

August 16, 2023 – Captain's Award Recipient: Tom King's remarks.

First and foremost, I would like to thank the board & members for this great honor. As we celebrate **FCW 40th anniversary**, I'd like to tell you my story of why and how I became involved with FCW and ardently believe in protecting & preserving the beautiful Chatham waterways for future generations.

My family has deep roots in Chatham, and it holds a special spot for my wife, Jessica, and me. We both grew up summers in Chatham and were married at Chatham Light House before we began our cross-country adventures together and built our family along the way. I have many great memories as a kid sailing the pristine (and sharkless) waters of Stage Harbor, Nantucket Sound, and Pleasant Bay. Not a seal was ever seen. This was back in the day when bay scallops were so plentiful you could almost catch them with your hands while sailing over the flats of Morris Island and sail boats outnumbered motorboats.

My grandparents had a camp just south of Inward Point on Monomoy called "The Powder Hole", but it was long gone by the time #4 (me) came around having been destroyed by hurricane Carol in 1953. However, my great uncle Johnny Manson's camp "The Knot Hole" (Johnny was the owner of Manson Motors, now Chatham Ford) and his camp was hidden in the dunes further inland on Inward Point and survived the great hurricane.

I have wonderful memories, spending many a summer's night with my cousins listening to the surf and enjoying the bright stars at night around a campfire at the old camp on the elbow built of lumber collected from old shipwrecks. Navigating through the dunes to the outhouse at night was always a scary adventure for a young kid, but exploring the island, surf casting for stripers and digging steamers for dinner by day made more cherished Chatham memories I will never forget.

As Jessica and I moved around the country during my business career that took us to Seattle, Los Angeles, Chicago & New Jersey, we always tried to replicate Chatham wherever we lived. We came close once, while living in the Midwest and sailing our beloved Crosby Wianno Sr. on Lake Geneva, WI, dreaming of Chatham, but it was not the same looking at miles of corn fields off on the horizon. Something as simple as finding your oars hidden in the eel grass and rowing out to your boat on a mooring just could not be done. And cherished childhood memories of sailing and exploring the waters and beaches of Chatham were something we wanted to pass on to our children firsthand.

While we enjoyed our tour of the great USA, we always planned on returning to Chatham someday. In 2005 after 21 years on the road, we moved back to Chatham year-round. It was then an old family friend, the late FCW president Lewis Kimball, asked me if I'd be interested in joining the FCW board.

Growing up summers in Chatham I knew many of the legendary and trailblazing FCW directors and past Captain's award winners, such as Doug Wells, Tom Ennis, Bruce McClosky, Lew Kimball, Debbie Ecker, George Olmsted, Martha Stone, Bill Coleman, Richard Batchelor, Sr., Chuck Bartlett, and Nat Mason, to name a few. I also was aware of great things FCW had accomplished in its early years by religiously reading *the Chronicle* in our faraway places.

In its infancy, FCW was instrumental in encouraging the town of Chatham to buy the Old Mill Boat Yard (now the harbormaster's headquarters) and pushed hard for cesspools to be replaced with Title 5 septic systems and later sewerage to help deal with excessive nitrogen going into our harbors, bays and estuaries. Perhaps most importantly, FCW started water quality testing that proved to be instrumental when the town began the plan to expand the sewer system townwide.

Lew, in his kind & thoughtful fatherly headmaster delivery, gave me a refresher on the many women and men who, over the years have brought both skill and energy to giving life to this organization, so vital in helping maintain our special quality of life in Chatham. Without hesitation I signed on and joined the board to help continue the charge protecting and giving back to Chatham's beautiful waterways.

Trying to make a difference by helping protect this treasure we call Chatham. I've enjoyed working alongside the many knowledgeable and thoughtful FCW board members over the years, and rest easy knowing the organization is ever evolving and continuing the quest to protect Chatham's most precious resource, our waterways. I know the job will never be done, which is why I'm also continuing the never ending mission of helping protect Chatham's waterways by chairing the towns South Coastal Harbor committee, so that we may continue our endeavor to clean up our waterways and bring back the day when our coastal waterways and beaches are pristine and eel grass and bay scallops are plentiful for future generations to continue to enjoy for many years to come!

I am honored, humbled and most grateful to accept the 2023 Captain's award.  
Thank you!

- Thomas G. King