

NEWSLETTER FOR BIG ISLAND BOATING

Boating Emergency Response Team

(BERT) – John M. Luchau

Well before formation of Na Hoa Holomoku of Hawaii Yacht Club there was a concern for the safety of locally moored boats. Many of our club members have viewed the destruction of more than one vessel from either broken mooring, dragged mooring, chafed lines or lack of attention to the condition of the vessel. There have been previous sailing associations that have been attentive to member's boats in Reed's Bay and they had some limited success in keeping boats and boaters safe during times of crisis. Many stories can be told of what has happened in Reed's Bay, Radio Bay and the rest of Hilo Bay. When our club was in its formative stages and the bylaws were being drafted, Article II, Section 2 was composed. It states that one of the objectives and purposes of the corporation is to maintain communication with all members concerning any safety and security issue about their boats at a mooring, quay or dock and to assist whenever possible in preparation for inclement weather or any other situation which threatens. Even in the short time that our yacht club has been formed there have been incidents where boats have been damaged or have been in danger of being damaged. BERT has been

formed to help address future incidents such as those.

BERT has taken on the following goals:

Help boats in the Harbor including Reed's Bay, Radio Bay and Wailoa that are in need of assistance.

Help assist sailors and power boaters coming into Hilo by providing guidance into the harbor for newly arrived boats and extend a hand by providing fuel, navigational and mechanical assistance to cruisers, power boaters and yacht club members who are stranded.

In order to accomplish these goals we have established an emergency communication system and we will be training our team members. We will have a boat and emergency gear and have it staged in an accessible location. BERT member Jim Wytosky has agreed to let us use "Sea Mist" which has a mooring in Wailoa River as our emergency response vehicle and we will work in conjunction with the USCG Auxiliary to gain gear to use for our responses. DLNR is addressing our request for an emergency gear staging area so we should be able to respond to calls by the time you get this newsletter. We will also stay in touch and be on good terms with other governmental entities, i.e. USCG, HFD, etc.

Our communication system will depend a great deal on

you, our club members, other boaters and their friends. Please pass the word to all. When you see or hear of a boating emergency situation please call one of the following in this order, (1) Jim Wytosky – 982-6630, (2) Pat Bolln – 961-4474, or (3) Ed Chase – 966-4005. A phone tree has been established for them to communicate with the rest of the BERT members and any local government agency. Please copy down those numbers and put them in your wallet, purse, truck, car or boat somewhere where you will find them when you need them.

Watchfulness is a great part of security. When or if we are able to acquire the pavilion area for our yacht club or the marina is established there will be a greater increase in security for your moored boats by having someone watching over them for many more hours a day. Please keep that in mind when the club asks you for your help in gaining an area for our yacht club to establish a permanent residence.

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Do you love to sail? If you love to sail you'll want to move people, gear, repair items, fuel, tools and other myriad stuff to and from your boat on its mooring.

Dinghies can double as fishing platforms and get you into really shallow waters where your big boat won't go. They can be emergency transportation to or from your boat if something bad happens or to row or motor out another anchor if you hear there is some inclement weather on the way or to kedge off the rocks. Dinghies give you seamanship skills you can't learn in other ways and certainly don't want to learn while aboard your big boat, i. e. rowing, docking without crashing, going aground.

What about inflatable dinghies? The only one that I have experienced sailing is a Tinker. It sailed pretty well but not quite so well as the hard dinghies and they are **very** slow. Rowing an inflatable dinghy for any appreciable distance is an experience very few people want to repeat. Inflatables have several advantages though. They don't bruise your big boat when you come along side in even the most severe weather. They collapse easily and store much better than hard dinghies. They won't sink if capsized. They can take a larger outboard than can small hard dinghies and therefore can shuttle you to and from the shore faster.

Launching hard dinghies sometimes is a chore. If you are concerned about the nice paint job you just did, the rocks and coral on the beach become a problem, but with the inflatable you just scoot it out the back of your truck or off the trailer with few worries.

A dinghy launch ramp and docking facility in Reed's Bay would be one of the club member's biggest labor savers. Our recent regatta brought this problem to home. I needed assistance getting both dinghies launched and retrieved whereas a small launch ramp would have made it much simpler. A dinghy dock would have saved me repairing the coral scratches and gouges from beaching prior to and after the race. There was a launch ramp opposite the beach and near the pavilion years ago. Can we get it back and have a dock too? This short story might illustrate what is possible.

"A scientist finds evidence of an actual dinosaur, alive and living in the rainforests of South America. He campaigns several universities and succeeds in getting a grant to launch an expedition. Several weeks pass and the expedition party stumbles upon a 3-foot tall pigmy standing near a 300-foot long dead dinosaur. The scientist approaches the pigmy and exclaims, "Dear Lord! Did you kill this dinosaur?"

"Yep!" replied the pigmy.

"But, it's so big and you're so small."

"Yep!" replied the pigmy.

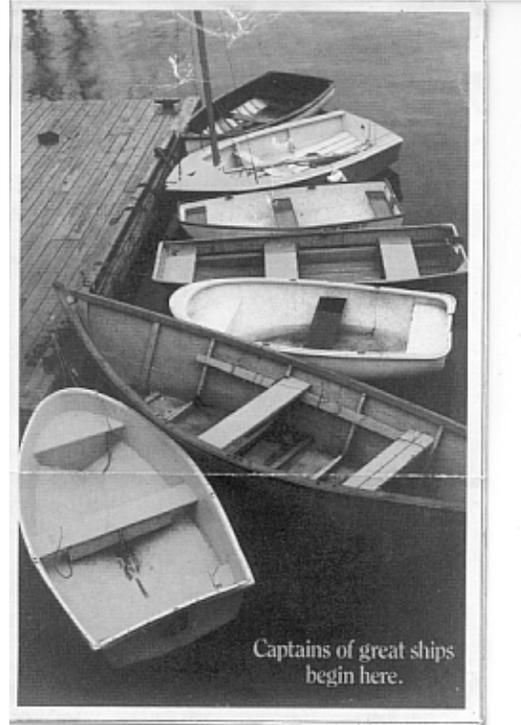
"How the heck did you kill it?" inquired the scientist.

"With my club," replied the pigmy.

"How big is your club?" demanded the scientist.

The pigmy replied, "Well, there's about 50 of us!"

Working together I think we could get a dinghy launch ramp and dock, don't you?



I was not available for calls for assistance to boaters one day last week as I was being rescued myself. A million thanks to Paul & Cora Matsumoto and Larry Peck who came to my aid by keeping me off the rocks and away from Kim's boat and getting me back onto my mooring. You made a great day of sailing have a happy ending. Mahalo nui loa. Pat Bolln

Please send your email addresses to John Luchau at skiprjohn@aol.com to save postage in getting information to you.

We have a shortened newsletter this month as Jim Miles is in the hospital. Send him best wishes at jbmiles@gte.net or go for a visit. He will be back at the publishing desk next month.

The next potluck meeting for Na Hoa Holomoku is Monday, April 9th at 6pm Wailoa Park pavilion #3. Come early to get acquainted with your shipmates and to hear of exciting prospects for the upcoming months.
