

FISHERMEN'S VOICE

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News & Comment for and by the Fishermen of Maine

FREE

Why Ever Own a Boat?

Now this is pretty much about powerboats. I can sail, somewhat. Know which ropes go to certain pulleys to make those oversized rags go up and down, in and out. And some things are common on the water. But in the end, blow people don't have as much fun, and sailing's more expensive. They have to work harder, don't go as far, and get to the cocktail hour later all worn out.

Is it smart? Rational? In a court of balance, can this primal urge of possessing a boat be rationalized? Why own a hole in the water beset by such overwhelming costs and problems? What is there about this barely dumb, faintly alive creature that sometimes receives and is witness to language Mother embarrassing that is so endearing. Why keep a vehicle on which weekends and vacations are so dreamed and so often wrent asunder, whose physical parts can bring the stalwart to knees? The psyche of ownership can conspire to separate the finest of friends and is one upon whom marriages of the greatest tenderness and love may be hung upon the rocks. What is it about a boat that will bring seemingly rational individuals to lavish more money, time and energy upon it than their homes, family and transportation? Semi-rationals, who in other circumstances cannot get out of bed in the morning, are up at the crack of dawn cleaning, polishing, on their backs scraping foul growths of barnacles, ocean grass and mussels from bottoms and applying smelly paints of such rank to upset a nose doctor. Those who would flee from a cheaply cologned at a cocktail party. What drives us to spend hours replacing rotted wood, and more hours trolling through marine catalogs and reading the myriad of boating magazines for the latest electronic whiz gadgets so necessary to impress neighbors at the dock. Why do these same when put upon over the years to keep up with this inhaling void then contract the disease of "10-footitis" and purchase a larger vessel with correspondingly more problems. Do you think it has anything to do with the migration of our population to the sea? Are our numbers predestined to increase?

In thirty years of building floatable abodes that are driven at ridiculous speeds and live in hostile environments, I've tried to fathom why anyone who could live in the comfort of home, cottage on steady ground, or even in a land yacht, would want to take on the awesome responsibility of owning and caring for a boat. Anyone with a midgeon of experience will say 'tis less costly to charter. Perhaps, maybe just perhaps there's a niggle in our psyche, perverted I agree, that leads us down that watery, dollar strewn course, to have and to hold this ever so demanding mistress. (I love the meaningful names, "Mom's Mink", "Kids Inheritance", "Mistress II", "Poor Bill"). And, perhaps this niggle is fostered and nourished by god's own number of events. Was so for this child. Started with that first evening in a quiet cove at anchor with long slow sun going down. There was more. The anxiety of a long, lumpy passage and then exhilaration of landfall and the feel of steady

ground, or the sweet purr of combustion iron. Rowing out to your boat and she's so beautiful you have to face her and push the oars. Daybreak. Clearing the harbor. Flat calm. Hand curled around a cup of hot brew. Sun just touching the outer islands. Alone. Big water ahead. Getting to name your own boat. Love cooking on the water, food tastes the absolute best. Hard to fail. There's one absolute best. Taking the grandbabies out. Let 'em drive, catch their first mackerel, spill coca cola all over the cockpit, wipe that first salt spray from their faces as they grin—pretty damn special.

Shop 'N Save as do others I'm sure, have a great sundried tomato which is soft—meaning the cook doesn't have to soak same for hours—and tastes great. This child has a hard time not to nibble. I had a package, a deadline for an article and no recipe. Salmon filets had come from Pectic Seafood in Halls Quarry. Beautiful filets. What would we do for salmon without the farm raised. Bet the price would be \$20.00 lb. by now. Good for us too, all those davonoids and fish oils. Digression. Pan sear your salmon in a heavy, hot skillet (let skillet get up there in heat) add a touch of Canola oil. When salmon is crusty on the down side, flip, and by the time fork will pierce filet, it will be crusty on the other. Remove to warm place. While searing takes place, chop up a small handful of sundried tomatoes, a few tablespoons of red bell peppers, some chopped parsley, and a teaspoon of minced garlic. Have ready a tad of scotch, bourbon or whiskey, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Half and Half cream, and a small dollop of butter. When salmon is just done, remove to warm place or cover. Deglaze the hot skillet with an ounce or two of scotch. Scrape off all the scrunchions and stick-ons (great flavor), pour in the cream and remaining ingredients and with moderate heat, reduce until sauce becomes slightly thickened. Drizzle some over the salmon or pool beside. It's wicked good and wicked easy and shows well beside—like a great mate—what more can you ask.

"There's nothing quite so fun as messing about in a boat"——"*Wind in the Willows*"

Lee S. Wilbur