

**Follow along with us as we cruise onboard our
56' Ocean Yacht.**

Somewhere on the Water

Our Great Loop
Monday, September 1, 2025 – Labor Day
Grand Haven, MI to Holland, MI anchorage

Welcome! Glad to have you here!

This morning we met a local Grand Havenite who grew up in Buzzards Bay. Her dad used to fish the Cape Cod Canal. Grand Haven was a fun stop. Because we were tied up to the boardwalk for two nights, there was a lot of opportunity for people to stop and chat. We overheard several comments about Valkyrie, and we had some fellow loopers & future loopers stop and introduce themselves. We appreciated that very much.

Maybe because it was Labor Day weekend that the number of people & boats walking the boardwalk & cruising the Grand River was so numerous. Or maybe it is busy all the time; I would not be able to confirm that; however, there was an endless number of people and boats all weekend. Mostly, the boaters were very courteous, followed the no-wake rule, and no one was cutting anyone off or driving crazy. It was very clear that the boat captains were very comfortable with their vessels and their ability to maneuver them because docking on and off the boardwalk wall was very tightly spaced. Kudos to them!

What a fun tradition for many!!

Start your Labor Day with a community tradition—the Grand Haven Labor Day Bridge Walk. We'll gather at the 3rd Street Bridge at 9:00 am to begin the walk together, making our way across the bridge and along the waterfront. The route takes participants all the way out to the end of the Grand Haven Pier for a turnaround before concluding at Waterfront Stadium in downtown Grand Haven. Prize drawings will be held at the end of the walk, so plan to stay and enjoy the celebration. This event is free and open to all ages. Bring your family, friends, and neighbors for a beautiful morning along the waterfront.

<https://visitgrandhaven.com/events/labor-day-bridge-walk/>

With Mark's step-by-step guidance, I took Valkyrie off the wall, through the channel, and into Lake Michigan. I continued to drive much of the day as we cruised to Holland.

Mark tinkered with the RPMs and the engines and tried to "clean things out". Valkyrie has been running a little smoky lately. (Explained in detail in the video)



"BIG RED was not always BIG, not always RED, and not always a LIGHTHOUSE..." - Valerie van Heest, Maritime Historian.

The harbor's first beacon, a 34-foot white wooden structure, began shining in 1870 and eventually gave way to a taller steel beacon. In 1907, the present structure took shape as a manila-colored fog signal building, becoming an official lighthouse in 1936 with the addition of a light tower that raised its height to 49 feet. Not until 1956 did it adopt its iconic red color. <https://www.bigredlighthouse.com/>

We arrived in Holland just before noon. The beautiful holiday brought out all the boaters and beachgoers. The water temperature is 70 degrees; the air temperature is 74.

We are anchored in Lake Macatawa. Downtown Holland is approximately 5 miles up the Macatawa River. With better planning, we could have visited the iconic Dutch Windmill at the Windmill Island Gardens and the Nelis Dutch Village.

De Zwaan Windmill: The centerpiece of the island is [De Zwaan](#), a 251-year-old authentic working Dutch windmill built in 1761. It was the last working windmill allowed to leave the Netherlands, arriving in Michigan in 1964. Visitors can take a guided tour up its five stories to see the massive wooden gears and view the surrounding park. [Google](#)

Nelis' Dutch Village in Holland, Michigan, is a family-owned theme park that recreates a 19th-century Dutch village complete with canals, architecture inspired by the Netherlands, and traditional cultural demonstrations. [Google](#).

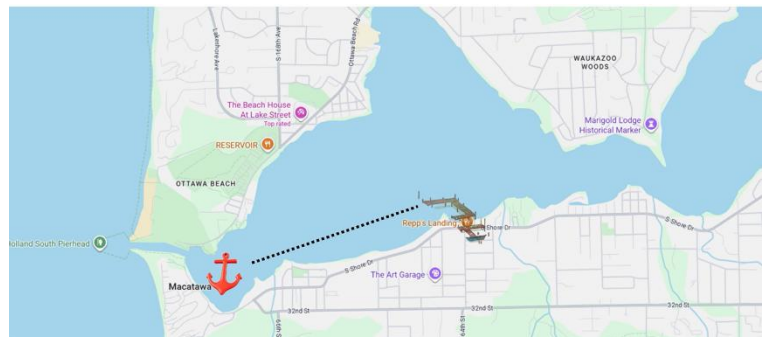
Lake Macatawa, historically known as Black Lake, is a drowned river-mouth lake in Ottawa County in the U.S. state of Michigan. The Macatawa River enters the lake at its eastern end in Holland, and the lake connects with Lake Michigan through the federally maintained navigation channel of Holland Harbor.

[Wikipedia](#)

Mark flew the drone, lowered the tender, and vacuumed the grill. Unfortunately, there was no filter in the shop vac, which was only discovered after he made a mess of the flybridge.



We took the tender to a nearby boat ramp and walked about 900 feet to a liquor store and stocked up on wine, rum, and finally some peanut butter whiskey. We have not had celebratory shots in a while, and we will soon reach 100 days of looping. A toast would be in order!



Thankfully, we were anchored in a no-wake zone because, although we were being thoroughly entertained with the huge number and variety of boats passing by, if we weren't, it would have been disastrous.

We had salad and leftovers for dinner.

In the video, you will hear me remark about butterflies:

September brings a massive surge of Monarch butterflies to Michigan because it marks the peak of their multi-thousand-mile southward [migration to Mexico](#).

Why September is Peak Butterfly Season

- **The "Super Generation":** Unlike the short-lived summer butterflies, the generation born in late summer is biologically built to survive up to nine months. They delay breeding and channel all their energy into flying south. Google

Donna's Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary –
FACEBOOK PAGE POST I FOUND -

Derrick Harge · September 23, 2025 ·
Monarch butterfly migration tracked in Michigan

I had never seen a "tagged" Monarch Butterfly until today. I submitted the information to the organization that tracks the butterfly's location. These were taken today in my backyard in Saginaw, Michigan.

UPDATE (9/23/25): This butterfly was released September 18, 2025, in Northern Bruce Peninsula, Ontario. That's about 170 mi as the crow flies from my house.



Donna Gentkowski Smith – (FACEBOOK COMMENTER ON POST)

Monarch butterflies live for a short time as adults, with most generations lasting only 2 to 6 weeks, while the migratory generation lives much longer, up to 8 to 9 months to complete their journey south and overwinter. This longer lifespan is due to an extended period called reproductive diapause that delays reproduction, allowing these butterflies to survive the winter and begin the next year's breeding cycle in the spring.

Saginaw, MI, is quite a distance from where we were in Holland, but I thought her post was cool. The photo looks AI-generated but was taken

by the FB poster. It has been fun to see all the butterflies. They are beautiful and mighty considering the distance they need to cover with those small little wings.

Daily Summary:

Departed from Grand Haven, MI @ 9:21 am

Arrived at Holland, MI @ 11:49 am

Days cruised: 66 Days on the loop: 97

Hours traveled: 2 hrs 27 mins

Nautical Miles Traveled: 19.07 (1,542.92 total miles)

Average Speed: 7.5 knots

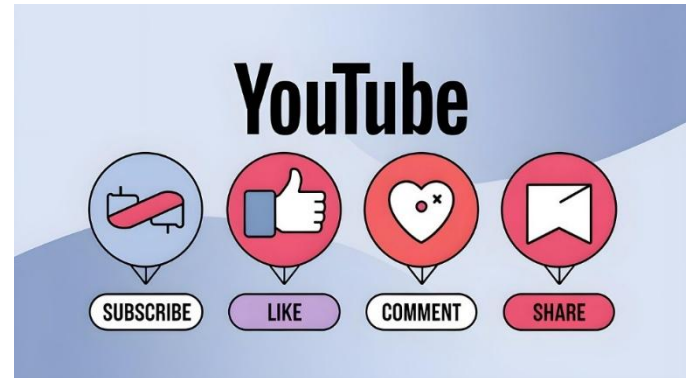
Weather: 74 degrees, sunny, light breeze weather

Anchorage/mooring/marina review: Free day dock was good. Nothing fancy but great location. No pump-out or fuel. Don't stay during west wind.

#of locks we went through: (73 total locks)



https://youtu.be/Pj3Gst3_o3U



Time is unrenewable and tomorrow is never promised so do it before you can't!