

Meet the Editor: Jeanie Quigley – An Autobiography



On numerous occasions the Bridge has suggested that we do an article on the Editor of the *Pharos Beacon*, much as we have done “Meet the Bridge.” In light of the recent 2009 Distinction in Journalism award, this seemed the month to talk to you about your Editor of the *Pharos Beacon*.

Born in Ambler, Pennsylvania shortly before America’s entry into WWII, I began early life with a

father serving his country as a doctor and Major in the US Army in charge of a 500 bed hospital in North Africa and later Italy. One of four sisters, I was privileged to be part of a family that enjoyed music, especially singing together with Dad on the banjo. We had no TV and were happy to spend lots of time outdoors. My gentle Mom baked the best pies, while Dad was a family physician serving that community for over 50 years. Dedication and caring were paramount examples in our lives.

An interest in dressmaking led me to an AS degree in Fashion Design at Endicott Jr. College (now Endicott College), but I quickly followed graduation into marriage, the dream of the 1960’s, when I married Wes in 1961.

Looking back, I was able to be a stay-at-home mom with two daughters of pre-school age. Though I was theoretically at home, I helped milk cows or cared for crops, and later managed our 240 calf veal operation, as Wes moved from electro-mechanical technician to farm operations to facilities engineering. Though we have lived numerous places, we always seemed to come back to Connecticut, and here we added a son to our family.

Seven years later, I too moved into administration and industry, learning computer skills on the job. We lived almost four years in Australia. As we roamed through the Perth Boat Show, we met Wendy and Peter of the Ocean Reef Sea Rescue Group, and learned about their group and that they also had a Cadet group for kids. We showed up at their meeting the next night and began a four year adventure of training, sea rescue duty, and searches, as well as weekends on our 23’ boat at Rottnest Island. Incredible experiences and friendships were our reward, and I fell, hook, line and sinker, into boating.

Back in the USA, I was again rewarded with administrative jobs and continued to build computer skills. In my last employment of 12 years, I worked for an incredible human services organization, Marrakech,

Inc. based in Woodbridge, CT, and serving people with mental, physical, and behavioral challenges, as Executive Assistant to the Executive Director. In addition to my responsibilities as Executive Assistant, I also was Editor of their newsletter *Marrakech Expressions*, and their annual report. The organization, the people, and the work were always challenging and always an inspiration and motivation.

In the meantime, my husband and son, Wes and Wes III, were building a business, WHQ Woodworks. In 1998 while looking to buy a home I said, “We don’t want a house, we want a boat. If we buy a house, there will never be time for a boat.” So began our dream of owning a boat. That led to the building of Miss Ruby, seven years of nights and weekends, and moving aboard full time in September 2007.

In January 2007, we knew the time was at hand to retake the CT Boating Certification course simply to refresh our knowledge. So Three, Courtney, Wes, and I signed up, and went on to join the Waterbury Power Squadron. Wes and I were on countdown to moving aboard Miss Ruby and dove into whatever courses were available – Seamanship, Weather, Small Engine Maintenance. We were taking three classes, trying to finish Miss Ruby, downsize WHQ Woodworks, close an apartment, and retire. I guess we were NUTS, but somehow we managed it

all. For several months after moving aboard our retirement boat we didn’t do one thing other than cruise.

A year later, sitting on Knot Bad after the Port Jeff clam bake, Randy once again asked for someone with computer skills to take over the *Pharos Beacon*. “I’ll do it,” I said. The next morning he asked, “Were you drunk or did you mean it about *The Beacon*?”

There comes a time when you know you’re ready again to take on a challenge. We wanted to “give back”

to this organization that has given us so much. Though I am the Editor, my first mate, Wes, is my trusted proof reader. It’s not just the education and sociability; it’s the friendship and encouragement of

everyone we meet in person or on-line. Waterbury Power Squadron is about enabling each and every person to be a safe and happy boater. It’s a team. We want to continue to be part of that for a long time to come.



Three, Courtney, Sam, Wes, and Jeanie on Miss Ruby.



Miss Ruby appears out of the mist. Frankfort, MI Lake Michigan.