
ChaNNels

The Newsletter of the Sailing Club of Washington

February, 2002

Commodore's Log

WOW! Have we gotten off on the right foot, or what? I don't know about you, but after Gary Jobson's stirring presentation to the club during our January meeting, I wanted to get out on a sailboat right then and there, and commence on the adventures he'd described. Of course, it was about 35 degrees, very dark and I was wearing a business suit, so it wasn't something I could really do right then. But spring can't be too far down the road. Can it?

At any rate, it was a great opportunity to learn about the joys of sailing, both in competition, and just cruising. And I hope you were able to be there and enjoy it as much as I did.

But despite winter's best efforts, soon sailing season will indeed be upon us! And in anticipation of that, your 2002 SCOW Board spent all day January 5 making plans for a fun-filled year of SCOW happenings. At that meeting, we also made a couple of decisions that we think will keep SCOW a strong and active club, not just for this year, but into the future. I want to devote this Commodore's Log to telling you about those decisions.

1) Increase in Dues and Skipper Fees

The Re-Up Brunch is scheduled for Sunday, March 3 and this year there's more reason than ever to renew your membership and skipper fees early. As of March 11 (one week after the Re-Up Brunch), dues and skipper fees for 2002 will be increasing slightly. Dues - which have not been increased since 1997 - will increase to \$45 for individuals (from \$40) and \$70 for household memberships (from \$60). Skipper fees - which have not been increased since 1996 - will increase to \$90 for Flying Scots (from \$80), \$125 for the cruising boats (from \$110) and \$160 for both the Scots and the cruising boats (from \$140). So, if you renew at the Re-Up Brunch, or by mail postmarked by March 11, you will be eligible for the old fees. That'll save you enough for those sailing gloves you've been eyeing, maybe a couple of Flying Scot winch handles or some beer for your next cruise.

These increases are not large, but they are necessary. The reason is simple. Costs are increasing and a vast majority of our income comes from member dues and skipper fees. We need enough income to pay our expenses and allow a small cushion for emergencies. For example, about half of our income goes to cover fleet operations -- insurance, slip fees and maintenance for our five boats - the ones we all enjoy at Social Sail, training, River Cruises, and for our own use. Those costs have been going up at roughly ten percent a year and we simply cannot avoid paying them. In addition, the administrative costs of running the club have been going up.

We're not in dire straits yet - not by a long shot. Last year, our income exceeded expenses and we have money in the bank. However, the fact that costs have steadily increased since dues and fees were last adjusted has now put the club's finances right at the "break even" point. The Board felt that the club had to increase dues and fees now, before an unexpected emergency pushed us beyond the "break even" point into a financial crisis that could endanger the club.

The dues increases are as nominal as we could make them: five dollars for a single membership and ten dollars for a family membership. The same with the skipper fees. It costs \$20/hour to rent a Flying Scot at the Marina, so the Flying Scot skipper fee has been increased by the price of one-half hour of rental time. The slip rental alone for a cruising boat costs \$1800, so we don't think anyone can argue that the new cruising boat fees are still not an incredible bargain. And don't even get me started on the cost of owning a boat! SCOW still strives to make sailing accessible to a large number of people, and this new fee structure will still achieve that objective.

These increased fees will allow us to continue to grow financially as a club, and keep up with increases in the cost of doing business. In addition, down the road a few years, they may allow for club activities to expand further and provide more opportunities, both sailing and social, to our members.

But this year, you've got an incentive to renew your membership (or join in the first place) sooner, rather than later - if your dues and skipper fees payment is postmarked by March 11, 2002, you can still join at the old rates! The re-up notices will be going out this month, so don't hesitate to send them back right away.

2) SCOW E-mail List to be Purged

One other bit of business we'll be taking care of this spring is the purging of SCOW's e-mail list, something that's never happened in the history of the club. Right now, our e-mail list consists of hundreds of people, many of whom are not paid-up members of SCOW. By being on our e-mail lists, they receive notices of SCOW events, opportunities to crew, this very newsletter, and access to a vast majority of the club's communications. But we feel that this access to club communications should be a privilege of club membership. Therefore, at some point after the re-up period, we'll be creating a new SCOW e-mail list (and Channels list too) that will just contain paid-up members of SCOW. Hopefully, this will inspire some former members who haven't renewed in a while to come forward and renew their membership.

The Board thought hard about these decisions and I hope you'll agree with us that they were necessary for the long-term health and growth of our club. Given that many of you will be "grandfathered" in at the old rates one last time, our club won't feel the full financial benefit of these changes until next year, so this isn't about the 2002 Board. This is about the long run and making sure our club will be able to continue well into the future.

If you'd like to discuss these issues, or any others with me, I'm available. Please e-mail me at
commodore@scow.org.
Or call me at home (703) 838-0645.

National Maritime Heritage Foundation to Present at February Meeting

Our program for February will be a presentation by a representative of the National Maritime Heritage Foundation (NMHF) on tall ship building and preservation. NMHF, based in Northeast D.C., is in the process of designing and building a tall ship which will resemble an 18th century American schooner. The ship - to be named THE SPIRIT OF ENTERPRIZE - will be a 140-foot double topsail schooner, circa early 1800s. It will be used as an educational resource and goodwill ambassador for our nation's capital. The NMHF representative will discuss how tall ship replicas are designed, funded and crafted.

The National Maritime Heritage Foundation currently operates the FEDERALIST, a 15-foot, three-masted bark, replica of the original Federalist which was presented to General George Washington in the late 1780s. NMHF is also chairing the AMISTAD Host committee which will bring the historic freedom schooner replica from Connecticut to Washington D.C.'s Southwest Waterfront as a special guest of the 2002 Cherry Blossom Festival.

The meeting will be held Monday, February 11, 2002 at the American Legion Hall, 400 Cameron Street, (around the corner from Gadsby's Tavern), in Old Town Alexandria. Socializing begins at 6:30 p.m.; The meeting will be at 7:30 p.m.

Attention Bay Skippers and Bareboat Skippers

There will be a meeting for all Bay and bareboat skippers on Monday, February 11, 2002 at 6:00 p.m. (prior to the February membership meeting) at Pat Troy's Restaurant and Pub in Old Town, 111 North Pitt Street - not far from the Legion Post where our monthly meetings are held. This meeting is for anyone who owns a boat on the bay, or is interested in/qualified to charter a bay boat and participating in SCOW Bay activities.

Together at that meeting, we'll plan the 2002 Bay program, and get your input on what SCOW activities you'd like to have on the Bay, along with when and where. We'll also be looking for a Bay skipper to take the lead in organizing each event.

As you will read in a related article, two Bay Skippers - Mike Geissinger and Len Zuza - are already spearheading two Bay activities.

There are a lot of other possibilities already on the table, including trying to watch the Volvo Ocean Race restart, as well as the usual raftups and the like.

If you have any questions or comments about the SCOW Bay program for 2002, contact Matt Gaston, Commodore, at commodore@scow.org or Jon Allen, River and Bay Director, at bay@scow.org.

See you at Pat Troy's on the 11th!

2002 Bay Program Off to a Great Start

Two SCOW Bay Skippers already have stepped up as volunteers. Mike Geissinger and Len Zuza are going to be organizing a sail to an Orioles game in August, as well as a passage to Cape Cod during May and June.

Yep, that's right, Cape Cod. Mike Geissinger and Len Zuza are looking for crew to help them on a cruise from the Chesapeake Bay to the Cape Cod - Martha's Vineyard - Nantucket area and back between May 18 and June 8. They also welcome any other SCOW skippers who would like to join them.

Although the trip is in the preliminary phases of planning, several details have begun to emerge:

1. The cruise will be broken down into (probably) six legs. Crew can join for one or more segments. Each leg will probably last between 2 to 4 days. Every effort will be made to select crew-change locations that will be (relatively) easy to reach.
2. Crew will arrange their own transportation and bring provisions for the leg(s) of the cruise in which they will be onboard.
3. Crew will share costs of provisioning the boat. The skippers will pay for boat-related costs (slips, fuel, water).

Len Zuza set up a similar trip in 1986 for the rededication of the Statue of Liberty and more than a dozen SCOW members participated. One marriage resulted from contacts made during that cruise - though no guarantees are offered on this trip. This is an excellent opportunity for "serious" sailing offshore with experienced skippers who will stress safety.

The cruise will be broken down into small increments to facilitate logistics. The outbound leg will go from the Bay to Cape May and then to Woods Hole. The skippers plan to spend the next week in the Cape Cod area over Memorial Day weekend and then start the return trip through Long Island Sound to New York City. Although Mike and Len do not plan on spending any significant time in New York, the route will take them close to the site where the World Trade Centers used to be. The final legs will go from NYC through Cape May and then back to the Bay either directly along the Atlantic coast or through the C&D Canal.

Mike and Len are eager to have as many SCOW members - skippers and crew - as possible join the cruise. They will provide more information during the February meeting.

Re-Up Brunch

Save the Date! Sunday March 3rd is the 2002 SCOW Re-Up Brunch at The Colonies in McLean (same place as last year's and same place as the December Holiday Party). The Brunch runs from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., but, as the old salts know, "the early bird gets the best crack at the food". The purpose of the Brunch is for members and prospective members to renew their membership (or join), renew skipper status for Flying Scots and cruising boats, sign up for a sailing class and purchase things from the SCOW Boatique. In other words, bring your checkbook!

As in previous years, you can pay at the door or bring a dish (dishes are encouraged). Bloody Marys, Screwdrivers, Mimosas, Coffee and non-alcoholic beverages will be provided by the Club.

Susan Batchelder is coordinating the event. Please RSVP to Susan at vice@scow.org or 703-519-9844 (h) or 703-519-4680 (w) and let her know how many people are coming, what you're bringing (or if you're paying) and please feel free to volunteer to help with set-up, clean-up, bartending, money collecting, director assistance, and general help to get this thing off the ground.

Thanks in advance for your participation. We couldn't do it without you!

Racing News

Bill Bernhards

Is it cold and dismal outside? Don't worry, there's a ray of sunshine coming soon. How do I know? Because plans have already been made for SCOW's racing season! So get our your calendars and start writing down these dates.

On February 11th, the next members' meeting, a sign-up sheet will be available for crewing on the Tuesday night Big Boat Racing series. SCOW enters our two cruising boats in this exciting and challenging series of races starting April 23rd. There are a limited number of spots available and to be included, your name must be on the sign-up sheet, as the racing skippers choose their crew from this list. Another sign-up sheet for the skippers will be available at the meeting for all those who want to be a racing skipper in the series. To sign-up, you must be a cruising boat skipper in good standing with SCOW, and pass a written "racing test". If you have not taken the test, there is still plenty of time. Contact our skipper coordinator, Barry Dunsmoor, and he will get it to you ASAP. The lottery for being a skipper in the Big Boat Racing series will be held at the April 8th members meeting.

The next date to mark on your calendar is April 20. This is the date for our second annual "Spring Tune Up" race. This race is held in conjunction with DICF (Dangerfield Island Cruising Fleet). Last year we had about 15 big boats race and one Scot. This year we anticipate even more big boats and I hope all of our Scots will join in as well, or BYOB (bring your own boat!) Prizes and a picnic are in the planning stages now.

Another important date is May 7. This is the beginning of our Tuesday night Flying Scot races. These races are very informal and you do not need to sign-up. At 6:00pm, just show up near the dock cranes, find the Committee Skipper, and he or she will get you in that night's race. These races became very popular last year, and they are a great way for new skippers to practice and for newer members to get out on the water, learn to sail and meet other club members.

So if you're still feeling the winter blahs you can either hop on a plane for St. Thomas or at least be thinking warm thoughts about the coming season.

River

Jon Allen

This year we have even more events scheduled than last year. We'll have a river cruise almost every month and two all-day raft-ups at Smoots Cove. Several of the river cruises are taking place on Sunday afternoons, but most are on the traditional Friday night.

For those of you who have never been on one, a river cruise is a great way to get club members (both new and old) on the river in the cabin cruisers and having fun. We usually start around 7 PM, sail down (or up) the river, and arrive back at the dock around 10 or 11. The two club boats go out with volunteer skippers. Club members who own boats are also encouraged to participate. Crew are required to bring libations and snacks for the night. The best cruise is during the Alexandria Waterfront festival where you will have the best view of the fireworks.

The all-day raft-ups will occur in July and August at Smoots Cove near the Wilson Bridge. We'll sail down in the late morning, tie-up for a day of eating, drinking and swimming, and return to the dock after dinner. Last year we had eight boats show up and it was a great day! Remember to bring your super soakers!

If you have any questions about river activities or want to volunteer as a skipper, email me at river@scow.org.

Happy cruising!

Training

Donna Cohen

We have just set the dates for most of the classes (see calendar for details), and are still planning to schedule a few more during the year. Already on the calendar, and new this year, is an intermediate sailing course with a class size of nine students. We have also scheduled at least two Beginner Cruising and Beginner Sailing Courses, a few capsized courses, and are hoping to offer a refresher course which will be announced later on. Sign-ups for all courses will open at the RE-UP Brunch on March 3.

If you are interested in being certified as a trainer or are a trainer, please send your name and contact information to training@scow.org. Train the Trainer Day will be held on Saturday, March 23. Indeed, if you haven't been asked to train and would like to, please step forward. Now is the time to come to the aid of your club!

Social Activities

Shonika Proctor

Good Day, Good People. My name is Shonika and I am the Social Chair. I am sorry that I did not get to introduce myself in the January issue of ChaNNels, but I was too focused on getting the Gary Jobson details finalized that I missed the deadline. Also, the Commodore was still a little partial to his former position, so I had to let him work it out of his system.

At our January Membership Meeting, Gary Jobson, World Renowned Sailor, ESPN Sailing Commentator, Leukemia Cup Chair and Author, etc., etc., gave an outstanding 90-minute multimedia presentation. Our first membership meeting was standing room only, which was a great way to kick off the 2002 sailing year! The 2002 Board thanks everyone for coming and showing their support and enthusiasm.

We would also like to see all of those same smiling faces and some at Mango Mike's Caribbean Party (Feb. date TBA soon) and at our March Re-Up Brunch on Sunday, March 3rd at The Colonies! Vice Commodore Susan, will be the major organizer for this event once again and we could use volunteers to offer help in any way possible (admin., social, set up, clean up, bartending). If you are interested please email Susan at vice@scow.org! Look for your invites in the mail!

Last but not least, I would like to introduce Sharon representing Hexagon. Look for her email regarding Hexagon, the Political Satire Comedy. She will once again be selling tickets at the March Re-Up for this event.

Who else will be at the March Re-Up??? Guess you have to come to find out.

Membership Meetings

On the second Monday of each month (except December) at the American Legion Hall, 400 Cameron Street (around the corner from Gadsby's Tavern), Old Town Alexandria, Virginia. Socializing starts at 6:30 p.m. downstairs, and our meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. upstairs

Submissions to Channels:

Just type or paste your article into the body of an email message.

Don't send your articles as (or with) attachments.

Put a **title** on the first line,
your name only (not "by") on the second line,
and launch right into the article.

I know this is hard for you to resist doing, but-

**IF you include words in all caps, multiple tabs, indents, attachments, or extraneous notes,
your article will look kinda silly, or even totally unreadable.**

We will format (but not remove formatting, see above) your article,
adding emphasis, aligning tabs,
and doing all manner of things to present your article in it's assigned place.

Submit articles to
channels@scow.org
within one week after the monthly meeting.

Kelly E. Griffin, Layout Editor (the hard part)
Declan Conroy, Web Publisher
Kim Webb, Labels
Joan O'Kane, Editor
(I dress up the electronic edition too)

That's all, folks.....