

Two other U.S. Coast Guard vessels, one old and one new, have recently attracted interest. The August issue of "Boats & Harbors" carried an advertisement for the sale of the former buoy tender TAMARACK, which for many years was stationed at the Soo. She left the lakes in 1977 (replaced at the Soo by BUCKTHORN), and later became an oyster dredge on the east coast. The ad did not specify her current location. Meanwhile, the next in the long line of new tenders produced by Marinette Marine (there are so many we can't keep track of them!), the WILLIAM TATE, was doing the break-in circuit on the lakes in October and was at the Soo on October 10th.

On November 2nd, voters at Frankfort, Michigan, will be asked to approve a permanent home for the museum carferry CITY OF MILWAUKEE, the care and maintenance of which has divided the Frankfort and Elberta (where the ferry now is) communities since 1982. In 1986, Frankfort voters turned down the hosting of the old ferry, and that's when she was moved to Elberta. The ferry's preservation society has not been able to acquire a lease on dock facilities at Elberta because the site adjoins Michigan Department of Transportation property which the MDOT wants for commercial rather than tourist use. Without a lease in Elberta, CITY OF MILWAUKEE must be moved by November 18th, and if Frankfort voters turn down the proposition for facilities there, the Society will move the ferry to Mackinaw City, where officials have agreed to maintain the ship as a historic vessel and have the old State ferry docks at which to moor her. CITY OF MILWAUKEE is a designated National Historic Landmark, was built in 1931, and last operated for the Ann Arbor Railroad.

During the 1999 navigation season, the lakes not only saw the third-year return of the German cruise ship C. COLUMBUS, but also the newly-built French 90-passenger "megayacht" LE LEVANT. A larger visitor than LE LEVANT was SEABOURN PRIDE, A 1988-built, "upper end" cruise ship owned by Seabourn Cruise Line A/S, of Oslo, Norway. With more than 200 passengers aboard, she made one trip out of Boston which took her as far into the lakes as Toronto. She was upbound in the Seaway on October 5th, was moored at Toronto from the 6th through the 8th, and passed down the Seaway again on the 9th. Of interest is the fact that the outward-slung lifeboats (two on each side) protruded too far for SEABOURN PRIDE to pass through the draws of the bascule bridges at the Beauharnois and Iroquois Locks. Accordingly, the lifeboats were unshipped at Montreal and taken by land up to Prescott, where they were reloaded. The same process was employed on the return journey. Although SEABOURN PRIDE was equipped with inflatable rafts sufficient to accommodate all on board, we find it difficult to believe that she was permitted to transit the heavily shoaled waters of the Seaway without lifeboats.

A major feat of personal survival took place during the night of October 10-11 on Lake Superior. Scott Richards, 28, a crewman aboard the Oglebay Norton self-unloader BUCKEYE, fell overboard as he was trying to secure some barrels on the steamer's fantail. BUCKEYE was upbound light for Silver Bay at the time, and fortunately was passing Keweenaw Point, the only point in her journey across the open lake which would take her within sight of land. Richards' absence was not noted for several hours, but in the meantime, he had set off swimming for land, despite water temperatures of 8°C. (46°F.) and wave heights of 2½ metres (also reported as 2-3 feet). Richards swam some 4½ miles, managed to maintain his direction, and came ashore near Eagle Harbor on the Keweenaw. He made his way to a house and then was transported to Keweenaw Memorial Hospital at Laurium. Although he was hypothermic when found, the man's survival is amazing, as a person normally would lapse into disorientation within 20-30 minutes in water of that temperature, eventually becoming unconscious. Richards was in the water for almost eight hours!

We have not heard much (comparatively) in recent months concerning the proposed fast ferry service across Lake Ontario between Toronto and Rochester. However, delays in securing financing cost the Lake Ontario Fast Ferry Corp.