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*The Captain's charge is to command all. - Captain John Smith*

## Legacy of the Commander

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Karl O. Waltenbaugh</b></p> <p>He may have contributed greatly to my physical characteristics, but my grandfather's influence on my love of sailing was minimal since he died before I was born, a casualty of the delayed toxic effects of moonshine from the Prohibition Era. It's unknown if he ever went to sea or even set foot on a boat. From all accounts, he was more at home on a vaudeville stage than in a sailing craft. Regardless, I still consider him the first "Commander" in our branch of the family name.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>G. I. Waltenbaugh</b></p> <p>Karl's brother, George Isaac (known as G.I.) may be the source of my "sailing gene," at least that's what my father used to say. Although a railroad worker most of his life, G.I. spirited himself down to the Florida coast when the opportunity presented itself, and it was there that he spent the remainder of his days commanding the coastal waters, fishing and sailing in the warm sunshine with his dog, Vickie.</p>		
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>William K. Waltenbaugh</b></p> <p>He was fond of calling himself the Commander, but my father was not a Navy man. Instead, he was and Army Air Corps officer, and his only experience on a boat was a military transport to Italy during WWII and his honeymoon cruise on Lake Erie. It doesn't matter, though, because he was</p>	



and will always remain the Commander.



**Joseph K. Waltenbaugh**

Because none of my former commanders are around to stake their claims, I guess I'm left to inherit the title by default. I am, after all, the last of the males in this branch of the family name.

Perhaps it was my father's military experience, or my great-uncle's love of boats and warm climates, or even my grandfather's taste for bootleg liquor that led to my pirate ways and the claiming of this title--or maybe I just came by it naturally. After all, there was a period of my life when really believed I was Popeye. . .



. . . but as everyone who has ever been on my boat knows, there is only one true "Commander."



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