

Boating with Missy

By Melissa Gervais

Resolution of Happiness

I'm a member of the organizing committee for Women's Day at the Vancouver Boat Show. This group of smart, resourceful, no-nonsense, supportive women can turn any challenge into an opportunity. The event has almost become secondary to our relationships as we have all landed in a safe place together. We were a group of strangers that have become a flock.

As we waited for the server at our most recent meeting, the conversation turned to New Year's Resolutions. I make them, but have never been inspired enough to keep them. I was stumbling to come up with something original, instead I landed on the predictable "getting healthy and losing weight." My friend Des looked me square in the eyes and said, "Bigger is better. Good things are happening for you. This is your year and you can't ask for more than that." Hold the check.

That same evening on the train ride home, I was lamenting about some of the tasks that were involved in planning both a large tradeshow booth and an event at the Boat Show. As I was bemoaning this obligation, my friend, Gina looked me square in the eyes and said, "Just don't do it." It stopped me in my tracks. Could the running shoe company be wrong?

As I lay in bed recalling the advice I had received from my pals, I had an epiphany — 2020 is going to be my year, and I am not going to spend my time doing things that don't float my boat. Amen. I love being on the water and everything nautical and that should be my focus. This message was then written on a big, yellow sticky note, front-and-center to remind me at the start of each day.

The non-boaters in my life often say, "You sure spend a lot of time on the water, what's so great about boating?" As a boater, you instantly know the answer, but it's hard to put in words. In the Pacific Northwest, we get to spend time on the water in some of the most beautiful natural places in the world. Surrounded by such humbling drift, this allows us time to simply be. Our minds can travel to places that we just can't get to when sitting in traffic.

That said, maybe it's time for a different resolution that is a boat specific. If you don't usually take the helm,

then maybe 2020 is the year? If you feel uncomfortable near the dock, then perhaps you can take over the helm when you're en route, especially when it's a familiar destination. You don't have to take over for the entire trip, but maybe just an hour here or there. Baby steps.

Or maybe, download a navigation program on your iPad and plot the course, notice aids to navigation, shoals, or rocks, and follow along as you are cruising. This is a good project for a rainy day at home when you're dreaming about being on the boat. My favorite stand-alone navigation app is Navionics. If you have a newer chartplotter on board, there is a good chance that there is a free app like Garmin's Active Captain, Raymarine's Raycontrol, Furuno's Navnet, or the Link apps for Simrad, Lowrance, and B&G.

Do the same on your return trip, only this time, look at your speed, rpm's, engine temp, voltage, trim tabs, vacuum, engine sync, and other dashboard gauges. Write down the optimum numbers for each so you will have them handy for your next trip. If you are feeling especially adventure-some, call the Coast Guard for a radio check. You aren't going to learn it all in one go, so start with small manageable pieces and you won't be overwhelmed.

This morning, I am at my computer staring at the big yellow sticky note, my new 2020 proverbial aid to navigation. I'm so grateful for my friends every day as they really are the secret to my success. My flock made me see something I didn't know I was looking for. If you haven't landed on a resolution for 2020, look to the

amazing people that surround you. You know they will have something to say. But a word of caution before you attach any expectations to my advice. In this group, I have also heard, "This wine is making me warm" and "Does anyone have level 7 hair dye on board?" **NWY**



Missy Gervais, Christie Burdon, Desiree Miller, Lauralei Thomas, Iva Zima



Missy grew up boating with her family in the Gulf Islands. She works for a yacht services company based in Vancouver, B.C. and boats most weekends from April to October. A self-proclaimed weekend warrior, she enjoys blogging about everything cool for women who boat at missygoesboating.com.