

# ChanNels

The Newsletter of the Sailing Club of Washington  
February 2006

## Commodore's Log

### From the Commodore

February is one of our coldest and windiest months. That climate keeps all but the hardiest (and perhaps foolhardiest) off the water; so it is a good time for both crew and skippers to spend indoor hours reviewing safety and skills information for the sailing season to come. Dig out your sailing texts and safety materials and curl up in your easy chair. Or fire up the computer and surf the many sites available to the conscientious sailing enthusiast.

Reviewing safety procedures and skills are, without a doubt, the most important maintenance activity that a sailor can pursue.



**Here's the Commodore's  
First Mate!**  
"Can You Choose The Name?"

Dust off that treasured Coast Guard Safe Boating Course workbook or visit a boating safety website, such as [www.BoatUS.com](http://www.BoatUS.com), [www.boatsafe.com](http://www.boatsafe.com), or [www.boatingsafety.com](http://www.boatingsafety.com).

Review Crew Overboard (COB) procedures in your Basic Sailing or Cruising course notes **and** visit the following sites for maneuver descriptions: [www.cobevent.com](http://www.cobevent.com) (COB Maneuvers – Quickstop) and [www.sailnet.com/collections/articles/index.cfm?articleid=rmsma0033](http://www.sailnet.com/collections/articles/index.cfm?articleid=rmsma0033).

If you have taken a First Aid course, find the training materials and review them over a cup of coffee, or visit [www.mayoclinic.com/health/FirstAidIndex/FirstAidIndex/](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/FirstAidIndex/FirstAidIndex/).

Refresh your SCOW Procedures by reviewing the Skipper Information Files (SIFs) in the Scot and Cruiser Log Books. Read the SCOW "Launch and Haul" procedures for the Scots, attached to the tiller tie-down ring in each Scot. For Cruiser Skippers, review the SCOW "Prep and Shut Down" procedures and the equipment location guide posted on the cabin wall in each cruiser. Also, it wouldn't do any harm to review the cruiser systems materials in the onboard notebooks.

These procedures and other information will be covered at SCOW's annual Rub-Off-the-Rust event on March 25<sup>th</sup>.

Jan Earle  
Commodore  
Sailing Club of Washington

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**Talk Like a Sailor, by Henry Vice Commodore (More terms Next Month!)**

This is the first time I address the club as Vice-Commodore. Following our tradition started by our very own Jay Weitzel, I will try to add some colorful salt to our Talk Like A Sailor column after Jay's and Bill's footsteps.

I wonder if deep beneath the friendly and courteous that face we show at club functions and activities, there is a pirate of the Caribbean hidden, waiting to surface. Since some of us are heading to the Grenadines coming February, this may be a good time to sharpen up those Pirate terminologies that may come in handy. Here are some!

**AVAST:** A nautical term meaning "What's up?" or "What are you doing?"  
Example: "Avast, me matey?"

**PIECE OF EIGHT:** Spanish silver coin, often cut into pieces to make change.  
Example: "We be searching the high seas for Long John Silver's lost *Pieces of Eight*."

**WALK THE PLANK:** A dire punishment in which one must walk off a wooden board on the side of a ship and fall into the ocean.  
Example: "The scurvy scoundrel stole me favorite pirate hat; I'm going to make him *walk the plank!*"



**Websites recommended by the Commodore**

Even experienced sailors and skippers should review basic equipment and maneuver terminology, sailing maneuver procedures, knot-tying, and local knowledge of weather, tides, and waterways. Crack open those basic sailing textbooks or head for the web. Websites for **how-to-sail** include:

[www.sailing.about.com/cs/learntosail/](http://www.sailing.about.com/cs/learntosail/),  
[www.scils.rutgers.edu/~elfow/howto.html](http://www.scils.rutgers.edu/~elfow/howto.html), and  
[www.2020site.org/canoe/sailboat.htm](http://www.2020site.org/canoe/sailboat.htm).

**Knot-tying** is presented on [www.foreandaftmarine.com/knots.htm](http://www.foreandaftmarine.com/knots.htm), [www.marine.com/bk\\_knots.htm](http://www.marine.com/bk_knots.htm), and [www.boatsafe.com/nauticalknowhow/boating/7\\_1.htm](http://www.boatsafe.com/nauticalknowhow/boating/7_1.htm).

**Weather** information can be found at [www.weather.noaa.gov](http://www.weather.noaa.gov), [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com), and [www.accuweather.com](http://www.accuweather.com), as well as on other sites.

**Tidal charts** and tables are offered on [www.co-ops.nos.noaa.gov/tp4days.html](http://www.co-ops.nos.noaa.gov/tp4days.html) (MD/VA/DC-Washington National Airport), [www.tidesonline.com](http://www.tidesonline.com) (DC-Washington National Airport), and [www.scilib.ucsd.edu/sio/tide/](http://www.scilib.ucsd.edu/sio/tide/).

You can get a chart of the Potomac River from West Marine/BoatUS or from [www.gmcomapsandcharts.com/va.htm](http://www.gmcomapsandcharts.com/va.htm) (#10304 Potomac River from Washington DC to the Chesapeake Bay, \$4.95). Safe haven maps and descriptions are located in the Scot and Cruiser Log Books.

We are planning to add these website links to SCOW's website this year! So watch for those convenient new resources. In the meantime, use those "Wish-I-Were-Sailing" moments constructively!

**Next Membership Meeting:  
Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

The meeting's are on the second Monday of the month. Location is at the American Legion, 400 Cameron Street, in Old Town Alexandria (around the corner from Gadsby's Tavern). Socializing downstairs is at 6:30 pm and the meeting begins upstairs at 7:30 pm.

**Commodore First Mate!  
“Can You Choose The Name?”**

Commodore Jan has a new “First Matey” that needs a name. So, a prize is being offered for the best name submitted by Noon on March 12 (at Re-Up). The winner will be announced an hour after the contest closes. A “substantial” prize will be awarded (worth at least \$20). You need not be present to win but you must be a SCOW member. Names may be submitted by email to [commodore@scow.org](mailto:commodore@scow.org) or by submitting a written entry in person to Commodore Jan (please be sure to include your name!). You may submit more than one name entry. Historic, literary, and “cute” entries are all acceptable. Something more original than “One-eyed Jack” or “Pirate Pete” is preferred. You are welcome to request an introduction to the “First Matey” before submitting your entry. Selection of the winner is solely the right of Commodore Jan.



**Refurbished Motors  
are back on the Cruisers!**

**Caribbean Sailing**

Dear Fellow Scow-ites,

A group of us scurvy-sailor types have been planning a trip on the high-seas, to the piratical waters of the Caribbean, where the wind blows, the rum flows, and the dead men tell no tales!

**Help the Editor**

To facilitate the production of SCOW, please follow the following “Keys to Article Submission.”

**Keys to Article Submission**

1. When you e-mail the article, entitle it: **article submission**
2. When you submit photos for the newsletter, always include the names of people in each photo.
3. Submit your article by the **15<sup>th</sup> of the month**
4. Submit a full, written-out article
5. Submit your articles to [ChaNNels06@scow.org](mailto:ChaNNels06@scow.org) – **note the new email address!**

This applies not just to SCOW Board Members but also to SCOW freelance writers and photographers!

ChaNNels can also be read at:

[www.scow.org](http://www.scow.org).

Use any means, but email is preferred. If you would like a copy of the 2005 ChaNNels editorial calendar, please request via email to [channels@scow.org](mailto:channels@scow.org) or in-person at the next meeting. Thanks!

*Diana Combs Editor*

As the appointed Cap'n of this adventure, I find meself a bit short'o crew, preferring to cull from your prestigious ranks than to subject meself to the dregs from the press-gangs ashore. We be looking for one or two, er, "quality individuals" to help man the pumps, reef the sails, take a turn at the wheel, and of course, be willing to help out with the debauchery that will no doubt come in hand!

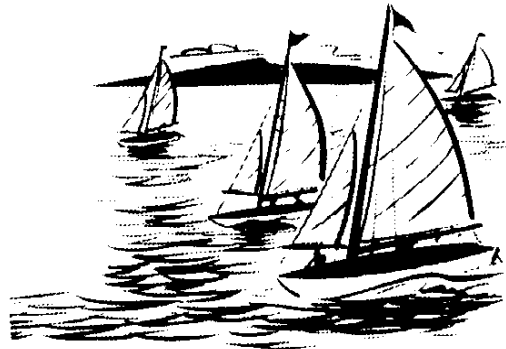
We will be sailing three sturdy craft, and I, along with Cap'n's "Johnny" Rogers and "Bobby" Soule are hoping maybe ye think yourself strong enough for such an adventure. The fleet departs St. Vincent in the Grenadines on Saturday, Feb. 4th, and returns Saturday, Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>.

If ye be intrigued by this opportunity, you can ring me or me first mate, Bobbi Philips, for more cajoling, er, discussion on this fine cruise. Ye can reach me anytime at 678-662-6203, or Bobbi at 703-757-7577. May the wind, and not yer enemies, always be at your back!

Arrrrrrggghhhh! Cap'n Tom

*With repetition comes good habits, with good habits comes good seamanship, with good seamanship comes security, and with security comes enjoyment. And after all, isn't that what we're looking for in the first place?*

**John Rousmainiere**



## **JONES POINT LIGHTHOUSE CELEBRATES 150 YEARS**

Located just south of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge on the west bank of the Potomac, Jones Point lighthouse is a small white frame house with a conical rooftop lantern. It is the northernmost of four remaining Potomac River navigation lights (originally, 11 lights existed). The Alexandria Port Lighthouse Board, established in 1852, approved work to begin on September 29, 1855, and the completed structure was lighted on May 3, 1856, 150 years ago this year. The original fixed white light was magnified by a 4<sup>th</sup> order Fresnel lens and burned sperm whale oil. It was reported to be visible for 9-12 miles.

In 1858, the fuel was changed to gas piped from the Alexandria Gas Works. This source proved unreliable due to pipe corrosion but no change was made until 1900, when the fuel was changed to kerosene. At that time, the light was changed to fixed red.

By 1918, river sediment had altered the shoreline to such an extent that in 1919 an automated 200-candlepower flashing white acetylene light was installed 100 yards east of the lighthouse, replacing the lighthouse as the official navigation light and ending the need for a full-time keeper. A 60-foot steel tower with a fixed green light was built on this same riverbank site in 1926 and the original lighthouse was officially deactivated. At this time, the lighthouse and the small parcel of land on which it stands was deeded to the patriotic society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), which restored the property, provided a full-time caretaker (until 1934), and opened the site for tours.

From 1936 until the end of World War II, the Army Signal Corps closed access to the property. By the time the war was over and the DAR was able to assess the property, the building and grounds were in very poor condition due to neglect, vandalism, and the Army's use of the building for target practice.

In 1962 the Woodrow Wilson bridge opened and the tower-mounted green light was deactivated, replaced by the lights on the bridge. The DAR deeded the property and preservation responsibilities to the National Park Service (NPS) in 1964.



## **JONES POINT LIGHTHOUSE CELEBRATES 150 YEARS (Continued)**

The NPS tried to sell the lighthouse and land to private developers in the 1980s but the sale was successfully discouraged by the DAR and the City of Alexandria. In 1986, with the assistance of the Mt. Vernon Chapter of the DAR (represented by Leona Kemper) and NPS historian Creg Howland, the NPS restored the outside of the lighthouse, but the interior remains unfinished and unrestored to this day. In 1993, a plastic 5<sup>th</sup> order Fresnel lens was installed and the bulb was re-lighted in the lantern room for the first time in 67 years. Although the fixed white light is no longer recognized officially by the Coast Guard, it is designated as a private aid to navigation. Because of bulb unreliability and bulb replacement difficulties, a plastic 155mm optic lens and multiple bulb changer was installed in 1995.

Reputed to be the oldest extant inland waterway lighthouse in America, the Jones Point lighthouse stands today at its original site at the confluence of Hunting Creek and the Potomac River. Located just east of the intersection of South Royal Street and Jones Point Road, at the south end of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, and south of the Woodrow Wilson bridge, the land surrounding the lighthouse is designated Jones Point Park. The grounds are open and free to the public. Both the lighthouse and the park are named for Cadwalader Jones, an English trader and map maker who built his cabin at Jones Point around 1699. The lighthouse is currently owned by the NPS and is on the National Register of Historic Places. Next to the seawall on the south side of the lighthouse stands the original South (and first!) Boundary Stone for Washington, D.C., laid with ceremony on April 15, 1791, and cared for by the DAR since 1915. A Virginia-Maryland boundary marker stands about 50 feet east of the lighthouse.

Sources:

U.S. Coast Guard - [www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/WEBLIGHTHOUSES/LHVA.html](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/WEBLIGHTHOUSES/LHVA.html)

City of Alexandria - [www.alexandriava.gov/recreation/parks](http://www.alexandriava.gov/recreation/parks)

National Park Service - [www.cr.nps.gov/maritime/park/jonespt.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/maritime/park/jonespt.htm)

Lighthouse Digest - [www.lhdigest.com](http://www.lhdigest.com)

Larry's Lights - [www.larryslights.com](http://www.larryslights.com)

[www.dcdar.org/BoundaryStoneLocations.htm](http://www.dcdar.org/BoundaryStoneLocations.htm)



<b>2006 Board of Directors</b>				
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#### **Other Key People**

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#### **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

#### **For Information about Club Activities**

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