

SIDEWINDER

NEWSLETTER

PUBLICATION OF THE UNITED STATES SIDEWINDER ASSOCIATION

JULY AUGUST 1979

Hello Sidewinder Sailors,

This will be the last newsletter which Mary and I are responsible for the editing end. We have enjoyed the two years of writing articles and communicating with all of you Sidewinder Sailors.

We will continue to sail and race the Sidewinder and probably we will help write articles for future newsletters. For now, we found this interesting story ... have fun.

- Carol

IS THERE INTELLIGENT LIFE ON EARTH ? (Close Encounters of the Worst Kind)

The purpose of our mission was to explore the planet Earth to determine the presence of intelligent life forms. Due to a malfunction of our spacecraft we were unable to land, but instead were trapped in stationary orbit above a small body of water which we named "Galway Lake." From that vantage point we were able to make observations for several earth-years while repairs were completed.

Looking down on the lake we observed a curious cycle of seasonal activity. The earth creatures are relatively inactive when the surface is frozen and snow covered, but the melting of the snow and ice brings on a frenzy of action. The activity appears to be associated with some sort of primitive ritual designed to bring back the life-giving snow and ice. It is possible that the earthlings are convinced that the rituals work, as the snow and ice return each year.

Seen from above, earthlings are long, narrow, and pointed at one end. Some are doubles, with two bodies attached together. They have large fins sticking up, usually white in color. The smaller earthlings have one head, while the larger ones may have as many as three heads. The heads stick out the side, and many shift frequently from one side to another.

The performance of the snow and ice ritual is related to the cycle of earth's moon, being repeated every 6th and 7th day of the moon's 7-day quarter cycle. From time to time the ritual is conducted at night, under a full moon.

To begin the ritual, earthlings gather in the center of the lake. A flurry of activity is seen, seemingly centered around their queen. The queen stays fixed in the middle of the lake, and is easily identified by shape, changing colors, and sound. Seen from above, the queen is approximately square in shape, and she does not have a fin. Her color change is associated with a loud "BLAST" sound which occurs at precisely timed intervals. (We have noted that when the intervals are off by as little as a few seconds, a great uproar is recorded on our sound meters.)

Groups of the earthlings then proceed around the lake, seemingly without purpose and with a motion resembling frenzied ants -- darting helter skelter, back and forth, yet with a general drift in the same direction. It is suspected that the earthlings indulge in some sort of intoxicating substance during these rituals, as they are often observed to lose their equilibrium, laying on their sides, turning completely upside down, and often going around in small circles.

A sort of language is heard, but it is limited to only a few words. These are:

BARGING
 STARBOARD
 MAST ABEAM
 BUOYROOM
 NOYOU DON'T
 UPUPUP
 HAHAGOTCHADOA720

Towards the end of each day's ritual, these earthlings that return first to the queen are rewarded with a "BLAST." The rest follow, and they disperse to their dwellings after passing the queen.

The level of activity drops sharply as the snow and ice season approaches. We assume that the earthlings hibernate during the cold season, as many are seen to be immobile on the shore of the lake.

Our mission has been successful in that we have established that there is life on earth. The level of intelligence is yet to be determined.

Reprinted from the August-September
 1978 Thistle newsletter, Bagpipe.

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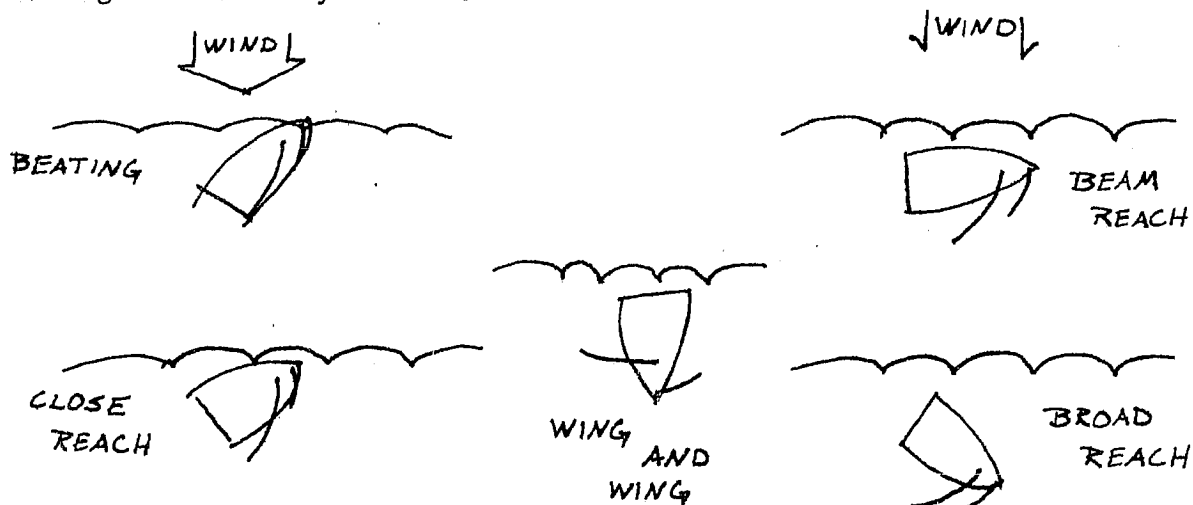
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BACK TO BASICS

continued from the last issue
of the Sidewinder Newsletter

Reaching across the Breeze

Sailing with the wind blowing over the side of your boat, reaching, is the easiest point of sail. From your course close to the wind, ease the bow away from the wind and let the sails out gradually as you do. Remember from the last newsletter that when you're on a beat, the bow of your boat slices the waves at a 45° angle. Now, while you are reaching, the waves should be hitting the side of your boat.



A beam reach is a point of sail with the wind perpendicular to the center line of the boat. To trim sail properly, steer your desired course and let the sails out until they luff (flutter) slightly (watch along the mast for the mainsail and along the luff pole for the jib) and then pull them in again to a point at which the luffing stops. You want the sails just on the verge of luffing. If the tiller is hard to handle, or the boat wants to swing into the wind, your sails are probably in too far.

Sailing Downwind: Running

If you had to beat to your destination, you probably will be rewarded with a downhill run back to the harbor. As you swing the bow away from the direction of the wind, you will notice that the apparent wind, the breeze on your cheek, will seem to decrease. The sun will be warmer and the motion of the boat slower. Not a bad moment for lunch.

But running is not simple. As you swing away from the wind and let the sails out, you have to guard against an accidental gybe, or downwind tack. If you let the bow go beyond the point directly downwind, the back of the mainsail will begin to fill with wind, called sailing by the lee, and can suddenly fill completely and swing violently across the boat, a flying or all standing gybe. Heads as well as gear can be damaged.

Instead of trying to steer directly before the wind, you will find it easier on the helm and the nerves to sail at an angle of about 165° to 170° away from the wind. Let the fine hairs on the back of your neck, as well as the windfly at the masthead and the ripples on the water, tell you where the wind is coming from and what angle you are from it.

Downwind, the jib may behave badly, flogging from one side to the other. This is because it is blanketed, its wind blocked, by the much larger mainsail. One solution is to try to fill the jib on the opposite side of the boat from the main, while maintaining tension on the leeward jib sheet, pull in the windward sheet until the sail fills with breeze. This is sailing wing and wing. The jib will collapse, and then fill, and then collapse again; so if you are going any great distance, a pole rigged from the mast out to the clew is a definite boon.

To change direction downwind you will have to gybe, and you will want to make it a controlled gybe. To prevent a flying gybe, you have to pull in the mainsheet until the boom is over the boat before you steer the bow across the downwind point. You have to steer slowly and then hold the new downwind course firmly or, as the mainsail fills on the other side, the boat will veer broadside to the wind. As soon as the wind does fill the back of the sail and as the boom swings overhead, let the mainsheet out again, rapidly but not wildly, until the sail is again facing the wind and pulling like a mule.

In the middle of the gybe, when the boat is heading dead downwind and the mainsail is over the cockpit, you'll notice that the boat slows down. When you want to slow down while running, to allow a boat to catch you or to get your bearing, that is the way to go about it.

Home Again: Making the Dock

When you begin thinking about making the dock, you'll probably want to roll-up the jib; you'll have one less sail to handle while docking.

The trick of making a mooring under sail is knowing in advance how far the boat will carry its way, or coast, after you have turned its bow to the wind. Practice this in open water by turning into the wind next to a harbor buoy and watching how far you go with the main luffing. When you have a good idea how far the boat will coast, you are ready to make a pass at the dock. You should approach a dock upwind so that the wind will slow the boat to a stop.

As you approach the anchorage, judge in advance the point at which you will make your upwind turn to coast to the dock. Have a person ready with your bow line or boathook. At the turning spot - downwind of the mooring and a coasting distance away - make the sharp turn into the wind, let the mainsail luff and steer for the end (corner or edge) of the dock. If you have estimated correctly, the boat should come to a stop just as the bow passes the edge of the dock.

Almost everyone misses his first few attempts at making the dock, so don't be deterred if you find the boat stopping with 15' - 20' to go. Swing around and try it again.

Once stopped, have someone get out and hold the boat at the dock; you can lower the mainsail. Now you're ready to put it on the trailer, tidy up and relax.

GYBING

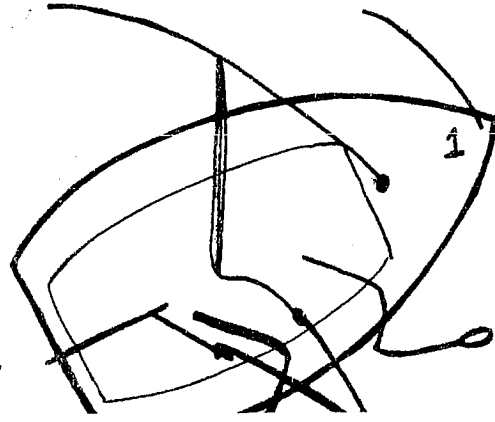
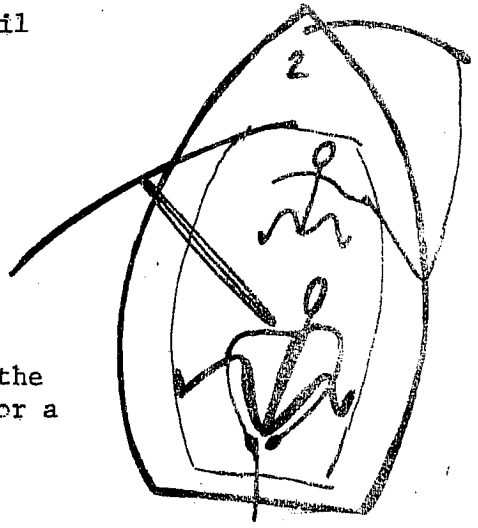
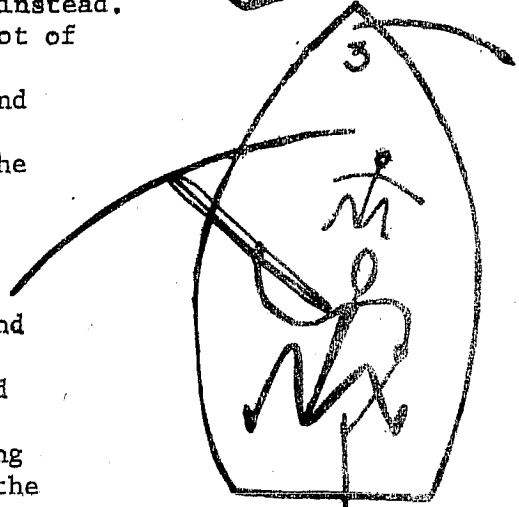
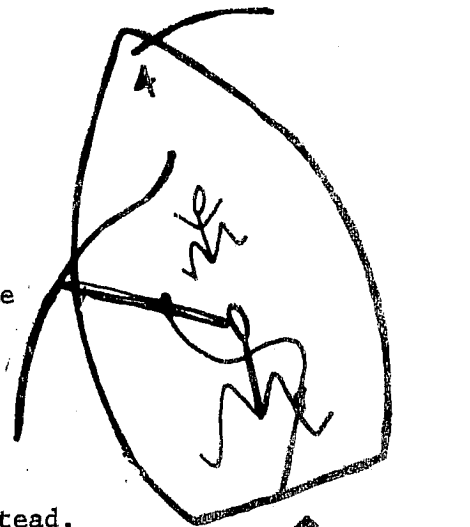
- M.P.

Essentially, gybing is the opposite of a come about. Gybing can catch you off guard because it is an abrupt change of the mainsail whereas coming about is a smoother, slower crossing over of the mainsail. When tacking the sail crosses the boat with no effort on the helmsmans part. When gybing it is necessary to help the sail across at the proper time. Gybing is a maneuver aimed at saving time and for this reason it is used for rescuing. If you're not confident of gybing then by all means tack instead. Gybing is a tricky maneuver and it is responsible for a lot of capsizes that occur in fresh winds. The difficulties and dangers of gybing depend mainly on the strength of the wind and the state of the sea. Gybing in strong winds should not be attempted until the technique of running before the wind has been properly mastered.

Any abrupt changes of course must be avoided, like going suddenly from a reach on one tack to a reach on the other. To execute gybing from a reach to a reach turn until downwind, get yourself ready then gybe and sail to your new course. Don't attempt gybing in the middle of a squall, tack instead, try gybing when the wind is weakest, that is to say, when the boat is at its maximum speed in relation to the wind--neither accelerating nor during a deceleration. A gybe should be executed as the boat is sailing down the wave. If the boat is going up a wave the boat will slow down and the wind pressure on the sail will increase.

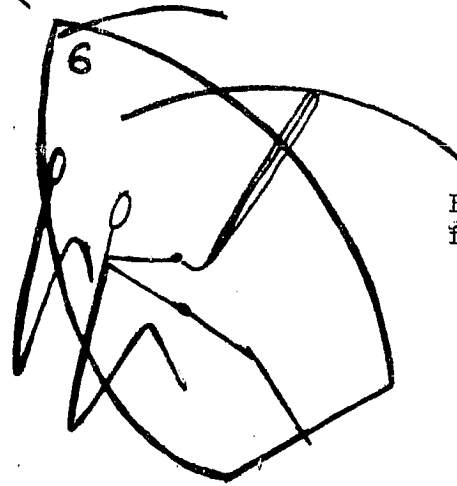
PROCEDURE to GYBE in a SIDEWINDER

The skipper readies his crew by giving a command--Ready to gybe. The crew responds with "ready" once the centerboard is up. (Raise the centerboard 3/4 so that it offers the least possible resistance while still giving directional control.) The helmsman then begins to turn the boat away from the source of wind (falling off) until he reaches the point where the wind is directly behind. He stops turning for a moment and stands up, planting his feet next to the side of the boat. Next he bends his knees and leans over slightly so he can change hands of the tiller behind his back--you should always face forward. Now the helmsman grabes the mainsheet in its middle with his free hand and begins the rest of the turn to gybe. He gives a quick jerk to the main sail and it should breezeright across. Be sure your head is down!

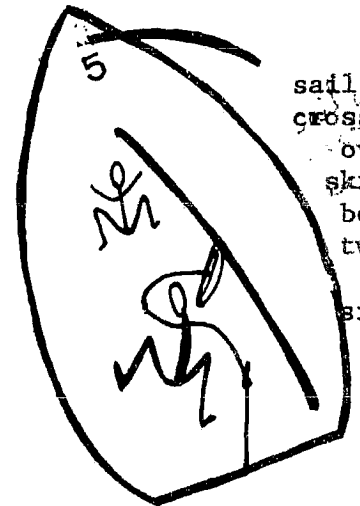


Keep slight windward heel throughout, essential for a smooth gybe to have windward heel at Fig 2 & 3 3 & 4

At the point of jerking the main sail a verbal command should be given by the skipper so the crew knows to ready himself for the crossing of the boom, "gybe ho." Also, the boat should be heeled slightly to windward (the side the sail will be going to) for better balance and added steering control. Immediately after the gybe flatten the boat for balance. The skipper simply sits down on the new windward side (side opposite the mainsail) and the crew keeps the boat balanced. By standing up the skipper is sure not to become pinned behind the tiller and he will be ready to jump to either side to keep the boat steady.



Boat should be flat here.

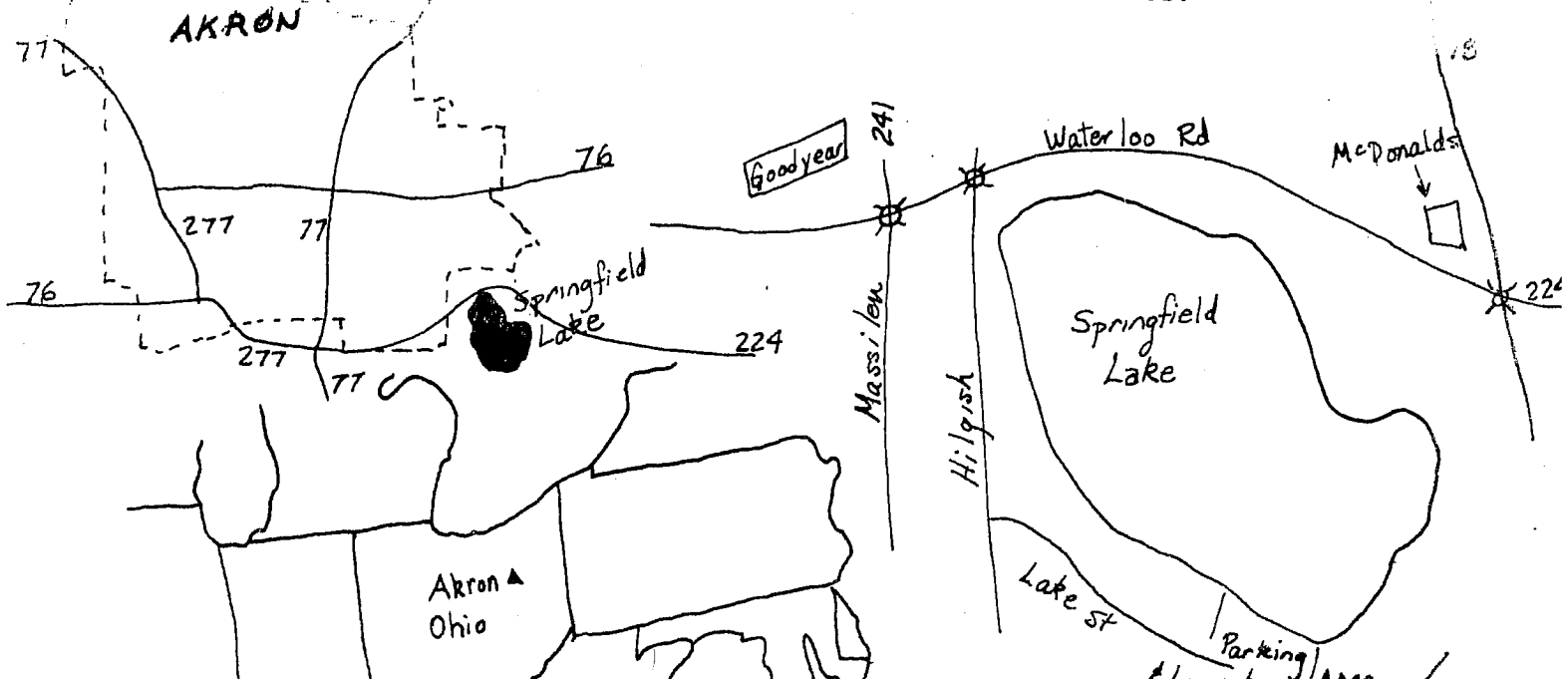


sail crosses over skipper begins twisting sideways

WIND ↑

SAILING CLINIC

Every Sunday at Springfield Lake Tom Baugher will be giving a sailing clinic for Sidewinder sailors. Tom can be contacted at the above address.



SIDEWINDER NATIONALS

AUGUST 4-5

HOST: Cadillac-Mitchell Yacht Club, Fleet 15

CONTACT: Lois Cole 616-775-2546
P.O. Box 329, Cadillac MI 49601

REGISTRATION: Price has not been set

AWARDS: Will be given to the top eight finishers

SCHEDULE:

FRIDAY 7:00-10:30 registration

SATURDAY 7:00-9:00 registration
9:00 Skippers meeting
10:00 First race

Lunch, followed with two races.

SUNDAY 9:00 Fourth race, fifth race immediately following
Lunch
Trophy Presentation

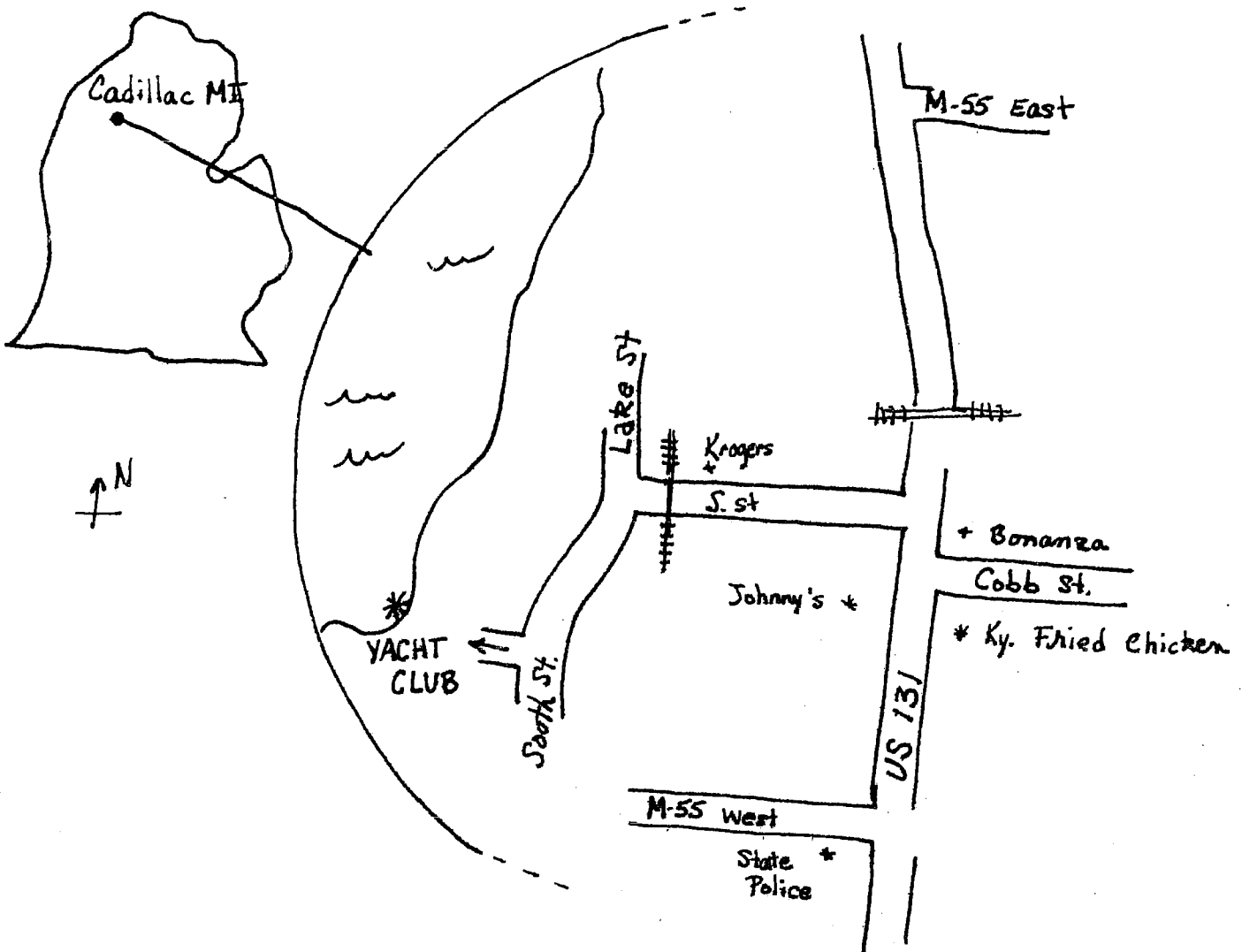
A time has not been set for the annual meeting, this year there will be an election for the Secretary/Treasurer

MOTELS: all just minutes away from the yacht club---

Maple Hill Motel, S. Mitchell St. (US 131) 616-775-5267
McGuire's Motor Lodge, S. Mackinaw Trail (just off US 131) 616-775-9947
Pine Knoll Motel, S. Mackinaw Trail (just off US 131) 616-775-9471
South Shore Motel, 1246 Sunnyside Drive (on Lake Cadillac) M-55
616-775-7641

CAMPING: Wm. Mitchell State Park 616-775-7911 (on M-115)
Cadillac Travel Trailer Park 10621 Boon Rd., Cadillac MI 616-775-9724
Birchwood Resort & Campgrounds 6545 E. M-115, Cadillac MI 616-775-9101

PLACE: Lake Cadillac is a lake approximately three miles long and one mile wide, situated just west of the city of Cadillac. A launching area is on the premises, but NO camping facilities are available on the premises. Grocery stores, drug store, dime store and restaurants are in walking distance of the yacht club.



The FIRST ANNUAL MFG REGATTA and CLINIC

September 15-16

Presque Isle, Erie PA

MFG will host the event. Two lunches, a barbeque Saturday evening and gift are included in the entry fee of \$20 per two person boat. Sidewinders, Pintails Bandit 15s and MFG 19s are invited to participate. More information will be coming out soon.