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LIFE

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OVER THE MOUNTAIN JOURNAL

Inverness Couple Ready to Set Sail in National Regatta

By RUBIN E. GRANT

Laura Jelks was 10 when her dad introduced her to sailing. They would go out on their Sunfish boat, a personal-size, beach-launched sailing dinghy, to sail on Cross Lake in Shreveport, Louisiana, where Jelks grew up.

Jelks crewed a lot, but once she went to college at Louisiana Tech and

‘I think it’s pretty unreal we’ll be hosting since it is a national regatta.’

LAURA JELKS

then got married and started having children, she stopped sailing.

She and her husband, Huff Jelks, settled in Houston for 10 years while he worked as an offshore engineer. When he switched his career focus, they moved to Birmingham in 1988. Huff Jelks is a senior structural engineer at Southern Company.

In the 1990s, the Jelks joined the Birmingham Sailing Club, but they weren’t too active because their weekends, which were the only time they could sail, were busy with Laura Jelks’ working as a real estate agent. She’s now a real estate agent with ARC Realty in Cahaba Heights.

Two years ago, after the COVID-19 pandemic moderated, the Jelks decided it was time to return to the water with the folks in the sailing



Photo by Amy Sides

Laura and Huff Jelks, above, will participate in a national sailing competition when the Birmingham Sailing Club hosts The Flying Scot Sailing Association’s 2023 Wife-Husband National Regatta on Sept. 29-Oct. 1.

club. They live in Inverness, and the club, located at Logan Martin Lake, isn’t too far from their home.

“It’s all about having fun,” Laura Jelks said. “There are not a lot of people who do it, but it’s a close group with some wonderful people who welcomed us back with open arms. We’re having a ball.”

At the end of this month, the Jelks will do something they have never done before. They will participate in a national sailing competition when the Birmingham Sailing Club hosts The Flying Scot Sailing Association’s

2023 Wife-Husband National Regatta on Sept. 29-Oct. 1.

“I think it’s pretty unreal we’ll be hosting since it is a national regatta,” Laura Jelks said.

“I’m kind of excited,” Huff Jelks said. “We sail together all the time, but mostly in club regattas and club races.”

Great Scot!

The Flying Scot sailboat is a 19-foot-long, centerboard spinnaker sloop that will be crewed by a married couple for the five-race regatta.

“Most people who sail them are older because they are a more reliable boat,” Laura Jelks said.

Thirty-five teams from more than 10 states are expected to trailer in with their boats to compete in two divisions, Championship and Challenge, for trophy honors.

The Jelks are both 66-years-old, and they have been married for 43 years. They have a son and daughter and six grandchildren. They will compete in the Challenge division.

“The people in the championship fleet have been sailing for 50 years,”

Laura Jelks said. “We’re going to try to stay out of their way.”

The Jelks will sail in a boat that is unofficially named “Yayi’s Escape.”

“We tried to get my grandchildren to call me Lolly, but it came out Yayi,” Laura Jelks said with a laugh. “One time my hairdresser asked me what was the name of my boat, and I told him that story and he said I should name it Yayi’s Escape since when we’re on the water we escape from everything else.”

The racecourse will be managed
See SAILING, page 11



Photo courtesy Brittany Brain

Ties That Bind

Bluff Park Art Show Is One of the Threads That Tie the Moore Family Together

By JUNE MATHEWS

Brittany Brain’s connection to the Bluff Park Art Association was established long before she was born. Her grandmother, Cary Moore, was one of its founding members. Her father, Daniel Moore, later served on its board and participated in its Bluff Park Art Show.

Now with Brain, known professionally as Brittany Carol Moore, comes a third-generation connection to the Bluff Park Art Association.

“I’ve been honored to have shown my art in the Bluff Park Art Show since 2011 and to be on the association’s board since 2021,” said Brain, whose medium is fine art photography. “I’m glad to be carrying on my grandma’s legacy in and passion for both the show and the association.”

Daniel Moore and daughter Brittany Brain collaborated on a special design for the 60th anniversary of the Bluff Park Art Show.

“Many of my BPAS memories include
See MOORE, page 11



Photo courtesy Brittany Brain

Artist Brittany Brain, known professionally as Brittany Carol Moore, with her grandmother Cary Moore, who was one of the founding members of the Bluff Park Art Association.

MOORE

From page 10

attending the show with not only my immediate family, but also with my uncles, aunts and cousins, walking with them to the show from my grandma's house, just up the hill from the park."

Granddad Gus Moore was also a proud supporter of the show, volunteering to put signs up all over Shades Mountain and often involving his four sons in the task. After his passing in 1990, Daniel, David, Richard and Billy established the August A. Moore Memorial Purchase Award in their father's honor, to which mother Cary was added when she passed in 2020.

So for the Moores, the art association is more than a mere connector; it's one of the ties that bind the family together in their mutual love of art.

At the 60th Annual Bluff Park Art Show on Oct. 7, a piece of family artistry will be on display throughout the show – on T-shirts, posters and other items – in a special 60th anniversary design that Brain and her father collaborated to create.

SAILING

From page 10

by a certified race officer from South Carolina with local sailing club members supporting him to set marks that the boats must round to complete the race. Each race requires the competitors to sail upwind and downwind on a two-lap course that typically takes 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete.

Sailboat racing involves careful timing to start at the gun in the favorable position on the line. The first leg after the start is to a marker buoy directly upwind, requiring teams to choose the best angle to steer and side of the course that will provide the most advantage to arrive at the mark the quickest.

The second leg after rounding the

upwind mark is directly downwind. Spinnakers are used on the downwind leg, but to which side of the boat that this larger sail is set is a team decision.

Right of way rules come into play as boats approach each other during the race. Sailing skill, boat handling, correct decision-making and luck are part of each team's success.

The Jelks are more interested in enjoying themselves than winning the national regatta.

"We just want to have fun," Laura Jelks said. "I hope we do well, but it will depend on the wind. If it's blowing 15 mph or more, we can't hold the boat and then we'll be in survivor mode."

"I don't know how it will turn out," Huff Jelks said. "I'm just going to take orders from my wife, like I always do."

cally gets after a day at the show – satisfied and full of good memories to cherish," she said.

Close Collaboration

Brain and Moore have collaborated on projects in the past, including a giant wall mural of one of Brain's photos of the Alabama Theatre for a downtown Birmingham law firm. They also brainstorm ideas on occasion, and every so often, they critique each other's work.

With similar eyes for design, color, and composition, the father and daughter

function well as a team. And as detail-oriented individuals who strive for perfection, they understand each other. Those very qualities, however, mean that working together can become a time-consuming proposition.

Nevertheless, said Brain, the time they spent on the 60th anniversary project was worth every minute.

"I really enjoyed working with my dad on this, as the Bluff Park Art Show is very near and dear to us," she said. "My dad and his brothers grew up in Bluff Park and attended the show every October as a tradition, as me and my

sisters would also grow up in Bluff Park into that same family tradition and hold many beloved memories of the show.

"The design was nostalgic and fun for my dad to work on," she continued, "and I was honored to be able to contribute a design for the first time."

The 60th Annual Bluff Park Art Show will take place Oct. 7 at Bluff Park Community Park, 517 Cloudland Drive in Hoover. For more information, visit bluffparkartassociation.org and follow the Bluff Park Art Association on Facebook and Instagram.

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