

## Master Captain Francis X. “Frank” McKee



Master Captain Francis X. (“Frank”) McKee is the latest in the line of distinguished mariners tracing their genealogy to the American Revolutionary War. A lifelong sailor, McKee learned his trade at the knee of his father, Eugene McKee, a decorated WWII US Navy / D-Day veteran and also a lifelong sailor. Frank sailed as a boy in inland Pennsylvania lakes and off-shore New Jersey waters, and as a father of five, he is passing along the McKee tradition of sailing to his children and grandchildren.

Frank has amassed thousands of miles of sailing on offshore and inland waters piloting a variety of sail and power vessels, up to 80 feet long, in the waters of California, the Eastern US coast from new England to Florida, Bermuda passages, Mexico, the Mediterranean and the Caribbean. He has served as captain and crew on countless sailing and power vessels in both cruising and racing scenarios.

Captain McKee founded ***The Gratitude Sailing Institute***, an American Sailing affiliate, and is a certified American Sailing instructor qualified through the Advanced Coastal Cruising level (ASA 106). He consistently draws the highest ASA student ratings. Utilizing sailing as a catalyst for organizational success, he leads a program at ***Gratitude Sailing*** for executive leadership and team building in cooperation with regional chambers of commerce. McKee was featured in the Boston Globe leisure section and Bucks & Montgomery (PA) Living magazine for this activity where sailing with him was described as “like sailing with an old friend who has a boat.”

Due to advancing age or physical limitations, some sailors can no longer experience the joy of sailing. To address this, Frank developed Captains’ Courageous, comprised of a select group of licensed USCG master captains who voluntarily take such sailors out on their own boats, at no cost, so they can continue to hone their skills and enjoy their passion.

Captain McKee holds a USCG Merchant Marine Master Captain 100 ton, near coastal, auxiliary sail and towing endorsement credential. He is fully STCW rated to unlimited tonnage permitting him to operate in international waters. He holds a British Admiralty Grade II Boat Master license along with several advanced technical ratings including an FCC Marine Radio Operator Permit, and radar operator certificates. In 2016, he was recognized as a certified ANSI Sail Safety Standard Evaluator, having qualified in a federally funded USCG project that developed sail safety standards for sailing schools’ teaching curricula.

McKee’s personal sailing philosophy is, “It is not the ship so much as the skillful sailing that assures the prosperous voyage.” attributed to George William Curtis, an American editor and public speaker.

### *Unedited student testimonials:*

*“I am amazed at the depth of your knowledge and experience. It was obvious that we were in exceedingly capable hands. Your pithy comments added an element of realism that could not have been realized otherwise. There is no doubt that we were sailing under the command of a “Master Captain”. It was an honor and privilege to have served under your command. Thanks for an unforgettable experience!” - Bill M.*

*“Captain Frank McKee was truly an exceptional instructor. I tend to get very anxious and worried that I will do something wrong. But I need not have worried as Frank’s calm attitude and continuous encouragement set me at ease right away. By the end of the class Frank was not only an instructor, but a friend. I could not have asked for a better ASA 103 experience, and Frank made it possible.” - Lori D.*