

Lake Townsend Yacht Club

TELL-TALES

September 2026



LTYC



Turn Over A New Leaf! Fall Into Great Benefits!

When you join Lake Townsend Yacht Club, not only are you joining a friendly, welcoming and supportive sailing community, you're gaining year-round access to training, racing, social events, club sailboats, and so much more - an incredible value at a truly incredible price. Only \$125 for new members and renewals, and \$62 in conjunction with learn to sail classes! And, yes, these rates include **EVERYTHING** below!

Social Fun Sailing

- On the fourth Saturday of each month, we have a Sail-A-Bratton! There is no set time or agenda. This is a day of just cruising and having fun. Club members are present who may either invite you to go sailing on their boat or give you advice about sailing your boat or a rental. It's a great time to practice and improve your sailing or racing skills.

Competitive Fun Sailing

- On the second Saturday of each month, the club holds its regular LTYC race series! A course is established, race-around-buoys are set, and the Race Committee administers the race from the club signal boat. There is a preset captain's meeting on the day of the race which details race specifics and launch and start times. Typically, three races are held the day of the event.

Education

- Sunfish Sailing Saturdays. On the fourth Saturday of each month spring through fall, members can sign out one of the club's Sunfish and sail and learn on the lake with a seasoned sailor.
- Members enjoy many opportunities to hone sailing skills and contribute to the club's success by volunteering to lead or assist with LTYC's sailing education classes, kids sailing camp and LTYC-sponsored regional High School Sailing Team activities and events.
- Members can take advantage of ongoing club seminars and training for beginning and intermediate sailors.

Other Benefits

- Members enjoy free food, drink and camaraderie at all club socials following racing events. Racing participation is not mandatory, but volunteer assistance on race day is both encouraged and appreciated. It's also an awesome way to get to know club members!

Members have access to all club fleet boats and club fleet boat launches, free of charge! Club boats include five Sunfish (first quarter 2026), three Flying Scots, two Wayfarers and a Tanzer 16. All are ready for use, mast up and on trailers.

For more information, see the [club sailboat usage policy, agreement, and reservations](#) in the Members' Cove on the LTYC website.

Membership Renewal

New Membership

Safe Sailing Strategies for Low Water Levels

Lake Townsend has always been one of Greensboro's most reliable sailing spots — steady breezes, wide open reaches, and a beautiful shoreline. But this season has brought unusually low water levels, and the lake is showing a different personality. Launch ramps extend farther than usual, familiar coves have grown shallower, and underwater features that normally stay hidden are suddenly part of the sailing landscape.

For club members, this shift isn't a setback — it's a call to adapt. Low water sailing demands sharper awareness, gentler technique, and a bit of teamwork at the ramp. With thoughtful preparation and shared best practices, we can continue enjoying safe, confident sailing even as the reservoir sits below its typical mark.

Here we gather the most effective strategies we can use when water levels drop: how to launch without strain, how to protect your hull and rudder, and how to adjust your sailing approach when the lake's contours change. Whether you're new to Lake Townsend or have sailed it for decades, these insights will help you make the most of every outing until the waterline rises again.

When reservoir levels drop, sailors face a different kind of challenge — not the wind or the waves, but the shoreline itself. Low water can make launching, retrieving, and even maneuvering more demanding. With a few smart adjustments and shared know how, the extended sailing season stays safe, smooth, and enjoyable for everyone.

SCOUT BEFORE YOU LAUNCH

Low water exposes hazards normally hidden beneath the surface. Before hitching up the trailer:

- Walk the ramp and shoreline.
- Look for rocks, roots, drop-offs, or soft mud.
- Use a pole or portable depth sounder to check depth.

Mark safe paths with temporary flags or buoys (if permitted).

Pull Quote:

"A few minutes of scouting saves hours of repair."

TRAILER TECHNIQUE IN SHALLOW CONDITIONS

Launching angles change when water levels fall. To avoid strain or damage:

- Back down slowly and keep the trailer centered.
- Stop immediately if wheels sink into mud or hit uneven surfaces — don't force it.
- Use a longer painter line to float the boat off gently.

Inspect winch straps and grease the winch before each outing.

Shallow launches put extra load on gear. A little maintenance now prevents big headaches later.

Safe Sailing Strategies for Low Water Levels

BALANCE & TRIM FOR SHALLOW STARTS

With less water under the hull, trim becomes essential:

- Keep crew weight centered and low.
- Raise the centerboard halfway on dinghies until you clear the shallows.
- Confirm rudder clearance before applying power or sail.

Avoid sudden turns until you're in deeper water.

Even a light scrape can chip paint or bend fittings — gentle is the name of the game.

WIND, CURRENT & NARROW CHANNELS

Low reservoirs often create tighter sailing lanes and unpredictable gusts:

- Approach docks under control using short bursts of sail or power.
 - Keep a fender ready for sudden wind shifts.
 - Tack early if the wind pushes you toward shallow banks.
 - Treat each outing as a chance to relearn your home waters — shoreline contours change dramatically.
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HULL & RUDDER PROTECTION

Shallow sailing means more opportunities for unexpected contact:

- Inspect the hull after each outing.
- Sand and wax lightly to protect against abrasion.
- Carry a spare rudder pin and a small repair kit.
- Avoid jumping out unless you're sure of footing — mud flats can be deceptively soft.

Watch for floating debris that may have drifted from newly exposed banks.

Treat the reservoir like a living chart — always changing, always teaching.

Safe Sailing Strategies for Low Water Levels

LAUNCHING ETIQUETTE & TEAMWORK

When ramps are crowded or narrow, cooperation keeps things moving:

- Offer to guide trailers or hold lines.
- Communicate clearly and patiently.
- Clubs can assign launch volunteers during busy weekends.

Share observations — “The left side is deeper today” helps everyone. Sailing is a community sport. A little teamwork goes a long way.

ADJUST YOUR SAILING STRATEGY

Low water changes the wind map:

- Trees and hills sit closer to the waterline, creating new gust zones.
- Make note of both safe and unsafe areas as levels drop.

Watch for floating debris that may have drifted from newly exposed banks. Treat the reservoir like a living chart — always changing, always teaching.

SAFETY FIRST

Carry essentials:

- Handheld VHF or waterproofed phone in the event you get stuck.
- Spare line
- Centerboard/rudder repair kit

Water and sun protection

If you ground unexpectedly, stay calm. Shift weight aft, raise the board or rudder, and gently rock free.

Important....

Share your findings. If you discover a deeper path or a tricky shallow spot, let the next sailor know. Collective knowledge keeps the fleet safe.

Smooth Sailing for New Students

The recent LTYC beginning sailing class was a resounding success, thanks to the steady leadership and teamwork of club members **Keith Smoot, Randy Shelton, David Duff, Tim Thompson, and Andy Brunk**. Their combined experience and enthusiasm created an atmosphere that was both welcoming and confidence-building. Two days, they guided students **Mychal Gallop, Allen Hetzet, Tamara Spooner, Gene Spooner, and Tara Barnett**, through the essentials of rigging, launching, and handling small boats, always emphasizing safety and fun. Calm winds and clear skies provided the perfect backdrop for learning, and the instructors' patient coaching helped every participant find their sea legs.

By the end of the course, students were confidently tacking, jibing, and returning to shore with smiles that said it all. The class not only taught sailing fundamentals but also strengthened the club's sense of community—proof that with good guidance and a bit of wind, anyone can discover the joy of life under sail.



The Knot-So-Serious



"No wonder why our computer is slow. You have 17,987,623 photos of you on your boat on it."



If you have a funny, send it along!

newsletter@laketownsendyachtclub.com

Perspectives From The Helm - Lessons Learned



Shared by Jim Heffernan

World champion and sail maker Mike MacNamara shares starting techniques. Part II
Those last few seconds (continued from Starting)

1. As those seconds tick away there is nothing that we can do about our position on the line. That was taken care of long ago when we went through our "checking which is the right end to start" routines. In fact, there are quite a few ways to find out which is the best end. The most simple and therefore the easiest one, is to sail along the line, sheeting the mainsail in as perfectly as possible. Once you've got that organized, tack but be careful not to alter the mainsail setting as you do so. As you sail away back down the line, check to see if the mainsail is set as perfectly as it was before. If it is not, then one or other end of the line is the paying end. If the mainsheet has to be eased, the wind is further behind and so the end you are sailing from is the paying end. If the mainsheet has to be pulled in, the wind is further in front and so the end you are sailing towards is the paying end. If the wind is shifting, you will have to check and keep checking. So don't sail outside the end of the line because it may be impossible to get right back to the other end if the wind changes.

2. If it is obvious to you which is the paying end then it will be obvious to everyone else. That leads to the fleet all ganging up together in one place. The result of this congestion is that the wind drops as it goes up and over the top of the mass, wash increases and confuses the wave pattern and, worst of all, boats congregate early and, as they stop, they raft up. If it is a big committee boat you can even run out of wind under it. So, as we know to our cost, it is only one or two boats maximum that get away. The rest all wallow in their dirty wind. Much better to be just away from the paying end. To leeward of the bunch, at the windward end for example, with all the luffing rights, etc. that gives you. Hidden from the race officer's eyes, you can nibble up to the line and be ready to bear away, accelerate and go as soon as the gun goes. O.K., so you've lost a few meters by being further down the line, but at least you're safe. Besides, the raft of boats to windward acts as a buffer against those poor unfortunate naive sailors who come down from beyond the committee boat hoping to find space. If it's the leeward end that pays, then this playing for safety is even more important. The timing to get it right has to be so perfect that it just isn't worth the risk to start right next to the buoy.



Perspectives From The Helm - Lessons Learned



Shared by Jim Heffernan

World champion and sail maker Mike MacNamara shares starting techniques. Part II cont.

3. Never go outside the windward end of the line. As windward boat you have no rights. Rule 18.1(a) is clear when it states that you are not entitled to water at a starting mark surrounded by navigable water. Besides which, as you bear away hoping for a gap, it will already be closed and you're speeding up to a certain 720° or worse.

4. Try to keep speed on. If you have to hover, do so a few seconds away from the line. Then you've got a chance to build up speed before the hordes envelop you and envelop you they surely will if you try to hover exactly on the line. You will already have worked out how long it takes to get going in the conditions, so that is your guide to the safe hovering distance.



5. Practice your acceleration techniques and keep the boat upright, otherwise you will be in the dirty wind of the boat to leeward. Try to bear away as the gun goes to get a bit of speed. You can only really do this if, as you nibbled up to the line, you luffed up minutely from time to time to create a gap between you and the boat to leeward. Don't overdo this otherwise the gap will be spotted and will be filled by a boat coming in from behind, who then has rights over you because you're windward boat! How unfair can you get?

6. As the fleet comes up to the start the wind will drop all the way down the line. So ease kickers (vang for us Americans); don't oversheet jib; don't sit too far forward (or aft). Then as the fleet spreads out, bring the controls back on to their proper settings.

7. Keep a good watch out all around and get your crew to do the same, reporting in all the time. Crews should be doing the timing too. In big fleets don't expect to hear the gun. There will be too much other noise and besides it is visual signals that count.

Perspectives From The Helm - Lessons Learned



Shared by Jim Heffernan

World champion and sail maker Mike MacNamara shares starting techniques. Part II cont.



8. Don't try to tack too soon around the front of the committee boat. His anchor warp is dangling there desperate to entangle you. So, in your pre-start checks have a look at the anchor cables at both ends.

9. If you've made a really good start, don't blow it in the euphoria of the moment. Relax and get on with the race but a small smile is permitted!

If you've blown the start, don't panic! Be consoled that everyone does from time to time - but you don't have to make a habit of it. Just get on with things - getting into the tacking routine as you hunt for clear air, keeping the boat moving. It is possible to make a come-back. After all, there is the whole race in front of you to do it. All it needs is patience.

In club races, if you have the courage, try starting at the back just to experience the feeling. Then if it happens in big time stuff, you won't get so grumpy.

10. My favorite routine is to sail along the line on port, towards the right end looking for a gap to tack into. If you remember in Golden Rule No. 5, there will be gaps being created all the time. All you have to do is find them!

11. It was the Dane, Paul Elvstrom who said that "if you're not over the line once in every five races then you're not trying". Well if that's your view too, be over the line in non-important races. But I bet that it will be the other way round! Finally, if all else fails, keep your cool. There is a whole lot of race left to go. Happy Starting.

Michael McNamara UKWA News #70/Summer 1996

Share Your Sailing Story



Every sailor has a beginning—a moment when wind, water, and curiosity came together and set them on a lifelong course. Maybe it was a childhood summer camp, a friend's invitation, or the simple thrill of watching sails fill on a breezy afternoon. However your journey started, it's part of the rich tapestry that makes our club such a vibrant community. We'd love to hear how you first found your way to sailing and what drew you back for more.

Of course, no sailor's story is complete without a favorite boat. Whether you swear by the simplicity of a Sunfish, the elegance of a Wayfarer, the speed of a Laser, the spirited performance of a Flying Scot, or the comfort of a cruising keelboat, your preferences say something about the sailor you've become. Tell us which boats have captured your heart and why—was it the feel of the helm, the challenge of the rig, the camaraderie of a Flying Scot crew, or the memories made aboard?

We're also inviting you to share the adventures that have shaped your time on the water. Maybe you've weathered an unexpected squall, discovered a hidden cove, or enjoyed a perfect afternoon race where everything just clicked. Big or small, triumphant or humbling, these stories remind us why we sail and what keeps us coming back to the lake again and again.

Your experiences inspire new sailors, strengthen our community, and celebrate the spirit that makes our club special. Send us your stories—funny, heartfelt, daring, or reflective—and we'll feature them in upcoming newsletters. Let's fill our pages with the voices of the people who make this club more than a place to sail. It's your turn at the helm; we can't wait to hear what you have to share.

Send To Andy Brunk—newsletter@laketownsendyachtclub.com

Choosing the Perfect Boat for your Style of Sailing

Selecting the right dinghy is one of the most satisfying decisions a sailor can make. Whether you're new to small-boat sailing or looking to expand your fleet, the "perfect" dinghy isn't a universal choice—it's the one that matches how *you* like to sail. Hull shape, rig type, weight, and even cockpit layout all influence how a boat behaves on the water. Understanding your sailing style is the key to choosing a dinghy that feels like an extension of yourself rather than a compromise.

For sailors who love **relaxed cruising**, stability and comfort matter more than top-end speed. Boats like the Sunfish, Minifish, or similar lateen-rigged dinghies offer simplicity, easy rigging, and a forgiving feel. Their wide, buoyant hulls make them ideal for exploring coves, enjoying quiet afternoons, or taking kids out for a gentle sail. When shopping, look for dinghies with durable hulls, comfortable seating positions, and rigs that can be stepped and unstepped quickly—because cruisers value time on the water, not time fiddling with gear.

If your heart leans toward **performance sailing**, you'll want a dinghy that rewards athleticism and precision. Boats like the Weta, Laser, ILCA, RS Aero, or similar single-handed racing dinghies offer responsive steering, powerful rigs, and the ability to plane in the right conditions. These boats demand more skill but deliver exhilarating speed and tactical racing. When purchasing, inspect the spars and sail condition carefully, check for soft spots in the hull, and consider whether you prefer a standard, radial, or smaller rig depending on your weight and local wind conditions.

For sailors who enjoy **two-person teamwork**, double-handed dinghies open up a different world of fun. Boats like the Flying Junior, 420, or RS Feva offer shared responsibilities—one trims the jib, one steers—and they're perfect for couples, parents and kids, or sailors who enjoy the social side of the sport. When evaluating these boats, pay attention to cockpit space, the condition of the foils, and whether the boat includes features like spinnakers or trapezes. These add excitement but also complexity, so choose based on how adventurous you want your sailing days to be.

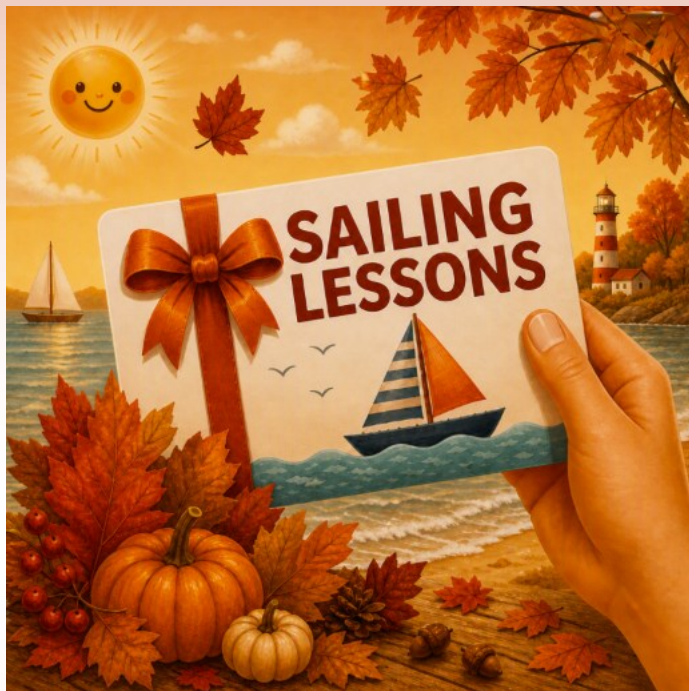
Some sailors prioritize **versatility**, wanting a dinghy that can cruise one day and race the next. Boats like the Wayfarer or Flying Scot offer stability, room for gear, and the ability to handle a wide range of conditions. They're excellent for clubs because they accommodate beginners while still offering enough performance to keep experienced sailors engaged. When shopping, consider how easily the boat can be reefed, how it handles chop, and whether it's light enough to launch single-handed.

Finally, no matter your sailing style, the **buying process** deserves care. Always inspect the hull for cracks, soft spots, or previous repairs. Check the sail for crispness, shape, and signs of UV wear. Evaluate the condition of the rudder, tiller, daggerboard or centerboard, and standing rigging. If buying used, ask about storage history—boats kept indoors or under proper covers last dramatically longer. And don't forget the trailer or dolly; good gear makes launching and retrieving far more enjoyable.

Choosing a dinghy is ultimately about choosing the kind of sailing life you want. Whether you crave quiet evenings on the water, competitive racing, family adventures, or a boat that can do a bit of everything, there's a dinghy designed for your style. Take your time, ask fellow club members for test sails, and enjoy the process—because the right dinghy doesn't just carry you across the water; it carries you into years of memorable sailing.



Give The Gift Of Early Autumn Sailing!



Only \$75 to gift two people a memorable first sailing experience? How cool is that? LYTC will continue offering an affordable, three-hour Discover Sailing experience for up to TWO on beautiful Lake Townsend, hosted by a seasoned club sailor. This great deal will include sailing, boat and safety basics and real hands-on, on-the-water experience, designed to spark interest in this great sport and, of course, our great club and membership!

BONUS! In addition to an unforgettable three-hour experience, your giftee(s) will have immediate follow-up access to a

“Member Mentor,” who can help them chart a course for continuing club education, event participation, networking and membership!

To order this one-of-a-kind sailing experience, visit [Discover Sailing Order Form](#) to make your purchase. We will forward a copy of your gift certificate that you can print and/or email for gifting. Pay Pal, and major credit cards are accepted.

For information on gifting lessons, email education@laketownsendyachtclub.com

For information on gifting a membership, email membership@laketownsendyachtclub.com

Classifieds

Have something to sell or trade or something you are interested in finding? Send it to newsletter@laketownsendyachtclub.com and include "Classified" in the subject line. Members advertise for FREE!

Sold Last Month—LTYC classifieds WORK!!!!!!



Sunfish Sailing Saturdays!

LYTC is pleased to offer **Sunfish Sailing Saturdays** for experienced sailors, held on the **fourth Saturday of each month** from now through October. These sessions are designed not as formal lessons, but as relaxed, skill-building opportunities hosted by seasoned Sunfish sailors who enjoy sharing their knowledge. Participants will have the chance to spend dedicated time on the water honing already established sailing skills in a supportive, low-pressure environment.

Sunfish Sailing Saturdays provide a structured yet flexible format where attendees can practice a variety of on-the-water drills aimed at improving boat handling, sail trim, balance, and overall confidence. Sailors are encouraged to work at their own pace, revisit familiar techniques, and challenge themselves with new maneuvers. Alongside skill practice, there will be plenty of time simply to sail for fun — enjoying the responsiveness and simplicity that make the Sunfish such a beloved boat.



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In addition to time on the water, each session will include hands-on opportunities to refine essential boat-care skills such as **rigging, launching, de-rigging, and proper covering and storage**. These fundamentals are key to keeping the boats in excellent condition and ensuring smooth sailing experiences. Experienced hosts will be available throughout the day to offer guidance, answer questions, and demonstrate best practices for maintaining the club's fleet.

The club's **five Sunfish** will be available for use, and sailors are welcome to bring their own boats as well — participation is **unlimited**, making these Saturdays a wonderful chance to gather a large community of Sunfish enthusiasts. Whether you sail a club boat or your own, the focus is on camaraderie, shared learning, and enjoying time on the water with fellow sailors who appreciate the unique charm of the Sunfish.



Sessions will run from **10:00 a.m. to approximately 3:00 p.m.**, allowing plenty of time for rigging, practice drills, open sailing, and end-of-day de-rigging. Sailors may come for the full session or drop in for part of the day, depending on their schedule. The relaxed format makes it easy for participants to tailor the experience to their interests and comfort level.

Sunfish Sailing Saturdays are expected to be very popular, and **early signup is strongly encouraged**. These gatherings offer a rare opportunity to sharpen skills, enjoy time on the water, and connect with a vibrant community of sailors who share a passion for the Sunfish. Whether you're looking to refine your technique, enjoy a day of breezy fun, or simply spend time with fellow sailors, Sunfish Sailing Saturdays promise to be a highlight of the season.

The link to sign up for SSS is <https://laketownsendyachtclub.com/activities/SignUp.asp>

Sunfish Sailing Saturdays! See you at the lake!

Calendar of Events

1 OCT, THU

- 6pm Board Meeting

3 OCT, SAT

- John Bernard Regatta (VISA) (Day 1/2)

4 OCT, SUN

- John Bernard Regatta (VISA) (Day 2/2)

9 OCT, FRI

- 9am Racing Basics Class

10 OCT, SAT

- Great Pumpkin Races
- 9am Racing Basics Class

11 OCT, SUN

- 9am Racing Basics Class

24 OCT, SAT

- Jim Cooke Memorial Regatta (CYC) (Day 1/2)
- Social Sailing
- Sunfish Sailing Saturday

25 OCT, SUN

- Jim Cooke Memorial Regatta (CYC) (Day 2/2)

31 OCT, SAT

- Halloween

5 NOV, THU

- 6pm Board Meeting

14 NOV, SAT

- Turkey Day Races

28 NOV, SAT

- Social Sailing



LTYC Social Media Connections



Please LIKE LTYC on Facebook!!



- Go to LTYC on Facebook
- Tag us
- Write an endorsement for LTYC
- Like LTYC on the "Like" page
- Post a review of LTYC on FB
- If you need help to post pictures or a video on our page, please contact JC Aller at aller.jc@gmail.com

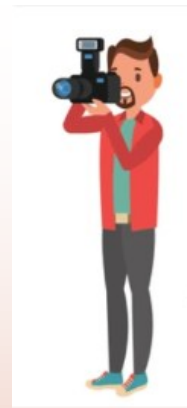
Readers, Feedbackers & Contributors?

Thank you for reading Tell-Tales!

Like what you see? **Tell us!**

Something you'd like to see improved? **Tell us!**

Have an article suggestion or pictures of an outing or event you'd like to share? **Share it**, and we will do our best to get it included in a future issue.



This is YOUR newsletter!

Reach us at newsletter@laketownsendyachtclub.com

Your 2026 LTYC Board of Directors

Commodore: Mark Wilson	◆ commodore@laketownsendyachtclub.com
V. Commodore/ Racing: Steve Jones	◆ vicecommodore@laketownsendyachtclub.com
Rear Commodore/Education: Andy Forman	◆ education@laketownsendyachtclub.com
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Socials: Ron Washburn	
Newsletter: Andy Brunk	◆ newsletter@laketownsendyachtclub.com
Social Media/City Liaison: OPEN	
Marketing: Randy Shelton/Ray Bednar	◆ marketing@laketownsendyachtclub.com
Website/Publicity: Sam Martin/Sid Hale	◆ newsletter@laketownsendyachtclub.com

Please note the **OPEN** positions above and reach out if you can be of assistance! But, you don't have to be a board member to help out. Everything our club does is done by volunteers. Please contact the individual board members to see how you can contribute. Thanks for making LTYC its best!

Board meetings are open to all members. They are held virtually, via, Zoom the first Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. If you would like to attend, see the club calendar for times and reach out to membership@laketownsendyachtclub.com for a zoom link.