take on sailing

start off life on the open waters

party on the waters

from dragon boat races to epic boating festivities
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take on sailing: life on the open waters

by Jon Paulos, NLC Librarian

Sailing has the reputation of being a rich person’s sport but that doesn’t always have to be the case. The cheapest way to learn is simply to offer up one’s services aboard other people’s boats at the various local marinas. Close to North Lake College are lakes Grapevine, Joe Pool, and Lewisville which are all good places to start. Further afield are Possum Kingdom and our own “great” lake, the massive Lake Texoma. There are a number of books on learning how to sail, and one of my favorites is *The Complete Sailor* by David Seidman. Seidman’s book covers all the basics in a highly user-friendly format. North Lake College library has *The Complete Sailing Manual* by Steve Sleight, another useful resource for all things sailing. For more formal training, talk to the local marinas about American Sailing Association (ASA) sailing classes (or look online at asa.com) leading to various certifications demonstrating sailing competence.
When it comes time to buy your own sailboat, one of the best resources is [www.sailingtexas.com](http://www.sailingtexas.com). This website lists thousands of used boats in all price ranges. Another great option is Craigslist. Just go to the boats listing and filter to show only sailboats. Assuming you have somewhere to park it, finding a boat on a trailer avoids the need to pay monthly slip fees. As always, caveat emptor applies and remember that if a deal seems too good to be true then it probably is.

There are several ways to ascertain the basic seaworthiness of a used boat. One is to hire a SAMS (Society of Accredited Marine Surveyors) certified boat surveyor and the other is to look the boat over yourself. For the latter option, find a copy of *Inspecting the Aging Sailboat* by Don Casey. It shows exactly what to look for when buying a used sailboat. Taking along a knowledgeable friend is always advisable too, of course. The good news is that there are a ton of perfectly serviceable thirty year-old sailboats in the 15 to 27 foot range to be had cheap. So to quote a famous sailing couple, “go small, go simple, go now!”


Jump start your learning with this sailing manual.


The first out of 20 books, Patrick O'Brian's seafaring tales inspired Jon to learn to sail.

**take on sailing**
**(cont.)**


A Sailor's Life


Fictional Explorers


dragon boat racing & festivals

Dragon boat races originated in China thousands of years ago. The most famous of all takes place at the Dragon Boat Festival held on the 5th day of the 5th month in China, which can be May or June in the Western Calendar. The history behind this day varies from the former worship of dragons to commemorating a renowned poet, the dragon itself is "deeply embedded" into Chinese culture. The boat is shaped like a long canoe with the head of fierce, horned dragon. Boats can fit dozens of paddlers, whose movements resembles a dragon's feet. A drummer sits at the bow and directs the paddlers into pace with each beat.

Chinese communities outside of China have inspired other races. Cambodia's Annual Water Festival incorporates dragon boat racing to commemorate the end of monsoon season. Ottawa, Canada's capital, hosts a summer festival as well as winter festival dubbed Ice Dragon Boat. Texas has several dragon boat races with 3 in the Metroplex area. Check out our next pages for a map of some the most interesting races around the world.

Yueyang International Dragon Boat Festival (Hunan Province, China): the modern day sport is said to have originated here (June 18)

Ottawa hosts 2 annual dragon boat festivals: Tim Hortons Dragon Boat Festival (June 21-24) & Ice Dragon Boat (Feb 9, 2019)

5th Annual Puerto Rico Dragon Boat Festival (May 26-27): This year’s event benefits the recovery efforts from Hurricane Maria

2018 IBCPC Dragon Boat Festival (Florence, Italy): The IBCPC stands for International Breast Cancer Paddler’s Commission. It is an non-competitive dragon boat racing to support breast cancer rehabilitation.

Australian Dragon Boat Championships (Mar 3-8): Australia has many dragon boat clubs and their skills are showcased in this annual event.
Party on the Waters: Texas Festivals

DFW Dragon Boat, Kite & Lantern Festival (Irving): May 20th

Cleburne Dragon Boat Festival: June 30-July 1

Grand Prairie Dragon Boat Festival: October 13

Battle on the Brazos-Dragon Boat Festival (Waco): October 27

Texarkana Dragon Boat Festival: April 21

LakeFest Drag Boat Races (Marbles Fall): Aug 10-12

Austin Dragon Boat & Paddle Festival, April 28-29

Lago Fest (Austin Yacht Club Turnback Regatta): May 5th

Battle on the Brazos-Dragon Boat Festival (Waco): October 27

Float Fest (San Marcos): July 21-22

San Antonio Dragon Boat Festival: Nov 3

2018 Harvest Moon Regatta (Port Aransas): Oct 25-28

Port Neches River Fest (High Speed Boat Racing): May 2-6

Thunder Over Cedar Creek Lake (Mabank): June 30

Houston Dragon Boat Festival: May 5th