



The Lighthouse

Christmas events around the area

The fifty-sixth annual Christmas Boat Lane Parade, presented by the Cities of Clear Lake Shores, Kemah, League City, Nassau Bay, and the City of Seabrook is Saturday, December 9, starting at 6 p.m.

Ring in the holidays with this Clear Lake tradition. Over than a 100,000 people traditionally enjoy this event from land and from hundreds of boats anchored throughout the Lake. The parade features more than 100 brightly decorated power and sailboats that will traverse the Clear Lake channel from the South Shore Harbour Marina and the Nassau Bay Lagoon to Galveston Bay.



Breakfast with Santa

Come join the City of League City for a morning filled with fun, Saturday, December 9 from 8-30-11:30 a.m. Bring the family for a pancake breakfast with Santa and lots of great activities and games. Resident registration is now open at Hometown Heroes Park for \$10 per person. Non-resident registration begins on November 15 for \$15 per person. Contact Ashley Creller at ashley.creller@leaguacity.com for more information.



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CALL OR STOP BY THE MARINA OFFICE . . .

if you haven't set up your automatic payments. December 15 is the deadline.



Remember the reason . . .



Editor's note: Longtime editor Keith Emmons penned this piece December 2012 and it still holds true. Happy holidays from everyone at South Shore Harbour Marina.

by Keith Emmons

Yes, it's Christmas. And it's going to stay that way, at least for me. Let's keep Christmas as the holiday it's supposed to be. Too much political correctness lately.

The holiday party season is upon us, and I'm sure there will be lots of great parties in the marina and the hotel. I had a great time one year when I was on pier 1 at Christmas, watching all the parties walking down the pier to the big party boats and stumbling back after their cruise. You can see much of the same up at the lobby bar since lots of companies have their Christmas parties in the hotel. Don't underestimate the entertainment value of hanging out there during the holiday weekends!

Here's another idea I received in an email recently. Instead of buying lots of toys and expensive gifts made overseas, why not buy gift certificates for haircuts, house cleanings, auto detailing or other services that people would love to have. Who wouldn't like the gift of having their lawn cut for a month or two? Visit local restaurants. Think about this as you go about your Christmas purchasing this year. Try to keep as much of our money in the local economy as possible!

Remember, this is the season for caring and giving. If you're able, anything you can donate to local charities will be much appreciated, especially in these hard economic times. If you can't afford to donate money, maybe donate clothing, blankets, or food. Or give a neighbor a helping hand.

Try to do something extra nice for someone this Christmas season. You'll be surprised at how good it will make you feel, and will come back to you in ways you never imagined.

Christmas

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Magical Winter Lights

Magical Winter Lights Houston is a spectacular, larger-than-life attraction with a fresh take on the traditional holiday light show. The festival features Texas-sized lanterns, carnival rides and games, acrobatic performances and more.

They are open November 10 through January 2 and closed November 13 and 27 and December 4 and 11. Located at Gulf Greyhound Park, 1000 FM 2004 in La Marque. Hours are Sunday through Thursday, 5-10 p.m. and Friday and Saturday, 5-11 p.m. Visit www.magicalwinterlights.com/houston for more information.



Festival of Lights

November 12 through January 8, Moody Gardens hosts the Gulf Coast's largest holiday lighting event features a 100-foot slide, ice skating, and a mile-long trail of more than a million lights and 100 sound-enhanced animated displays sparkling over the beautiful Galveston Bay.

The Nutcracker

Bay Area Houston Ballet and Theatre will present the popular holiday classic, *The Nutcracker*, the week-

ends of December 1-3 and December 8-10 with performances at 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and matinees at 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays at the UH-Clear Lake Bayou Theatre. Visit www.bahbt.org or call (281) 480-1617 for more information.

A Christmas Carol

Clear Creek community Theatre presents *Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol*. Performances are each weekend from December 1-17. Fridays and Saturdays at 8 pm with matinees Saturday and Sunday afternoons at 2:30 on December 9 and 16. Purchase tickets online or call the box office at (281) 335-5228 to request reservations. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$13 for seniors and students. The theatre is located at 18091 Upper Bay Road.



The Christmas Visitor

The Pasadena Little Theatre, 4318 Allen-Genoa Road, will present *The Santa Claus Chronicles*, December 2, 9 and 16. During a special live edition of *The Santa Claus Chronicles* at the North Pole, Saint Nick's press secretary answers questions about the jolly guy. You also meet the elves who take care of the reindeer, and hear from the elves who work the gift suggestion hotline. The biggest mystery at the North Pole is where is Mrs. Claus?

For reservations, call (713) 941-1758 or visit www.pasadenalittletheatre.org.

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A sailor's brilliantly dumb idea

Courtesy www.saltysailors.com

Scott from s/v Rubicon and ScottsSweaters.com

The Florida Marine Patrol bagged me the other night. It was like a simple traffic stop, only on the water.

About 9:30 p.m. I was making my nightly six-minute dinghy trek across the harbor back to my boat. I had dutifully stuck my little red/green split flashlight up on the front of my rubber inflatable. However, to the Marine Patrol approaching from the rear it appeared I was running without any lights at all. Technically, in addition to the red/green light shining forward, I should have had a white light visible from the rear; either that or a single 360° light on the boat's highest point. I knew of this regulation, but didn't believe anyone would be that nit-picky. Acknowledging my forward lights showed at least an attempt to comply, they sent me on my way with a warning.

The following night I repeated my daily trek armed with a bright white suction mount 360° flashlight. This new light is so bright it ruins my night vision. Holding it high above my head I ventured across the harbor. After only two minutes my arm was getting a bit tired and I figured there's got to be a better way, for I'm not about ready to do this every night. I tried sticking it to the dinghy, but being lower than the motor and my torso, the required 360° coverage was blocked from several angles. It was then a brilliant idea — an idea 100 times more brilliant than my new light.

There is, I said to myself, an advantage to being bald. It was dark enough, and I'm far enough from land that no one could see how stupid I looked as I wet the inside of the light's suction cup and squished it down upon my skinhead. It was perfect. I now had both hands free, the light was well above everything on the boat, and my night vision was unaffected, as I couldn't even tell the light was on.

Recalling the nightly parade of tired arms holding lights aloft as dinghies dash across the harbor, I wondered why no one else had thought of this grand idea. Granted, it probably does look rather stupid, and other boaters might tend to steer away, but it worked exceptionally well. That is until I spied a much faster boat departing the dock behind me.

I tried speeding up, but quickly realized this boat was easily going to overtake mine. Reaching to my head, I grabbed the flashlight in hopes of removing it until the other boat passed. I tugged, but the light didn't budge. I tried prying it off at an angle; it didn't budge. I tried raising one edge of the rubber lip; it didn't budge. I tried sliding the suction cup across my scalp and down over the edge of my head; it didn't budge. With the other boat quickly approaching my embarrassment zone, I altered course.

As the faster boat zipped by in the distance, I steered back toward my floating home. Nearing the stern of my boat the whole back end suddenly illuminated. I spun around expecting to see the bright lights of a Marine Patrol boat with three officers grabbing the rails in desperation of falling overboard from uncontrollable fits of laughter. Yet when I looked back no one was there. Spinning back around, the stern of my boat was still lit up brighter than I'd ever seen it at night. Again I looked behind me; again no one there. I suddenly realized I not only looked stupid but acted the part as well, for the bright light was coming from atop my head where absent any nearby objects I couldn't even tell it was on.

Still I couldn't break the light's suction firmly grasping my scalp. Fishing a dime from my pocket — a brief period of intellect suggesting the pocket knife my fingers first found would be a poor choice — I gently pried up an edge to the rubber cup. Near midnight, in a calm harbor, the loud Champagne-bottle-like pop probably aroused several slumbering alcoholic sailors.

The top of my head felt like a can of ravioli, for the suction cup had drawn up my scalp in circular ridges that held their shape. Undaunted and in the certain knowledge that these skin ripples would dissipate within an hour or so, I headed to the shower. The raised circles atop my head were already beginning to soften when I bent over to soap up my legs. On the way down I caught a glimpse of something strange in the mirror. Directly in the middle of my head was the world's largest, world's most perfect, most crimson hickey.

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Courtesy www.boatingmag.com

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Greatest Sailing Stories Ever Told: Twenty-Seven Unforgettable Stories

For thousands of years, man has sailed into battle, sailed for rumored wealth, and sailed for pure adventure. And for nearly as long, stories about the sea have entertained, intrigued, and inspired readers. *The Greatest Sailing Stories Ever Told* brings together some of the most compelling writing of the millennium. Here is Peter Goss's wrenching narrative of incredible courage in the world's most desolate ocean; Ernest Shackleton's understated and awesome account of one of the most daring small-boat journeys ever taken, where failure meant certain

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Iron Smoke Whiskey

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"Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas."

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