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Dear Tom and Crew,

Thanks for helping me out in my latest debacle getting Toujours safely on the hard and headed towards repairs. I was so much looking forward to our trip to Maine, and had waited the whole summer for it, but hey, that's history now.

I've enclosed a couple of gift certificates to Dunkin' Donuts so coffee's on me this week. There's some significance to this: I worked as the Marina Manager (do you still have that position?) 25 years ago with Tom. I never drank coffee until that time, but every day, either Tom, Donald, Larry or I would run for coffee. I felt left out not drinking it, so I started (and haven't stopped).

Another little known fact: I first knew Tom as the enemy. It was probably 35 years ago or so (feel old Tom? I do). My cousins and I spent our summers on Herring River with some nice, yet deviant friends. We had a few old boats; power and sail, which we used frequently in a manner inconsistent with harbor regulations--most notably, water skiing in the River. Whenever it was too rough to 'ski in the Sound, we'd often go down past the Rte 28 bridge and water ski in the conservation lands. There was nothing quite like going around those bends, at high tide, at full speed in a Boston Whaler. We rarely got caught, but perhaps we're responsible for some premature erosion! (I think the statute of limitations is up with the DEP).

My opinion of Tom and his position changed around my senior year in high school. I had gone sailing with my cousin, Kathy, in her Tech Dinghy in a smoking Sou'wester. We could make the boat plane surfing down the waves, and it was lots of fun. We also learned one day that we could swamp the boat. After at least ½ hour of trying to self rescue the swamped "T" boat, Tom showed up to tow us in. He tied a line to our bow and headed towards shore at the only speed Tom knows: full throttle. Kathy and I had all we could do to keep the boat upright and headed for shore. As our speed built up, it took all our might just to hang onto the transom. It was at that point that I realized I had another, perhaps more imperative problem: the drawstring on my bathing suit wasn't tied and my trunks were fast approaching my ankles! It took all my strength, agility and coordination to try to balance the boat, hang onto the stern, and to keep my legs spread far enough apart so that my bathing suit didn't end up flying solo. As we approached the shore, Tom swung hard to port and the boat, Kathy, and I ended up bounding in with the waves. Kathy was completely horrified to see my white ass as I scrambled to pull my suit up. We waved to Tom and he waved back with that grin of his--you know the one.

Anyway, I think Tom's towed me three times (the other was when I realized the fuel gauge wasn't working on Toujours and Tom towed us in from the outer harbor). I'm grateful for the service and the memories. Thanks Tom and crew for all you do!

Brian