



New Buoys in Moriches Bay - Head Up!

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Any mariner who has transited Moriches Bay knows that, in several places, it can be and will be very unforgiving if you stray from the channel. In some places, such as between buoy-26 and buoy-27 to the east of the US Coast Guard Station on Tuthill Point, it can be unforgiving while in the channel. The USCG Local Notice to Mariners has noted for over a year that depths of 18" (that's inches) have been reported there. This author has been sending letters to congressmen and the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) for years about this dangerous situation (don't get me started!) and the dredging that is needed. Last week, the USCG, who don't and can't dredge (see ACOE) stepped forward and moved a large number of buoys in that area of water in an attempt to find good water. They largely succeeded and with some small fine-tuning will have it in very good shape shortly. This column is about these moves and some lessons learned.

Hard Aground

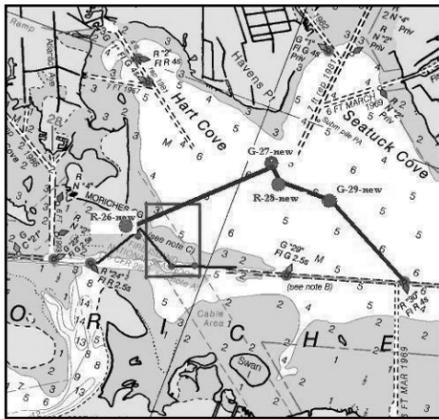
As has been written about here (see SSP, "Hard Aground

- Now What?", 7/9/08 & 11/1/06), running aground is no fun and can be quite dangerous if done at high speed or against hard surfaces - like rocks! The one saving grace about the South Shore is, quite likely, you will run hard aground on sand and or mud. God left the rocks on the North Shore; Sand on the South Shore... However, if you hit anything at enough speed, it is going to hurt and sand doesn't require that much speed to feel/act like concrete. For the local mariner, the "thin" water issues in several sections of Moriches Bay are well enough known that they automatically throttle back and raise the engine's angle (where so equipped) as they approach the traditional "danger zones." On the chart below, the box on the left side encompasses the area between buoys 26 and 27, where the problem has been legion for so long.

In fact, it is so problematic that you can't find any buoys on USCG charts of that area (between buoy 24 and buoy 29) because the

buoys needed to be moved so often. In that situation, charting is counter-productive. The heavy line that has been annotated onto the chart is where the new buoys are now - including buoy 29, which has been moved considerably to the north - to hopefully wake up the casual boater that something dramatic has happened. Head up - north!

For those that want the latitude/longitudes for their GPS's, here are the coordinates as of this past weekend:



G 29	40-deg 47.636' N x 072-deg 43.259 W
R 28	40-deg 47.764' N x 072-deg 43.802 W
G 27	40-deg 47.807' N x 072-deg 43.836 W
R 26	40-deg 47.295' N x 072-deg 44.314 W

Has It Worked?

Largely, yes - but you need to pay attention. As one skipper found out this past Saturday while following his GPS instead of what he should have been seeing, he drove his 38' SeaRay hard onto the shoal in the old channel, aiming for a buoy that existed only in his GPS. Three hours later, after a tremendous effort by TowBoat-US in ungrounding him, it was determined that he had disabled his propulsion system (read: bent his prop so much that it would shake his boat apart if he ran the engine) and little steerage (rudders also shot.) And the new channels themselves aren't 100% clean as there is always some shoaling in that area but, with some small "tweaking" by the USCG, who is to be commended for taking the initiative, it will be as good as it can get out there.

Lessons?

Plenty. First, the Law of the Sea still prevails. SeaTow (who put in a tremendous number of hours) and TowBoat-US

often "held station" by the new channels to warn boaters not to run aground, despite it being in their commercial interest to be towing rather than not towing. Of course, all parties worked closely and well with US Coast Guard Forces, both the active-duty regulars and Auxiliarists. Second, keep your head up! Just because the GPS says "go right", only do so if your eyes confirm what your electronics are telling you. In fact, when I teach seamanship electronics, I start with "what do your eyes tell you?" - then cross-check that to the electronics. If they don't agree, STOP THE BOAT AND FIND OUT WHY! There is no shame in safety first! Had the skipper of the 38' SeaRay followed that advice, he'd be saving himself what I expect is going to be a very expensive repair bill.

BTW, if you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at JoinUSCGAux2008@aol.com or go direct to MaryJo Cruickshank, who is in charge of new members matters, at FSO-PS@emcg.us and we will help you "get in this thing..."

19 Boats Pre-registered for Moose Fluke Tournament

The Riverhead Moose Lodge will host its 12th Annual Riverhead Moose Fluke Tournament which benefits The Suffolk County Child Advocacy Center which assists abused children. 19 Boats with 60 anglers have pre-registered for this year's event. The tournament has an Adult Division and a Junior Division (less than 16 years old).

Tournament Chairman Capt. Ray Kelly stated "We hope adults will bring more junior anglers and that more female anglers will participate this year. The juniors really enjoy weighing in their fish. The weigh-in is always suspenseful. It is always a fun day for a great cause." Capt. Kelly expects to have an additional 50 anglers or more on 10-15 boats register at the Captain's Meeting which will be held Friday, July 25, 2008 at 7:30 PM.

The boats must depart and return to the Riverhead Moose Lodge Marina on the beautiful Peconic River in Riverhead, NY. Fishing hours are from 8:00 am-3:00 pm. Local businesses donate many raffle prizes which will be raffled off including Two Round Trip Travel Vouchers (one domestic and one international) valued at \$700.00 donated by Spirit Airlines of Miramar, FL, an OUPV Captain's Course (value \$650.00) donated by The Captain's School of Long Island in Calverton, NY and a 3 hour Sunset Champagne Cruise on the Great South Bay (value \$600.00) donated by Capt. Kip Johannsen of Lindenhurst, NY. Capt. John Lavelle of Rocky Point, NY donated 6 beautiful Fluke Prints which will be awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place in each division along with other prizes.

For more information, check www.adventuresinfishing.com, call Capt. Ray Kelly at 61-525-7987 or email captray@adventuresinfishing.com



Capt. Ray Kelly

Joan's View

story and photos by Joan Travan

In Memory

July 6: Opening the ceremony with a poignant statement on a hot July 4th holiday weekend, the Chaplain of Brookhaven Town Fire Chief's Council, Rick Vanderkeift, stated America is "Home of the free because of the brave."

Hundreds of Medford residents and guests attended the ceremony at Fireman's Park, dedicating The 9/11 Memorial Garden in memory of Joseph V. Vigiano and John T. Vigiano and all those who made the ultimate sacrifice on September 11, 2001.

"Joe Vigiano chose to live and raise his family in Medford," said Rob Saporito (MFD/Det. NYPD). "We wanted a place for people to come that is peaceful and relaxing to help in the healing of the Medford Fire Department and the community as a whole."

A steel beam from the World Trade Center rests in the middle of a circular garden, representing the circle of life.

Saporito said, "We have not forgotten and will never forget."



Members of the Medford Fire Department, Medford Fire District and honored guests



Chief Franklin Rivera, Medford Fire Department - Reverend Harold McDowell Chaplain of Medford Fire Department