



THE LIGHT



Night Vision

Robert Fisher

Many of us live in a 24/7/365 world of constant bright light, from sunlight during the day to the many sources of artificial light at night. We may not be aware that there is a big difference between day vision (very bright light) and night vision (very dim light). We also may not be aware of how important this is to anyone bold enough or foolish enough to venture out in a boat at night upon the sea.

There is a huge range in the amount of light energy between a cloudless noon and a moonless midnight. Our visual system is designed to cope with this wide range of light energy in two ways.

The first is the pupil response. This works during day vision. Under brighter light, the pupil constricts, and, under dimmer conditions, it dilates, in an effort to keep the amount of energy falling on the retina, the light sensitive area at the back of the eye, about the same. (This is similar to the aperture setting/F-stop of a camera lens.) The pupil response is very fast, quick as a wink, and can be measured in milliseconds. But it only works in the relatively bright light of day vision.

Once the pupil reaches maximum dilation and the light continues to get dimmer, say from twilight to a cloudy, moonless night, a second mechanism takes over. It operates by increasing the retina's sensitivity to what light is available at maximum pupil dilation by producing more of the chemical pigment called rhodopsin that makes the retina respond to light. This process is called DARK ADAPTION and prepares our eyes for night vision. It is very important to note that, unlike



the milliseconds for pupil response in day vision, dark adaptation takes 20-25 minutes (!) to reach a point of maximum sensitivity. Then our night vision is as good as it's going to get.

Now here is the thing: This whole process of reaching maximum night vision can be undone, also quick as a wink. When this happens, the retina loses its sensitivity and our hard-won night vision is degraded. This is called PIGMENT BLEACHING. The rhodopsin is bleached out and the retina now needs a brighter light to respond. Our night vision has been compromised.

The big question is "What can cause this pigment bleaching and reduce our night vision?" The answer: Bright light. The brighter the light, even if it's only for a very brief period, again we're talking milliseconds, the more bleaching. And the greater the bleaching, the greater the loss of night vision. And the longer it takes to regain our maximum sensitivity to low light.

So for one so bold/foolish as to go to sea at night, it would be wise to let dark adaptation happen early and naturally, and then to protect it at all costs by minimizing or eliminating any further exposure to bright light, such as flash lights, cabin lights, instrument panel lights, etc. This means using the absolute lowest level of light on-board or, ideally, no light at all.

When I was in the USN, deep red lights were used for interior lights at night. These days we see pale green lights used, for example, as compass lights. Both of these are meant to minimize pigment bleaching and degrading of night vision. The reasoning behind these strategies is a bit complicated and beyond the scope of this article.

The bottom line, however, is very simple: Minimize or, better, eliminate any exposure to artificial light, regardless of color, or however brief, once your dark adaptation has reach its peak. It is a precious commodity. Safeguard it.

And then stand by to enjoy the bioluminescence display swirling off into your wake, or catch a meteor streaking across the Milky Way, or make out the faint outline of a gap between two squalls off in the distance.

There's a lot more to this topic, like the difference between rod and cone vision or between central and peripheral vision, but I'll leave that for a future article or a conversation at one of our club gatherings. Over and out from the V.C.'s corner.



Candidates for LMYC Board are Announced

The nominating committee has produced the 2011 slate for board members. All nominees have been contacted concerning their nominations to office, and have indicated acceptance of positions as stated, if elected. Those nominees who are elected to office will be sworn into office on the evening of January 15, 2011, at the Annual Commodores Ball.

For Commodore: Colonel "Bill" Maples **
 For Vice Commodore: Robert Fisher **
 For Rear Commodore: Brian Mikiten **
 For Secretary: Marylin Myers *
 For Treasurer: Chris Hughston *
 For Steward: Jana Craft *
 For Fleet Captain: Rick Ekstrom *
 For Barrister: Bill Schwer **
 For Surgeon: Wes Thom **

* New to board ** Returning nominees

Thanks to everyone who donates their time and energy to the club and its goals.

Decorators hard at Work

By Bill Maples

Gone are the plastic chairs, at least from the club's main social room. In their place in tune with the Red/White & Blue decor of our freshly painted club facility by Keith Portman, are sixteen new director chairs along with new matching canvas chair backs. All a part of a re-decoration scheme layout approved by the LMYC Flag Officers but Captained by member Marylin Myers and a hearty group of helpers like Valerie Ekstrom and Steward Bill Rushfeldt. The chairs are already in position, however you will notice many are missing their canvas backs. These chair backs are currently in a Brownsville upholstery shop after members Maples', Zamponi's, Myers, Maggards, Schwer's, Godfrey's, Pinkerman's, Rushfeldt, Hughston's, Ekstrom's, Mikiten's, Craft's, Stark's, Fryer's, & Thom's- donated over \$1000.00 paying 100% of the funds to purchase these new chairs and the painting of the facility. We still have 10 more Red canvas backs and seats coming in that will balance our tables. The covers have been consigned by the donors to place their boat's name on two backs each to donors. LMYC members who would like to do the same, may do so on two chair backs (choice of color as available) at a cost of \$25.00 per pair by contacting Marylin Myers for information and arranging payment.

Commodores Corner

Col. Bill Maples

"You are all," the representatives of our club's membership strength and loyalty thru active participation or from distance support, all determined in a sincere ongoing surge of pride, stepping up to the plate of challenges thru 2010 in recruiting new members - the largest group of new members since the club's inception. Members who now bring with them an emergence of fresh desire and interest. Your collective unselfish physical and monetary support in the many areas of maintenance, working together at decor beautification and increasing social camaraderie to a grand level as well as making "in a successful manner," issues known with the city, that has gained us an outstanding rapport with its elected officials, thru the on-going volunteer support by our qualified Seamen and engineers as members of the B&W Ways group.

The engineering/survey is completed and contracts will be going out to dredge companies ASAP. Thanks to Sid Rouch-Jim Godfrey and Mike Myres for their polishing of the final survey. Although this year has been an expensive catch up, your Flag Officers promised in concert at our first meeting, that this was the year to increase the visibility of our LMYC to the area, to identify and improve administrative and maintenance problem areas, to restore a vitality to our membership numbers by establishing an aggressive successful recruitment program, to encourage our club members in suggesting and improving our club decor with new furniture and a great interior paint job and many other areas. With your help and the greatly increased new membership funding, it has been accomplished and all is paid for.

As Commodore my sincere "Thank you,"...I am truly humbled by the graciousness and unselfish devotion by all, ladies and gentlemen, of your time, energy and special voiced desires to make us bigger and better.

New Business

We are establishing at the encouragement of many members a double duty committee, selected by the Commodore, under the by-laws, to support and back up the Fleet Captain in his many duties. In response to input I have received concerning the areas of training directly suited to our club and its boating activities, inclusive of additional organized cruising as well as distance and local Laguna Madre races. a committee of two parts (Organization of Cruising

and Racing and Instruction and Liaison with other clubs) is being named to assist in developing all boating activities such as the 2011 Boating- Racing and Cruising schedule, as well as establishing a volunteer training program for club members and accepted outsider guests ranging from man over board safety training to Navigation, Seamanship, GPS/Radio and many other areas of interest. Training on "board" fully ensured boats is part of the plan for selected subjects...Instructors will be experienced boaters and some qualified American Sailing graduates. The caveat is: "as a non-profit organization we cannot charge..However donations can be accepted for the betterment of the club." Involved in the instructor group as of today with more being recruited, are Dr. John Pinkerman, Jim Godfrey, Wes Thom, "Skip" Maggard, Brian Mikiten, Navy Commander Sid Rouch, Dr. John Howe and Fritz Corey with 20 years + as a sailing coach at Annapolis US Naval Academy ..

A great "Power Team," of instructors.....

Additionally this group will involve itself in many of the other Yacht Clubs boating events such as next years, "Race to the Border by the composite Galveston Clubs..Their destination being our LMYC /Laguna Madre. I enjoyed organizing our effort last year, and I have asked John Pinkerman, who raced in the event last year, to please liaison with their efforts for the race as part of his committee duties. So keep this training effort in mind and assist in any way you might feel capable...

Hear ye hear Ye.....

Don't forget November the 13th 2010 is the General membership meeting/ social and election of 2011 Flag Officers +++(Plus)+++The "Great great," LMYC White Elephant Auction. Drop your "Elephants" off at the club and enjoy a great planned dinner.

Speaking of Great Dinners...Our "Annual Gala Commodore's Ball," is scheduled for the 15th of January 2011 at the Isla Grand Resort on SPI. You might want to pencil it in on your time line and please make sure the families are aware of the date as well as get word to your guests. A "tickler" with pertinent information will be coming out this week, followed soon by personal invitations...

Always a great event this year is filled with personal recognitions, team awards, individual awards, the swearing in of the 2011 Flag officers, great music and a scrumptious dinner- and all around fun.

God Bless you all!

Steward's Corner

What a great time we had at the shrimp boil last month! Special thanks go to Rick Eckstrom and Pete Pranis. Without them it just wouldn't have been the same. Rick was able to get nice shrimp right off the boat for a price much lower than I would have had to pay at the store. Pete had the experience cooking them, and saved me from messing them up! Thank you both for your help!

This month our social is perhaps our most important one of the year, and I hope everyone can be there. It is not just a social. It is our annual membership meeting as well. Of course we will have a nice meal and great time, but we are also electing flag officers for the upcoming year, and having our annual White Elephant fund raising auction.

The Auction is an opportunity to support your club with donations of unwanted nautical items that may be just what one of your friends desperately needs. It also gives you the chance to get a great deal on just what you may need, with the proceeds going to help support the ongoing activities of the Laguna Madre Yacht Club.

Everybody clean out the boat house and garage and come to the party!

Bill Rushfeldt, Steward



David Craft decided to take his beautiful Hans Cristian 38 Perseverance out last August and decided to wash the jib. Actually, the sail ripped at the top and came tumbling down. Keith Portman was in his Hunter Moonlight Sue and caught it happening. Great photo!

2010 Race and Cruise Schedule

Note: Always check the website for current information

Race results will be shown on the web site.

NOVEMBER 20, 21 GULF AND BAY RACES

Remember, you don't have to own a racing boat to race. Everyone is welcome under our handicapping rules where the best sailed boat and not the fastest wins.

Sea Scouts Off to a Great Organizational Start

Although the organization of the Christ's Harbor Church Sea Scout program, in Laguna Vista, has been long in coming...The first official announcement of the "Sea Scouts" organizational boating activity was made last week. Based on a long standing agreement between the Mc Millan family and the LMYC, the Flag Officers of the Laguna Madre Yacht Club passed funds held in trust, & donated to the Scouting program, by the McMillan family in their parents name. Mac and Dottie McMillan-were well remembered old time members of the LMYC for whom the Club's Annual McMillan Bay Race is named. The funds were passed to Mr. John Hancock Scout Board member by Commodore Bill Maples. As you recall, both Dottie and Mac Mc Millan's ashes were strewn in the waters of the Laguna Madre at their families request by members of LMYC. The Sea Scouts are off to a grand start. LMYC club members, who care to assist in manners associated with boating should contact Capt. Rick Ekstrom LMYC liaison officer with the Christ Harbor Sea Scouts. The photo of the ceremony. Front row, Mr. Hancock and Commodore Maples. Back row left to right are LMYC members, Wes Thom, Marilyn Myers, Chris Hughston, Valerie Ekstrom & Rick Ekstrom.



For changes or comments email bmikiten@idworld.net

Your 2010 Flag Officers

Commodore

Col. Wm. "Bill" Maples
H 956 421 3168 C 979 218 4850

Vice Commodore

Robert "Bob" Fisher C 956 299 1259

Rear Commodore

Brian Mikiten C 210 863 5245

Steward

William Rushfeldt C 956 266 3789

Fleet Captain

Rocky Poovey C 956 535 2224

Treasurer

Chris Hughston C 956 454 4443

Secretary

Jo Anne Lesieutre C 956 761 3169

Barrister

Bill Schwer C 713 882 0976

Fleet Surgeon

Wes Thom C 956 778 7628

Membership information

Clubhouse Phone Number
956-943-5692

Thanks to all the members for their wonderful articles this month!

membership@lagunamadreyachtclub.org

