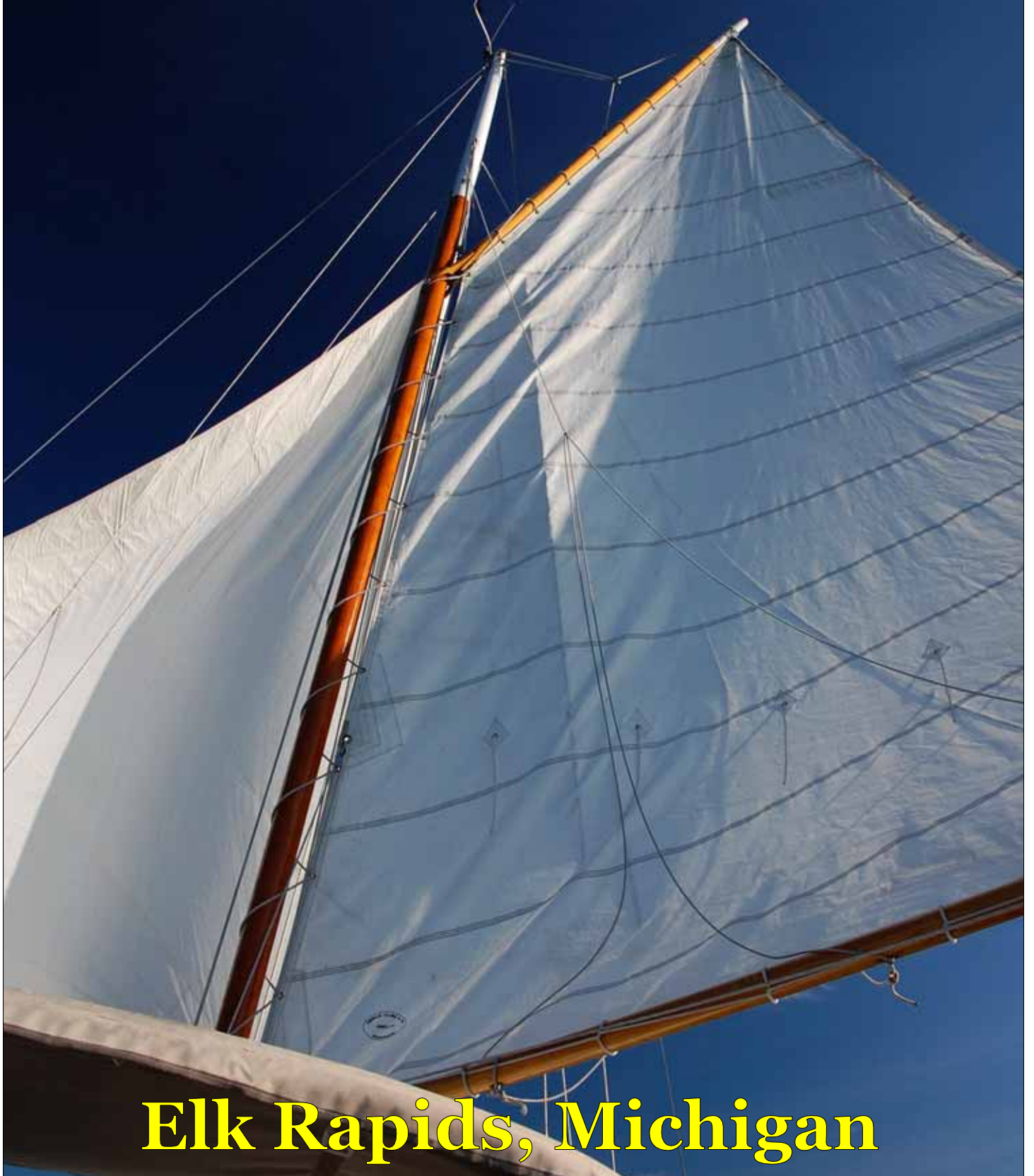


# Flicka Friends

Summer 2009



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**Elk Rapids, Michigan**



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# A Tall Ship?



The PRIDE of BALTIMORE, the NIAGARA, MADELINE, and the ZEETO docked along water front of Duluth, Minnesota.

Photo: Tom Davison © 2009

# Articles or Photos

If you have a Flicka photo or article that you would like to have published in Flicka Friends, please forward them to the editor at the address on page 3.

# Cover Photos

## Front Cover

The gaff main of s/y **BEN MAIN, Jr.** is against the wire rigging on a downwind trip on the East Arm of Grand Traverse Bay, Lake Michigan.

Photo: Tom Davison © 2009

## Back Cover

Larry Bracken at the tiller of s/y **BEN MAIN, Jr.** just inside of the green can on Suttons Bay. The seventy-seven foot schooner **INLAND SEAS** is astern.

Photo: Tom Davison © 2009

By Tom Davison

Last summer (2008), Betsy and I decided to visit Duluth, Minnesota for a tall ship festival. The tall ships present were the **PRIDE of BALTIMORE**, the **NIAGARA**, and the **MADLINE**. All were docked along the waterfront for several days. We drove up to Ashland, Wisconsin the night before and planned to arrive a couple of hours early to get in line. After we bought tickets, we found the lines to be three or four hours long. Because I've been aboard the **NIAGARA** before, and the home port of the **MADLINE** is only thirty miles from my home, my interest was in the **PRIDE of BALITMORE**.

The event planners didn't figure on 60,000+ people coming to see these ships over the weekend. Some of the estimates placed that number above 100,000 people. Being among this number of people was a few more than I'm used to. Living in a rural farm area doesn't prepare you for standing in line

for hours with thousands of others to visit the ships. Even our early arrival wasn't nearly early enough. Given the long lines, we opted to view the ships from shore and to look around the downtown Duluth area.

One of the other things that I'd wanted to do was visit Daryl Clark. He keeps his Flicka docked in Superior, Wisconsin. A number of messages were left on his cell phone. While we were waiting on the waterfront, Daryl called using his cell phone. He was out on Lake Superior at the end of a two week trip to Isle Royale. I asked if he was going to be near a marina today. He gave it some thought and said he could stop in at Silver Bay around 5:00 pm. We agreed to meet him there.

After lunch, we headed north along Minnesota's "North Shore." While we missed getting aboard a tall ship on this vacation, we would get aboard a small ship. It would be Daryl's s/y **BALLO LISCIO**.





# Cover Photos...

# About Flicka Friends



**BALLO LISCIO entering Silver Bay Marina.**

*Photo: Tom Davison © 2009*

**By Tom Davison**

Many of the images that arrive for publication in Flicka Friends are horizontally formatted. While this works well in a number of the page layouts, they are difficult to use on the cover.

Since the newsletter is always in need of cover photos, I'd like to encourage Flicka owners to accept a photo assignment. The next time you are taking photos of your favorite little sailboat,

take a few of them in a vertical format and send them into Daryl Clark.

You should include some space above and below your Flicka for the text that is on the cover. It is easy to crop out part of the image if there is some extra "real estate" around the sailboat.

Don't forget to include a caption for the photo that includes your name, the Flicka's name and where the photo was taken.

Flicka Friends is a newsletter that is written specifically for those who own, crew aboard, or are interested in the Flicka, a twenty foot sailing vessel designed by Bruce P. Bingham.

Based on the Newport Boats of Block Island Sound, this little ship has been built from various materials from the 1970's until 2002. This includes Flickas constructed from plans obtained directly from Bruce's California office. About 400 sets of plans were sold. According to Bruce Bingham, many Flickas can be found in New Zealand, Australia, and Sweden. A number of hulls were built by Nor'Star and some were completed by Westerly Marine. The manufacturer of the bulk of the class is Pacific Seacraft who built 434 hulls in California.

**Flicka Friends** is published on a quarterly basis, with issues being posted to the internet in March, June, September and December—or as material becomes available! Articles and photographs are welcome and encouraged.

First published in 1995, this newsletter was created by Dennis Pratt. The editor assignment was transferred to Tom Davison in 1998 and maintained until 2008 when the newsletter editor responsibilities were accepted by Daryl Clark. You can download the current issue as well as back issues of Flicka Friends from the Flicka Home Page:

[www.flicka20.com](http://www.flicka20.com)

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# Sailing To

*By Tom Davison*

We have planned a trip over to Elk Rapids several times during the last few years, but the weather always seemed to get in the way. Trying to match my days off with the frontal passages had just not worked. Sailing in storms isn't on my top ten list, so we patiently waited for another time. The weather forecast was good this year for the dates we picked, so Tom Grimes, Larry Bracken, and I planned an overnight trip.

The distance is roughly sixteen miles and the route is simple: head out of Suttons Bay, cross West Bay, travel around the Mission Peninsula, and sail half way down East Bay to Elk Rapids.

Our start was delayed because of a trip into town to replace a batten. The lower one was missing after a recent sailing trip. After measuring several times and cutting it for length, the new batten proved to be a very tight fit. Hopefully, this prevent the need to shop for another one in the future.

It was mid-afternoon when we pulled in the lines and headed out into the bay. Even with the late start, we felt that there would be enough time to arrive before dark.

We were determined to cover the entire distance under sail. That meant sailing when we could have made much better time under power or by motor sailing, but the goal was to sail, so we persevered with light air.

The crossing from Suttons Bay to the Mission Light was a bit slow at times, but the wind gradually picked up enough to fill out the sails. As we neared the light, we were pleased to have a wind shift that prevented tacking north to make the rounding. Water immediately south of the Mission Light is shallow and that required sailing beyond the light before turning south.



**Heading for the open waters of Grand Traverse Bay.**

*Photo: Tom Davison © 2008*



**The light off of the Mission Peninsula was our turning point for the trip into the East Bay of Grand Traverse Bay.**

*Photo: Tom Davison © 2009*





# Elk Rapids



**Clouds and the gaff main of s/y BEN MAIN, Jr.**  
*Photo: Tom Davison © 2008*

After the turn into East Bay, our course was downwind, we wished for a whisker pole to control the 120% genoa. A lesser substitute was created using a boat pole and a few knots in the port sheet. While not perfect, the arrangement worked in the light conditions.

Checking the GPS and knot log before and after, the improvised whisker pole provided as much as one and one-half knots at times. The Flicka was better balanced downwind and we settled in for the long run down East Bay of Grand Traverse Bay.

Moving south, we followed the east shore of the Mission Peninsula. Mission Harbor is a protected bay along this shore, but stopping there would have to wait for another trip. The wind was decreasing gradually as we continued toward Elk Rapids.

As the sun began to set behind the Mission Peninsula, the wind dropped lower and lower. We were ghosting along and crossing paths with a larger sailboat that was day sailing out of Elk Rapids. With an earlier start, we would have easily made it into the harbor under sail.

We finally reached the point where continuing to ghost into the harbor would mean missing dinner. Reluctantly, we started the diesel and motored the last three-quarters of mile into the marina. We telephoned the marina office to request a transient boat slip for the night. One of the staff members provide directions and another met us at the dock.

Larry Bracken is an interesting sailor, despite his vision problems, he is extremely effective sailing his Compac 16 on Suttons Bay. He also sails a Compac 23 in Indiana. He is good natured, about his vision, joking about being a vision challenged captain and who would have the right-of-way.



**A boat pole was used to improvise a whisker pole for the wing and wing run down to Elk Rapids.**  
*Photo: Tom Davison © 2008*





# Elk Rapids



The old Mission Point Light house is surrounded by very shallow water.

*Photo: Tom Davison © 2008*



After turning at the light, our course was south into the East Arm of Grand Traverse Bay. Our destination was Elk Rapids, roughly half-way down the bay

*Photo: Tom Davison © 2008*



# Photo Gallery



As the sun set astern, the wind began to fail us on the final approach into Elk Rapids.

*Photo: Tom Davison © 2008*



While we could have ghosted in the Elk Rapids Marina, but a late arrival would push us past the closing hours for the restaurants along the main street. Motoring was the only way to get dinner.

*Photo: Tom Davison © 2008*



# Sailing To

At the end of the day, I continued taking photos in low light. Larry is a retired photographer and wondered about the ability of the Nikon's vibration reduction system. It proved to be more than adequate for good image while aboard a sailboat after sunset.

The sails were secured as we approached the marina and the fenders were deployed. Our spot for the night was on the second finger on the port side. The marina staff was there to help us with the docking. They seem to take pride in providing good service.

After securing s/y **BEN MAIN, Jr.** in slip # 113, we headed off toward main street for dinner and a beer. The marina is roughly one-quarter mile from the main street of Elk Rapids. The food was very good, as was the beer we ordered.

We were in no particular hurry the following morning and we walked back into town for breakfast. We looked around the main street and stopped in a few stores before heading back to the marina while waiting for some wind.

The lower lake levels on Lake Michigan make some of the marinas difficult to use. Elk Rapids can lower their docks enough to make getting ashore a little bit easier. Some of the smaller harbors around the bay have fixed docks. One marina in particular requires a little bit of climbing technique to reach the deck.

Except for that minor point, Elk Rapids is a great marina, maybe the best on the bay. They certainly have sufficient land area set aside for boater's needs. Parking, the launch, the marina size and location are much more than adequate.

It was nearly noon when we decided to leave. The wind was pretty much non-existent, motoring would be the order of the day. After the fenders and dock lines were stowed, we settled into mo-



**Our temporary boat slip was number 113. During our travels, we often find that the number 13 is used for transient boaters.**

*By Tom Davison © 2008*



**We were in no real hurry to leave in the morning. With the clam conditions, there was no other option but to motor.**

*By Tom Davison © 2008*







# Elk Rapids



The schooner **INLAND SEAS** followed us in to Suttons Bay.  
*By Tom Davison © 2008*



Reaching down the bay toward home port,  
*By Tom Davison © 2008*

toring north. Motoring aboard a Flicka always seems to be slow going under power. Maybe it is all the time I've spent working at marinas and operating power boats. While progress is made, it certainly isn't that found in a similar sized powerboat. Still, we approached the turn west within a couple of hours and headed west across the bay.

The wind began to build slowly as we sailed north. As we neared the Mission Light in the bay, the switch from diesel to dacron was made. With the sails up, we were finally exceeding the speed under power. The switch could have been made a little sooner.

Turning west filled the sails and we set off across West Bay for the entrance in Suttons Bay. While still not strong, the wind was pushing us above five knots. It was a good tack, but a little short lived. Nearing the point, we were pleased to be pointed sufficiently west to clear the green can buoy.

We were not the only sailboat heading into Suttons Bay. The schooner "INLAND SEAS" was returning from the bay. This 77 foot schooner is also based in Suttons Bay. While I expected them to catch up and pass, they never seemed to close the distance. After reaching down the bay, we approached home port.

This trip was enjoyable with winds ranging from nearly zero to fifteen or twenty knots. Elk Rapids Marina is one more reason to spend some time sailing on the waters of Grand Traverse Bay. Located in northwestern lower Michigan, this bay stretches nearly thirty miles south from Lake Michigan.

With a little more time and better wind, a stop could have been main in Mission Bay. Another day would have allowed sailing down East Bay to Acme. These areas will be destinations for a future trip on Grand Traverse Bay aboard s/y **BEN MAIN, Jr.**





# Flicka Project:

*By Tom Davison*

A problem with the transom of s/y **BEN MAIN, Jr.** was discovered while cleaning the hull at the end last season. There was a small vertical hairline crack in the gelcoat along the centerline of the transom. The gray gelcoat had separated from the fiberglass and the polish was entering the void through the crack. The polish bubbled when you pressed the gelcoat on the port side of this small crack. Obviously, this was not good.

A local boat repair business was contacted and asked to examine the crack. Their inspection showed an area of gelcoat that was separating from the fiberglass. The area was much larger than the hairline crack suggested. The recommendation was to remove the gelcoat to make the necessary repair.

The repair was started this spring. While access to the Flicka and the boat barn was through two feet of snow, the garage was warm enough to work in. While I was using snow shoes to access the barn, the painter used a snow blower to gain access for the initial part of the repair. This isn't something that the Florida Flicka owners have to consider.

On the first trip, some of the transom gelcoat was removed using a power sander. The area was roughly one to two square feet. The depth was enough to expose the fiberglass, allowing additional inspection to make sure that there were other problems.

On a second trip, the West System was used to fill in the area, bringing the surface slightly higher than the original shape of the transom.

After the snow melted, s/y **BEN MAIN, Jr.** was towed to the boat repair business to finish the transom repair and some basic diesel engine maintenance.



**Sanding was required to remove the gelcoat separated from the fiberglass on the transom of BEN MAIN, Jr.**

*By Tom Davison © 2009*



**After the West System repair was completed, the transom was brought back to the original shape.**

*By Tom Davison © 2009*



# Transom Gelcoat Repair



**Matching the original gelcoat would be difficult due to fading of the gray gelcoat, so the transom was painted white.**

*By Tom Davison © 2009*



**The gray gelcoat along the edge of the transom was not sanded or painted, giving the appearance of wood planking.**

*By Tom Davison © 2009*

One problem with the repair was the color of the transom. The painter didn't think that the gray could be duplicated due to the differential fading of the original gelcoat. This fading happened over twenty-seven years with one side of the hull always facing the dock. Not only was it slight different from one side of the boat to the other, the color of the gelcoat surfaces facing downward were also different. His suggestion was to paint the transom white.

The plan was to paint most of the transom while leaving a one inch or so edge of gray gelcoat. The paint would not include the roughly one inch edge along the port and starboard edge of the transom. The goal here was to give the appearance of the end of the planking, building on the planking lines by Bruce P. Bingham designed on the topsides of the hull.

There was another way to complete this repair: painting the entire hull. This would have made the job larger and would have impacted the summer sailing season even more. Maybe that option will be considered at some point in the future.

There would also be the complication of getting the scrollwork painted again, something that the painter was not interested in doing. With the repair completed and the painting done, the Flicka was launched and sailed all summer.

While retuning to the marina this summer, one of the other local boaters hailed us, asking about the white transom. I yelled back that it was the cure for a little gelcoat acne and he nodded understanding the reason for changing the color of the hull.

While others in the marina viewed the work every time the sailboat is taken out, those aboard don't often see the transom. Even when checking the water flowing from the diesel's exhaust, I didn't notice the new color very often.



# Silver Bay Marina



**Silver Bay Marina is one of the newer additions to the Safe Harbor System on Lake Superior.**

*Photo: Tom Davison © 2008*

*By Tom Davison*

There are a limited number of harbors along the Minnesota portion of Lake Superior known as the “North Shore.” This area stretches one hundred and fifty miles from Duluth to Grand Portage near the Canadian border. The State of Minnesota has been building a safe harbor and access system in this area over the years and there are now ten along this rocky coast line. The list now includes and the distance from Duluth are:

- McQuaide Access ..... 9.0
- Knife River Access ..... 18.5
- Two Harbors Access..... 25.5
- Twin Points Access..... 43.5
- Silver Bay Access / Safe Harbor ..... 56.0
- Taconite Access / Safe Harbor ..... 74.0
- Tofte Access ..... 84.0
- Grand Marais Access ..... 109.0
- Horseshoe Bay Access..... 129.5
- Grand Portage Harbor (Private) ..... 143.5

The amount of protection from Lake Superior varies considerably from one access to another.

Located fifty-six miles north of Duluth, Silver Bay Marina is one of the newest safe harbors. Opened in 1999, this facility covers seven acres and offers boaters quite a few services. Forty of the boat slips are kept open for transient boats.

Silver Bay’s history is connected to a low grade iron ore called taconite found in the iron range. Large ships call on the port located just north of Silver Bay Marina. They transport Taconite pellets from the processing plant to steel mills on the Great Lakes.

The wreck of the Hesper lies in 30 to 48 feet of water along the west breakwall of Silver Bay Harbor and angles out into Lake Superior. Caught in a rare late spring snow storm in 1905, the sixty mile an hour northeaster drove the Hesper well off course and on to a reef . More detailed information can be found at:

[www.silverbay.com/hesper.htm](http://www.silverbay.com/hesper.htm)

More information about the Minnesota access/safe harbors and sailing on Lake Superior can be found at:

[www.dnr.state.mn.us/water\\_access/harbors/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/water_access/harbors/index.html)





**BALLO LISCIO leaving Silver Bay Marina.**  
*Photo: Tom Davison © 2008*

## Services

Location	MN, USA
Latitude	N 47.16.08
Longitude	W 091.16.39
Boat Ramp	Yes
Boat Slips / Transient	108 / 40
Boat Draft	12'
Boat Slip Length	30'-60'
Boat Storage	Limited
Brokerage	No
Cable TV	No
Concession / Vending	Small / Pop
Courtesy Dock	Yes
Diesel	Yes
Electrical—30/50 Amp	Yes / Yes
Fish Cleaning Station	Yes
Garbage / Waste	Yes / Yes
Gasoline	Yes
Ice / Groceries	Yes / No
Internet / Wireless	Yes / Yes
Laundry	Yes
Launch Fee	No
Lodging	1.5 Miles
Mooring / Dingy Dock	No / No
Post Office	1.5 Miles
Pump-Out	Yes
Repairs	Limited
Rest Rooms	Yes
Restaurant	1.0 Mile
Safe Harbor	Yes
Security/Gated Access	No / No
Ship's Store	No
Showers	Yes
Telephone / Payphone	Yes / No
Towing	No
Trailer Storage	Limited
Transport Carts	Yes
Travel-Lift	No
U.S. Customs	No
Water Hookup	Yes
Year Built	1999





# Silver Bay



Built in 1999, Silver Bay Marina is a welcome addition to Minnesota's Safe Harbor System.  
*By Tom Davison © 2008*



The launch ramp is located across the harbor from the marina.  
*By Tom Davison © 2008*



# Photo Gallery



**BALLO LUSCIO approaching Silver Bay from the north.**

*By Tom Davison © 2008*



**Another fifty-five miles to s/y BALLO LUSCIO's home port in Superior, Wisconsin.**

*By Tom Davison © 2008*

