

Neuse Sailing Association Does the LOOP by Claude Milot

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They came. On the afternoon of June 18th, a flotilla of 20 sailboats with names like *Lulu*, *Jade Moon*, *Ginger*, and *Midnight Silk*, having sailed all the way from Oriental, NC, slipped into docks at Albemarle Plantation Marina on the first leg of their tour of Albemarle Sound.

The boat owners, all members of the Neuse Sailing Association, were warmly welcomed at the Plantation's Marina Park by the members of the Osprey Yacht Club who invited the Loopers to explore this resort community and enjoy its many amenities. Several headed for the Clubhouse to dine in its formal dining room or the more casual Grille Room, or just to sip a cool one on the veranda overlooking the Sound. The next day at least one went straight to the Sound Golf Links to test his skills at the site of the recent Biggs Classic professional golf tournament. Others checked out the tennis and bocce courts and the Community Center. But the most popular spot was the pool, when temperatures on the 19th bumped into the high 90's.

Poolside is where I got to meet Jeff Kenyon, the association's Vice-Commodore of Cruising, the man responsible for organizing this cruise. An Army brat originally from Iowa, Jeff and I found we had something in common. Jeff earned his Bachelor's degree from Worcester Poly Tech, a stone's throw from where I was born, and then earned his MBA from Boston University and became a Boston baseball fan, which explains why he smiled broadly when he saw me wearing my Red Sox cap.

Another interesting fellow I got to meet by the pool was Joe Valinoti, captain of the Nonsuch class *Il Gatto*. Joe has had a most interesting career. As a chief petty officer and radio operator in the Navy for 36 years, he was on the destroyer USS Willard Keith during the botched Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961 and on the USS Sabine during the 1962 Cuban Quarantine. After retiring from active duty, Joe continued serving in the Navy Reserve while operating a garage in Highland, New Jersey, a family tradition—his dad had a garage and both his sons have one.

In 1998 Joe retired to Oriental, North Carolina, but he is hardly inactive. He is the town's solid waste coordinator, runs the recycling program, and chairs the Board of Adjustment. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the International Nonsuch Association whose 250 members can be found as far away as Canada, Australia, and Europe. "We all sail the same kind of boats," he says, "so we all have the same problems. We have an on-line discussion



Figure 1 Albemarle Plantation
Poolside w/ NSA



Figure 2 Neuse Rive Sailing Assoc. at the Albemarle
Plantation. [Click image to view video.](#)

group to share solutions and tips on sailing, and also a newsletter and a quarterly magazine, "NONSUCH Update."

I think Joe really enjoyed discovering this little corner of paradise on Albemarle Sound, saying he would have liked to stay longer. So, I suspect that he and many of his associates may soon be back for a longer visit. But for now, our pleasant chat had come to an end—it was time to jump back in the pool for another refreshing dip.

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Additional Notes:

Local knowledge for approach to Albemarle Plantation Marina can be found at <http://albemarleloop.com/videos.html> : and "[Albemarle Plantation Entrance Video - view the actual navigational courses and markers for entering the channel to Albemarle Plantation Marina](#)"