was extremely active in the ABS and one numerous awards and distinctions including being inducted into the ABS Hall of Fame along with the Blade Magazine Cutlery Hall of Fame.

Learning to research from his days at the University of Texas and the art of scientific discovery from his tenure at Redstone Arsenal, Jim authored numerous magazine articles and books ranging from the material science of bladesmithing, to how to build your own hydraulic forge press, to the history of the early American Knives he loved and made. In 1990, he began to pursue his lifelong quest to document the history of the Bowie knife. His first book published in 1992, James Bowie and the Sandbar Fight, was the first of many bodies of research this man of science, logic and skill would produce. He continued writing and researching until the end with his last book published recently at the age of 90.

Jim forged Damascus steel, restored an 1814 historic home in Twickenham, hiked part of the Appalachian trail with the Boy Scout Troup 400 he led, served as Deacon at Monte Sano Methodist Church, and was loved by all he touched. He was a man of remarkable talent and range, approaching every endeavor with humility, discipline, and an unwavering desire to learn. He is survived by his beloved wife, Barbara, who shared many of his most prolific years of craftsmanship and adventure; his daughter, Sara Fair, and her husband, Steve; his son, Jim Batson, and his wife, Bonnie, of Huntsville; Barbara's sons, Jim and John, and their families; 14 grandchildren; and 5 great-grandchildren. He is also survived by Sara Batson, his first wife and the mother of his children; his brother, Dorman Batson, and family; his sister-in-law, Ann Batson, wife of his late brother Ted Batson, and her family; and many nieces, nephews, and dear friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, James L. Batson Sr. and Bertha Mae Batson, and his brother, Ted Batson.

James Batson was led by a brilliant and curious mind. He continually sought out new skills and challenges to master with undaunting courage that no task was too difficult. His hunger for learning was rivaled only by what will be his greatest legacy: teaching, bringing people together of like minds to share and inspiring others for generations. His life truly did "take a Rocket Scientist."

"And last but not least, I wish to thank the good Lord above, who has endowed me with whatever basic skills I have." — James Lucian Batson Jr.

A private graveside burial service for immediate family will be held in Bessemer, Alabama. A Memorial Celebration honoring Jim's life will be held this fall at Burritt on the Mountain in Huntsville. Details will be announced at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in memory of James Lucian Batson Jr., will help support future generations of blacksmiths and bladesmiths who share his passion for craftsmanship, learning, and preserving the traditions of the forge.

Checks may be made payable to:

Alabama Forge Council in care of Judd Clemm

A Parting Sea Shanty written by Elle Cordova-
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