

# ChaNNels

The Newsletter of the Sailing Club of Washington  
April 2009

## Commodore's Log

This is the time of year when everything seems to happen. Social sails begin, Tuesday and Wednesday night races start, slip fees are due, training courses get underway, and people are starting to get out on the water. SCOW boats will participate in the first race of the season, the Cherry Blossom Regatta, on April 4th.

In preparation for the sailing season, we had a Maintenance Day in late February that was well organized and well attended. In March, we had a very successful Re-Up Brunch, where the usual great selection of food and drinks was paired with renewing memberships, signing up for training, paying our skipper fees, and renewing old friendships. At the end of March, we had the Train-the-Trainers and Rub-Off-the-Rust events. In between, all the membership and skipper renewals had to be processed, training fees sorted, and (oh, yeah) SCOW's new website was launched. Whew, I'm exhausted and it's only April!

For all the work I feel I am doing, I know there is much more being done by others. I would like to express my appreciation for the army of volunteers who worked at the Re-Up, helped with Maintenance Day, and took care of all the other tasks that need to be done at this time of year. I am simply amazed at how smoothly everything has been going! I consider myself fortunate to work with such a terrific group of people in SCOW.

Our guest speaker for the February meeting was well-received, and I counted 39 people in attendance. I don't remember the last time we had such a good turnout. Looking at the list of speakers scheduled for the next few months, I don't think it will be the last time we draw a crowd. There have been many new members at the past few meetings, and the vast majority indicated they found out about SCOW through the website. This shows me what an important tool our website is, and how important it is to keep it current and informative. We hope to see more improvements in the new site in the coming months, as the web team gets all the capabilities developed.

The full-year calendar is on the website, but it's not a static document. We will be updating it with additional information as we go along, so check back frequently. We hope to get information out far enough in advance to allow maximum participation in all the fun we are planning.

I'm also hoping to find some time to sail this year! Hope to see you all on the water.

Lisa

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### Upcoming SCOW General Membership Meetings

**Monday, April 13** -- Rico Newman, from the National Museum of the American Indian, will talk about pre- and post-tribal lifeways on the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay. Do YOU know a story about Native Americans on the river that you've always wondered whether it's fact or folklore? If so, send it to [vice@scow.org](mailto:vice@scow.org) at least two weeks before the April meeting, and after his talk, Mr. Newman will lead a short game of Fact or Crap!

**Monday, May 11** -- Bill Davenport will talk about racing, boat preparation, and sail trim.

**Monday, June 8** -- Captain Hank Moseley will talk about the history of the Schooner Virginia, and how the replica was made.

**Monday, July 13** -- We'll watch a video on a sailboat disaster and survival, followed by a SCOW panel to answer your questions on handling emergency situations.

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#### Did you know?

You can sail to Mount Vernon, radio in, and request docking at the private boat dock. Admission to Mount Vernon is \$13. When you sail there, admire the view – 6 miles of protected landscape, making the area very similar to what George Washington would have seen when he was in residence. We learned these facts and many more from John Marshall at the March general meeting.

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**SCOW Maintenance Day -- February 2009**



**Note name of  
ski slope!**

**Submitted by:  
Chris Von  
Guggenberg,  
pictured skiing at  
Aspen Highlands,  
Colorado, in early  
January**

## COURTSHIP -- A TRUE STORY OF A BAD LUCK BOAT

While I am not superstitious, sailors are in general inclined towards superstition. With this in mind, I am going to tell you the story of my vessel, "Courtship," which seemed destined to bad luck from the first owner onwards.

When I purchased Courtship, a ten-year-old Fountain-Pajot Venezia 42 catamaran, in 2004, I was aware that the previous owner had lost the entire rig in an unexplained accident. I figured that was OK, since it meant getting an old boat with a new mast, boom, sails, and new running and standing rigging. (I did not change the name.)

The next summer I was cruising in Newport, RI, when I decided to inspect the through-hulls. The through-hulls and seacocks on Courtship were made of plastic rather than bronze and I never really felt comfortable with them. While inspecting them, I found a slow leak in one seacock in the head area.

To my amazement, when I tightened it the thing cracked and split open right there! Water was pouring in. Fortunately, I had in my possession cork plugs for just this situation. I was able to remove the seacock, insert the plug, take a taxi to West Marine and buy a replacement bronze seacock. I also bought a spare in case it happened again.

The next year, in 2006, I put together a crew of three experienced men and set off from Cape May, bound for Bermuda, Azores, and Lisbon.

Now, all cruising catamarans have escape hatches near the waterline on the inside, under the "bridge deck." The purpose of this hatch is to escape through it, if the catamaran capsizes and the crew is trapped inside. On Courtship the dogs on the escape hatches were also made out of plastic. On the first night out, in rough conditions, the port hatch dogs broke and the hatch opened wide, letting in hundreds of gallons of seawater.

You can imagine our emotions when Andy went down into his cabin and found water pouring through the open hatch and sloshing in the bilge just below the floorboards, with no way to secure the hatch closed. Fortunately, no one panicked and we were able to take down all the sails and turn the boat downwind under power.

To execute repairs, Andy had to hold the inside edges of the hatch closed with his fingertips, while Dave and I jury-rigged a solution: We cut a piece of 2X4 to go across the inside of the hatch and attach a line to. We then removed bolts in the hatch handles, strung a 3/8" Dacron line through the boltholes in the hatch, and created a Spanish windlass with the 2X4, winding the entire affair tight.

We motored slowly back to the NJ shore, and pumped all night (both electric and hand pumps). We had everything dry by the time we arrived the next afternoon, about 12 hours later.

Of course I was terribly disappointed in the boat and had lost all confidence in plastic fittings! After a day to recuperate, I told the crew that I did not feel comfortable continuing with the crossing. At that point they both said that they had reached the same conclusion (independently), and were waiting for the right time to tell me.

In retrospect, it was a good thing that we were only 80 miles offshore, not out in the middle of the Atlantic. We were lucky that no one was hurt or killed. Actually, the total costs of damages to the boat were not more than \$300. (I replaced the plastic handles with newer aluminum ones.)

At this point I did not trust Courtship and put her up for sale. Although tempted to try another crossing, I just didn't feel good about her fittings and reliability. A French couple from Guadeloupe bought her in September 2008. Free of the boat, I volunteered to crew in the Caribbean 1500 Rally and had a nice sail from Hampton to Tortola in a Lagoon 380 catamaran. Upon returning from the BVI's, I received a message to this effect from my yacht broker:

"Courtship left Norfolk bound for Guadeloupe on November 9, 2008. About four days later she had an accident, approximately 180 miles south of Bermuda. The owners report that they either hit a container or were attacked by a whale. The ship starting taking on water and the pumps could not keep up. They triggered the EPIRB and were picked up by a freighter bound for Turkey. As they did not have insurance, the boat is a total loss."

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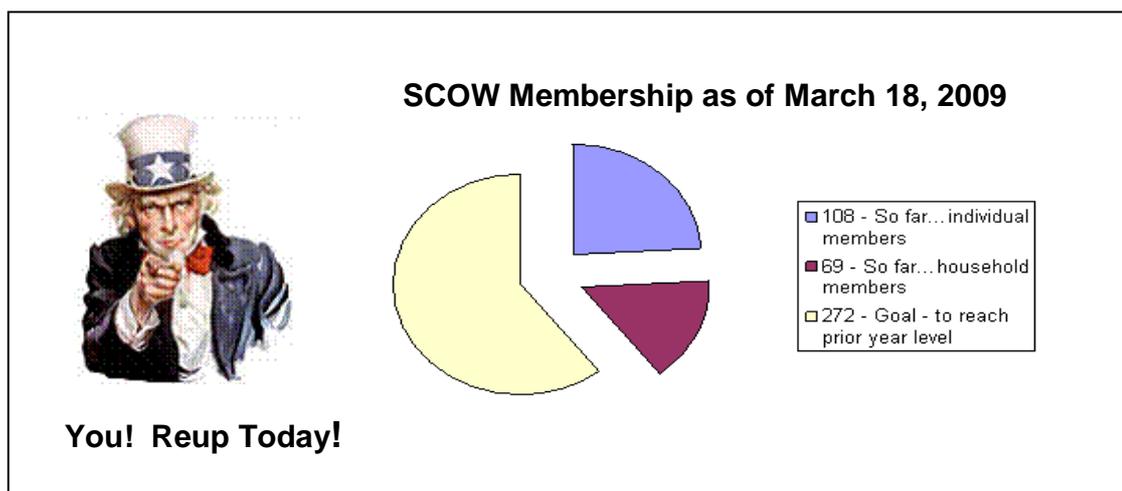
*(See next page for additional information)*

Continued from previous page -- See links below for videos of the rescue of Courtship taken from the freighter:

<http://www.latitude38.com/lectronic/lectronicday.lasso?date=2009-01-21&dayid=220#Story4>

<http://www.latitude38.com/lectronic/lectronicday.lasso?date=2009-01-23&dayid=221> (Scroll down to get the rest of the story from the new owners who lost the boat.)

If you enjoyed this true story, SCOW member Henry Yung recommends ***After the storm: True Stories of Disaster and Recovery at Sea*** by John Rousmaniere.



**Next Membership Meeting: Monday, April 13, 2009**

**Location:** American Legion Post, 400 Cameron Street, in Old Town Alexandria

**Time:** Socializing downstairs begins at 6:30 pm and the meeting begins upstairs at 7:30 pm.

**Guest speaker:** Rico Newman, National Museum of the American Indian

Membership Meetings	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month, American Legion Post, 400 Cameron Street, Alexandria -- Social hour at 6:30 pm; program at 7:30 pm
Social Sail	Every Thursday, Washington Sailing Marina, April - October, 6:00 pm
Social No-Sail	Events and locations vary, December - April, 6:00 pm
Board Meetings	1st Monday of every month, 7:00 pm (open to members)
Channels Deadline	15 <sup>th</sup> of every month. Submit articles to: <a href="mailto:channels09@scow.org">channels09@scow.org</a>
2009 Calendar	<a href="http://www.scow.org/calendar.html">http://www.scow.org/calendar.html</a>
SCOW Pictures	<a href="http://picasaweb.google.com/Sailing.Club.of.Washington">http://picasaweb.google.com/Sailing.Club.of.Washington</a>
SCOW Home Page	<a href="http://www.scow.org">http://www.scow.org</a>

### SCOW Calendar -- April 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 Social Sail	3	4 Cherry Blossom Regatta
	6 Board Meeting	7	8	9 Social Sail	10	11
12	13 General Meeting	14	15 Basic I	16 Social Sail	17	18 Basic I Water
19 Basic I Water	20 Cruiser I	21	22 Basic I	23 Social Sail	24 River Raft-Up	25 Basic I/ Cruiser I Water
26 Basic I/ Cruiser I Water	27 Cruiser I	28 Cruiser Racing	29 Basic I	30 Social Sail		

### SCOW Calendar -- May 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Basic I/ Cruiser I Water
3 Basic I/ Cruiser I Water	4 Board Meeting	5 Cruiser Racing	6 Basic I Scot Racing	7 Social Sail	8	9 Basic I/ Cruiser I Check-Out
10 Basic/Cruiser I Water Check-Out	11 General Meeting	12 Cruiser Racing	13 Scot Racing	14 Social Sail	15	16
17	18	19 Cruiser Racing	20 Scot Racing	21 Social Sail	22	23 Bay Event
24 Bay Event	25 Bay Event	26 Cruiser Racing	27 Scot Racing	28 Social Sail	29 River Raft-Up	30
31						

## 2009 SCOW Budget

### PROJECTED INCOME

Member Dues	18,500.00
Training Fees	14,585.00
Boat Use Fees	
Cruiser Use Fees	1,750.00
Day Sailors Use Fees	7,360.00
Both C+DS Use Fees	11,970.00
Other Income	
Boatique Sales	700.00
Raffle Sales	300.00
Social Events	1,000.00
Re-up Brunch	500.00
Hail & Farwell Sales	5,400.00
H&F Raffle	700.00
Interest Income	2,500.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>55,265.00</b>

### EXPENSES

<u>Administrative Expenses</u>	
Bank Charges	200.00
D.C. Corp Fee	100.00
Storage Rental	600.00
Recognition and Awards	1,200.00
Communications	
(postage, copying and printing)	1,000.00
Am Legion Meeting Room	2,200.00
Membership Directories	1,200.00
P.O. Box Rental 90.00	
Web Site Upkeep/ Upgrades	700.00
Misc. Admin	1,000.00
<u>Fleet operations</u>	
Boat Maintenance	9,055.00
Insurance	3,500.00
Slip Fees	12,000.00
Racing Fees	600.00
Boat Registration	90.00
Training Materials	4,100.00
Hail and Farewell	7,000.00
<u>Other Expenses</u>	
Boatique Inventory	800.00
Social Activities	1,000.00
Re-up Brunch	500.00
Afterglow	500.00
Picnics	200.00
River Activities	600.00
Training activity refreshments	250.00
Entertainment/Advertising/Meeting	
/New member recruitment	1700.00
Skipper/Check-out refreshments	200.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>50,385.00</b>
Minimum Transfer to Boat Asset Fund:	4,875.00
<b>Total Expenses and BAF Transfer:</b>	<b>55,260.00</b>

**Estimated Net Savings  
(to operating fund):** 5.00

## Budget Report

Now for the boring stuff. I know, we all joined this club for the fun stuff. But that only happens when the club's finances are being properly managed, and that starts with the budget. When preparing this year's budget, the Board looked at the mission and priorities of the club, as well as previous year's budgets. The Sailing Club of Washington is a 501(c)(7) organization -- legally, a social club. The club Bylaws state that the club shall provide its membership with opportunities to sail, to exchange information about sailing, to learn safe boating procedures, and to meet others in the Potomac River/ Chesapeake Bay area with similar interests. Keeping this mission statement in mind, we tried to figure out the magic formula for this year's budget.

In 2004, the SCOW Board of Directors approved the current Boat Use Policy. They wisely clarified the priority for boat use as follows:

- 1. Maintenance** – Boats may be taken out of service if an unsafe condition requires repair. In addition, scheduled maintenance days or special projects authorized by the Maintenance Director take priority over any other use.
- 2. Training** – Training will normally leave at least one boat of each type available for individual use; however, if a boat previously scheduled for training is out of service, then individual use will be preempted. In addition, the Board-approved Training Policy identifies courses in which use of all club boats is authorized.
- 3. Social Sail** – Thursday evening from 1700-2400 all boats are reserved for Social Sail when a Social Sail is scheduled.
- 4. Racing** – Tuesday evening from 1700-2400 all boats are reserved for racing when Board-approved racing is scheduled.
- 5. Board-Approved Club Functions** – These include events such as “river cruises,” the Leukemia Cup, etc., for which the Board has specifically authorized the boats to be reserved and used. A balance will be struck so that club functions in addition to those noted above do not unduly impinge on individual use.
- 6. Individual Use** – Paid-up Skippers may reserve boats for their personal use.

The Bylaws require certain funds to remain in bank accounts (see Bylaws: Boat Asset Fund and Reserve Fund). Because of this, there is often the misconception that the club has a lot of fluid assets, and this sometimes leads people to think that we should go out and start spending. Sometimes there are arguments over whether the Board is spending too much or being too frugal. Fortunately, the Board doesn't have to make these kinds of decisions on our own. The Bylaws require two committees who help guide Board decisions when it comes to money. These are the Boat Asset Committee (BAC) and the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee looks at the accounting to make sure we know where all the money is, and the Boat Asset Committee evaluates the condition of our club property and makes recommendations to the Board for major purchases. The BAC serves an especially important role for the Board, in that they act as an independent “think tank” who can look at all the details and come to a well-informed position. Before the Board makes any major spending decision, the BAC is asked to look at the situation. The BAC makes a recommendation to the Board; then the Board discusses the recommendation and votes on what direction to take.

By consulting the guidance provided in the Bylaws and the Boat Use Policy, and relying on the advice of the BAC, the Board will do our best to spend the club's money wisely.



### 2009 Board of Directors

Position	Name	Home	Alternate	E-mail
Commodore	Lisa Eller	423.360.6899		commodore@scow.org
Vice-Commodore	Bekki Lasell			vice@scow.org
Secretary	Lisa Carr	703.750.7851		secretary@scow.org
Treasurer	Chris VonGuggenberg	703.683.6649		treasurer@scow.org
Training Director	John Eller			training@scow.org
Maintenance Director	Nancy Eikermann			maintenance@scow.org
Social Director	Faith Rodell		301.674.9324	social@scow.org
Skipper Director	Brett Astmann		202.360.0512	skipper@scow.org
River/Bay Activities Director	Terri Nachazel	703.328.0118	703.715.2407	river@scow.org
Racing Director	Mary-Sophia Smith		202.213.5325	race@scow.org

### Other Key People

Channels Editor	Marty Taylor			channels09@scow.org
Advertising	Nick Gull			advertising@scow.org
Email Administrator	Jeff Teitel	202.271.1238		postmaster@scow.org
Membership Coordinator	Henry Chang			members@scow.org
Web Editor	Jan Iler/ Nick Gull			webmaster@scow.org
Photos on Web	Alice Starcke	703.971.7755	703.971.7773	pictures@scow.org

### For information about club activities

Visit <http://www.scow.org> or email [info@scow.org](mailto:info@scow.org)