

January 2026



**GREAT LAKES  
CRUISING CLUB**

*LifeLine*  
A member newsletter

## Lake Superior's magical Isle Royale



There are many special places in this world, but first among those unique spots on the Great Lakes is Isle Royale. Visit once, and it's likely you'll want to visit again and again.

[Click here to learn more](#)

## GLCC 2026 Event Calendar

Start making your summer cruising plans! GLCC has these scheduled events across the Great Lakes, with more to come.

Each offers special places, special times, and meeting lifelong friends. Check out the events below.

	Dates	Location
Toronto Boat Show	Jan 16-25	Enercare Centre, Toronto, ON
Toronto Boat Show Meetup Dinner	Jan 23	National Yacht Club, Toronto
April Launch and Board of Directors Meeting	April 10-12	Grand Bend, ON
Lake Erie Rally	June 12-14	Middle Bass Island, OH (E-18.5)
Mac Island Rally	June 22-25	Mackinac Island, MI (H-77)
Rally at the Soo	June 26-29	Sault St. Marie, MI (S-230)
2026 Rendezvous	July 10-14	Superior, WI (S-188)
Balloons Over Bay Harbor	Sept 11-13	Bay Harbor, MI (M-5.5)

\*More events to be added - check back often!

[Click here to learn more](#)



## FROM THE BRIDGE Commodore Joe McKeown

### HAPPY NEW YEAR, EVERYONE!

Karen and I hope your 2025 was a safe and successful year. As we set sail into 2026, I am filled with optimism for the exciting cruising season ahead. These winter months provide us with the perfect opportunity to reflect on our past boating achievements and to plan for new adventures on the water. Now, join me as I reflect on our Club in 2025 ....



## Region 39 gathering sets stage for 2026

GLCC members gathered Jan. 4 to celebrate the New Year. Organizers Dee McClure and Craig Shantz were having too much fun and forgot to take pictures of the 30 members attending. We'll look forward to seeing (and taking pictures) of members at upcoming events in the Region including the newly scheduled Mac Island Rally (June 22-26), Rally at the Soo (June 26-29) and Balloons Over Bay Harbor (Sept 11-13).

[Click here to learn more](#)



### **April 10-12 Dive into cruising season at April Launch in Ontario**

The GLCC's April Launch event draws a crowd each year – people like you eager to get back on the water. Save the date for this year's event, April 10-12, at Oakwood Resort in Grand Bend, ON. A Board of Directors meeting also is part of the agenda. Rear Commodore Dave Spencer is eager to show off this delightful part of Ontario. Don't miss it. More details to follow soon.

[Click here to learn more](#)



### **Show off your inner pirate at Lake Erie Rally June 12-14**

Save the date for the Lake Erie Rally June 12-14 (optional early bird arrival June 11), at Middle Bass Island (E-18.5). It will be a "Pirate Weekend," with swashbuckling games, crafty loot and rollicking fun and adventure. X marks the spot, and the fun starts soon. Brush up on your pirate trivia for the contest Saturday night. Registration details to follow. Direct questions to co-chairs Charlie and Esther Graves.

[Click here to learn more](#)



### **Newest Port Captains know and love Lake Michigan**

**Michigan State Park & Harbor Reservations**  
Department of Natural Resources



### **Michigan DNR changes its reservation policy**

Winthrop Harbor, IL, Port Captains Dave Hanson and Lennine Occhino grew up on different parts of Lake Michigan. They now own three boats together and share a love of the Lakes. What more could anyone ask of Port Captains?

[Click here to learn more](#)

The Michigan DNR, in an effort to counter abuses, has made changes to its reservation system. The most important change starting May 1 is a \$10 fee for cancellations made before one's arrival date. Click here for an overview of the current policies.

[Click here to learn more](#)



### Save June 22-25 for Mac Island Rally

We've added a new Region 39 event: a Mac Island Rally, June 22-25. Plan on joining fellow GLCC members at this highly coveted location on your way to the Soo or other cruising locations this summer.

[Click here to learn more](#)



### Save June 26-29 for Rally at the Soo!

Add a fun stop at the Soo as you make your way to the GLCC Rendezvous OR as a destination this summer

[Click here to learn more](#)



**Join the GLCC!**  
Initiation fee waived for Jan/Feb



**Join us in welcoming  
newest GLCC members**

Like the camaraderie and events you are seeing? Join the GLCC and expand your boating friends and adventures! The \$90 Initiation Fee is waived for January and February making joining the GLCC even more attractive. Take advantage of this opportunity to join in on the fun and cruising!

[Click here to learn more](#)

Please welcome our latest club members into the GLCC community. If you don't know them already, you soon will.

[Click here to learn more](#)



### Meet January and February's GLCCSchool instructors

These GLCCSchool instructors have experience that can only be gained over decades of boating. They share their knowledge in webinars free to Club members. Learn their tips on where to go, how to get there, and how to avoid or fix any problems along the way.



### Beat the winter blues with GLCCSchool's new offerings

Late January and February's GLCCSchool lineup includes seminars on cruising Lake Superior, the Trent Severn Waterway, Georgian Bay and the North Channel as well as the larger Triangle Loop and Down East Loops. Informational webinars include the history of the Soo locks, as well as navigating locks and an introduction to Marine Radar. The GLCCSchool has something for everyone, with many webinars highlighting routes and anchorages enroute to the 2026 Annual Rendezvous in Superior-Duluth. GLCCSchool classes are free to members. Check out the latest GLCCSchool offerings here.

[Click here to learn more](#)

[Click here to learn more](#)



### July 9-14 By boat or car, reserve now for annual Rendezvous at Barkers Island

Whether cruising into Barkers Island, Superior, WI (S-187), by boat or car, it's time to make your reservations and take advantage of GLCC discounts for the 2026 Rendezvous.

[Click here to learn more](#)

### Sept 11-13 Reserve dockage now for Balloons over Bay Harbor

Docking reservations at Bay Harbor Lake (MI) Marina for Balloons over Bay Harbor (M-5.5) can now be made. This popular event features multiple hot air balloon launches through the weekend and slips sell out quickly. The event will be Sept 11-13. Event details are still in process. Docking reservations can be made on [Dockwa](#).



## U.S. and Canadian boaters: Check your documentation renewal date!

**United States boaters:** Now's the time for American boaters to check the renewal date for their documented boat. The U.S. Coast Guard issues renewal Certificates of Documentation for 1 to 5 years.

Be aware: There are companies that aggressively market registration renewal services via official looking mailings. In fact, there is no need to engage a third party to complete your paperwork. The process is easy and can be completed online. Visit the USCG Estorefront at: <https://www.nvdc-estorefront.uscg.mil/vds-estorefront/terms>

**Canadian boaters:** With changes introduced in January 2026, Canadian boat licences or registration documentation must be renewed every 5 years. Prior to 2026, boat licences were good for 10 years. Licences with a 10 year expiration issued prior to January 2026 are still good for 10 years but those issued or renewed January 2026 or later will expire after 5 years. The processes for licencing and registration are both. The process for both is managed by Transport Canada at: <https://tc.canada.ca/en/marine-transportation/vessel-licensing-registration>



### Canada's Winfield Basin (GB-6) navigation aid survey set

The Canadian Coast Guard is assessing the current aids to navigation in this anchorage. GLCC members who are familiar with this harbor are encouraged to complete the survey.

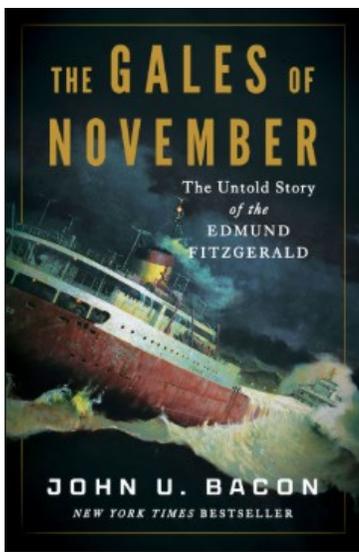
[Click here to learn more](#)



### Shared experiences inspire the Founders Award

The GLCC is a community of boaters who share their experiences in the hopes of inspiring others to follow in their wake. There is no time like the present to find your log book and organize your thoughts about a journey you took that you think others would enjoy. You could be a candidate for the 2026 Founders Award. Submit your story to the GLCC office by **Monday, March 2**. Criteria is listed on our GLCC website

[Click here to learn more](#)



## From the Chaplain: Familiar waters, fresh wake

### Don't miss this great read - 'The Gales of November' by John U. Bacon

*The Gales of November* explores the *Edmund Fitzgerald's* history, the disaster, and its broader impact on maritime safety. Lessons learned from the *Fitzgerald* led to significant changes that have resulted in no sinkings in the half-century since. It's a great read- enjoy!

'January invites us to pause before the engines fully engage; to reflect, to breathe, and to set our bearings. The Great Lakes remind us that beginnings do not require perfection, only intention.'

[Click here to learn more](#)

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