
CHANNELS -- SPECIAL E-MAIL EDITION

February 1998

Channels is the newsletter of the Sailing Club of Washington. The E-mail edition is an edited text-only version of our hard copy monthly publication, and is normally available 15 days before the printed version.

Articles for Channels should be submitted via email to to the editor at sanlar@erols.com. Please paste the text of your article directly into the body of the message, and be sure that word wrap is off.

Commodore's Log

By Stuart Ullman

Barbara says this may be the warmest January on record. It's not like January at all, is it? The balmy days lulled us, and for a while we thought it was spring. So one Tuesday evening in early January we took Rebecca out for a quiet sail in light air---really very light air, just enough to give us steerage with the big green and yellow jib up. When we left the dock it was a clear, warm evening.

But the river was a January river. The water underneath us on Tuesday had been snow on Monday. It was not much above freezing. The cold water pulled the moisture from the air above it, and turned it into mist. The lagoon had a wild look to it, with white wisps very flat and low on the water: it was dark and primordial. The last light of the day was thinning quickly. As we approached the small boat docks the water was almost hidden by mist, so that we could imagine ourselves sailing on top of a cloud instead of through the water. It was an eery, beautiful experience.

I'm sure you can see where this is going. As we passed the end of the docks the cloud was halfway up Rebecca's side. Midway to the next daymark it was spilling over the rail. When we reached that mark it was over the mast, and we could barely see the ghostly outline of the trees on shore less than 20 yards away. We had many thoughts at once, and said them to each other at once: 'is this local, or is the whole river like this?' 'It was clear just a minute ago!' 'Should we turn back?' Somewhere deep in my mind the phrase 'one long, two short' began to agitate for my attention. But sailing had seemed such a good idea that I was reluctant to give it up as easily as that. Indecision and hope kept us going for a moment longer, and then the fog began to clear.

By the time we reached the last daymarks we could see pretty well, and what we saw was a strange, quiet, lonely river, a little softened and misty everywhere, but also strewn with

great sculptures of dense fog: pillars and spheres, and shapes you might see in a lava lamp. We were alone, and with good reason: we were idiots to be there. I am writing this as a confession, not a recommendation. We should have turned back as soon as we saw that fog was possible. In the lagoon, when we saw the rising wispy whiteness, and recognized that the air was warm and wet, and the water was very cold, we should have known that fog was out there. I should have known it. But it's easy to say afterward what you surely should have known at the time, isn't it?

We looked behind us and saw the thick mass we had just sailed through, and once again let hope overcome good sense. We thought: that may dissipate if we wait a while. So we sailed between the sculptures for half an hour or so. I have to admit that it was fun. But the sculptures kept getting fatter, and the space between them smaller. Finally we accepted what should have been evident from the start. We turned around and headed back.

The bank of fog across the marina channel had only grown bigger and denser, of course, and now all daylight was gone. As we approached the power plant we were already deep in it. We could barely see where we were. If this had been any other place on earth I would have found somewhere to anchor until the fog lifted. But in the end there is no substitute for local knowledge: I have sailed back past that shoreline so many times that I do the dead reckoning without thought. I knew where I was. Just when I expected them, the first pair of daymarks loomed out of the fog, and we passed between them in silence. After that I followed the depth gauge in, keeping just far enough off the shore to stay in six to eight feet of water---Rebecca draws four. Right on schedule the small boat docks appeared ahead of us, well lit and visible. We sailed out of the fog bank into a clear moonlit night on the lagoon.

I'm sure there are many good lessons to learn from this experience, but I'm not sure what they all are. Maybe you can tell me when we see each other next.

And now, your attention please, ladies and gentlemen. Your homework assignment this month is to review your Chesapeake Bay ecology in preparation for the February speaker. I recommend that you study by the following method: find a copy of a CD by Corey Harris called "Fish ain't Bitin'", and play cut 5, the title cut, repeatedly between now and then. There may be a quiz on this at the meeting, if I can figure out what a quiz would look like.

The speaker at the February meeting will be Dr. James Wesson, head of the Conservation/Replenishment Division of the Marine Resources Commission of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Vice Commodore Thom Unger and Maintenance guru Monica Maynard recently attended a talk by Dr. Wesson on the history and replenishment of oysters in the Chesapeake, and were impressed by the man and excited about his talk.

"Oysters???" I hear you exclaim: "You invited someone to talk to us about oysters?"

Well, yes. I know, I know, some people don't like eating oysters. I'm not a big oyster eater myself. But there is romance in the history of oystering on the bay---skipjacks, dredgers and tongers, real shooting oyster wars! And oysters have other virtues. I believe they are

the most efficient bay water treatment system there is, and the bay has been losing them for a hundred years. A century ago, oysters filtered all the water in the bay every seven days, according to a recent article in the Washington Post*. Now the population has dwindled so much that the same task takes them more than a year. The oyster population, the Bay's own cleansing mechanism, is now down to about one percent of its 19th century level. If you care about the Bay, you care about the oysters in it. Come listen to Dr. Wesson explain their past and about what we can hope for their future.

Oh---what about the Corey Harris cut? Well, OK, it may not really be a completely relevant treatise on ecology. But it is some pretty decent blues.

*"Oystering in the Chesapeake Bay", Cheryl Lyn Dybas, W. Post Horizon section, Jan 14.

On the River

By Alice Starcke

I'm looking forward to a great year of sailing, racing and other fun on the Potomac. To start the season, we'll have an evening Racing Seminar on Wednesday, April 22--for those new to racing and anyone who wants a refresher. The event is being planned by our Training Director, Scott Getzow, so watch his articles and course listings for details.

The Tuesday Night Races begin on April 28. Initially, I'm planning on short Flying Scot racing in the cove at WSM, with flag signals from the pier. We can do either a triangle course or 1-2 laps windward- leeward, with occasional downwind starts thrown in for fun. Lots of variations are possible with racing--the fun begins at 6 p.m. As always, volunteers will be needed to help with, mark setting, starts, and so forth. Ill be in touch with those who have indicated an interest in racing on membership forms and all others are welcome. Another option to explore again this year is participation in PRSA races on Sunday mornings.

Weekly Social Sail begins on Thursday, April 23. Social Sail, as many of you know, also takes much volunteer effort. After being elected to the board--first I freaked, then I calmed down and started planning. This looks like a HUGE job, and I know I will need many people to help. My first plan is to split the job of coordinating River Activities into two parts-- Social Sail and Racing/River Cruises. When I thought it through and figured out on paper exactly how much time and effort is needed to run both functions effectively, it really, truly looked like a two-person job to me. Particularly if each person is to be left with enough free time for sailing and otherwise enjoying leisure hours in the spring and summer. And I say that very sincerely, not just to try to skin down the size of my SCOW board workload. I also would like very much to put most of my energies into making our racing program even better, and having more river cruises.

Thus, I'm looking for one brave person to take on the job of coordinating Social Sail events for the year. This is the club's single most important new-member recruiting activity, so if you've ever thought about making a big contribution to the well being of SCOW, here's

your opportunity. You'll get my backing and a lot of freedom to run your own show. I have some ideas for ways to vary and perhaps simplify the planning of Social Sail, but looking at these options may require willingness to "think outside the box" and break with tradition. For example: think about a Social Sail Coordinator of the Month, a Social Sail Coordinator of the Week, a coordinated potluck, food purchased from the Marina snack bar, a set food price rather than "donate whatever you want to," OR combinations of the above. More details on this next month.

I welcome your suggestions and feedback. My e-mail address is alicems@compuserve.com.

**Great Social Skate!
by Denise Derry**

The first SCOW Social of 1998 was a success, thanks to those who skated despite early Monday morning alarms; and it was a *sweet* success, thanks to the efforts of the club's able bakers & chefs!

Nineteen of us were on the ice... most of the time... and three who are Weak of Ankle, came along for laughs. I'd venture that they were not disappointed!

I think the ice has become more slippery than the last time I skated. By pure luck, and the convenient arms of Thom Unger & Monica Maynard, I did not fall. Thom and Monica couldn't rescue everyone, though, so there were a few spills and thrills. Mighty impressive ones, at that!

Cathy Hess took high honors for grace as she lowered to one knee and slid along until eventually the other leg gave way. Monica Maynard received extra credit for falling with consideration given to those behind her - she kept her legs tucked under so she wouldn't trip anyone as they passed. Commodore Ullman however, gets the Gold for his full-fledged, arms-a-flail prat fall on his very first round. It would have made Chevy Chase of the old Saturday Night Live bunch very jealous! (And Stuart thought we weren't watching!)

Many others seemed to do well, and only a few needed moderate assistance from the railing. I don't recall seeing ice shavings on the jeans of Ron or Micky Pugh, Victoria Hampton, or Mike Tankersley... but then, I may have missed a few minutes while munching cookies...

The party/locker room was located right off the ice, and once we set up, it was THE place to be. We had sodas, cider, munchies, and sweets. Kudos to Kevin (don't-call-me-Cream-Puff) Teitel for his delicious (you guessed it) cream puffs! They disappeared as soon as the plastic wrap was removed. By the end of the year, I venture Kelly Bowers will be famous for her chocolate chip cookies - look for "Ms. Bowers'" shops coming to a mall near you! Thanks goes to Brenda Rascona - never have chips and salsa looked more elegant - and to Monica Maynard for her cookie contributions!

I'd like to add a special thanks to Susan Berman, without whom I doubt I would have been able to skate! She didn't skate for the first half of the evening, so volunteered to (wo)man the party room during it's busiest time. That was a tremendous help to me! Kelly Bowers took over for the last half, after her ankles told her to stop skating. Unfortunately, the cream puffs were gone by then.

Thanks, SCOW, for making it a fun night! Really, my feet don't hurt too much....

Training News
by Scott Getzow

Well, we have scheduled another busy year of training. We kick it off with a train-the-trainers day. All trainers from last year who wish to teach again should attend this meeting. The session is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, April 18, 1-5 PM, at the WSM's chart room. (There is also a rumor going around that a SCOW T-shirt will be given to those that attend).

The classes to be held through June are as follows:

The Basic Sailing course classroom sessions are on Wednesdays, April 29, May 6,13 and 20 all at the WSM chart room, starting at 7:30 PM. The water classes are on Saturdays and Sundays, May 2,3,9,10, and 16,17, with two classes a day, 8-12, and 12-4 PM.

There is tentatively scheduled a second Basic Sailing course, if sufficient demand exists. This one will also be on Wednesdays, June 10,17,24,and July 1. The water sessions will be on the weekends, June 13,14,20,21,27 and 28.

Like last year, a Cruising boat course will be offered. The classroom date is June 3 at 7:30 PM at the WSM, and the water classes will be held on June 6, and June 13, 8-5 PM, with a nighttime class on Friday June 12 from 6-11 PM.

Also, if sufficient demand exists, a Racing Seminar will be held on April 22, starting at 7:30, at the WSM chart room. This class was very popular last year, and I am sure it will again be this year.

Anyone interested in taking a course should contact me at the phone number on the back of Channels or at my address on SCOW's web page.

Basic Boating course- made easy!
by Shelby Shoop

The Potomac River Power (and Sail) Squadron, a local branch of the United States Power Squadron(USPS), is holding a one-day basic boating class called BoatSmart on Saturday, February 28, 1998. The USPS is not those folks who bring you mail and make the evening

news with words like "disgruntled" and "shotgun" in the copy. It is a nationwide boating organization devoted to boating education and fun on the water. I belong to the squadron that is presenting this seminar.

The BoatSmart class grants Maryland's Boating Safety Education Certificate, which anyone born after July 1, 1972 MUST have to operate a boat on MD waters. (Virginians, note that it does not matter where you live, but where you operate your boat!) There are good reasons to take the course even if you were born after the effective date. For instance, if you were born before 7-1-72, but you intend to teach your teenager how to drive or sail your boat in Maryland waters, you must have the certificate, and your child must get one. Taking the course even makes you eligible for USPS membership and more advanced courses like Piloting, Cruise Planning, Engine Maintenance, Marine Electronics and Celestial Navigation.

BoatSmart will be offered at Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut AVE., NW, Washington DC, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. The textbook is only \$16.00 (including tax) and there is no charge for the course. (This course is usually offered over 6 evenings with a \$26 materials charge, so this one is a bargain in time and money.) The instructor is an experienced Power Squadron member who volunteers his time.

I hope that some of you will take advantage of this opportunity. If you would like more information about BoatSmart or the Power Squadrons, you may phone me at 301-933-6672 or e-mail me at shelbyshoop@erols.com or phone Cleveland Leggett of the Potomac River Power Squadron at 202-526-0289.

One new member (first for 1998):

Linda Roszkowski

Gert's Favorite Oyster Loaf*

ingredients:

- 1 pint oysters
- 4 tsp minced onion
- 1 cup milk
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 4 T. melted butter
- 8 cups bread crumbs

directions:

Combine and form into a loaf. Bake at 400 degrees for 40 minutes.

*** Recipe from Gertrude herself.**

Oyster Pie Nero Wolfe*

**3 T. butter
2 shallots, minced
3 T. flour
1 T. finely chopped celery
2 tsp. finely chopped chervil
1 tsp. finely chopped fresh parsley
1 tsp. soy sauce
1/4 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper**

**3 dozen oysters, with their liquor
3 thin slices Georgia ham, cut in small pieces**

**sufficient puff pastry for a top crust
2 T. milk**

Melt butter in sauce pan, add shallots; when they are tender but not yet brown add flour & stir. When well blended add oyster liquor & stir, then add celery, herbs, soy sauce, salt and pepper. Simmer for 5 minutes.

Lay the oysters and ham in a large deep baking dish, and pour the sauce over them. Cover with puff pastry top crust. Brush with milk and bake for 5 minutes at 450 degrees. Lower heat to 350 degrees and bake until crust is delicate brown and well risen.

*** Recipe abbreviated a bit, but almost verbatim from 'The Nero Wolfe Cook Book', by Rex Stout, Viking Press 1973**

Grandpa's Oyster Stew*

**1 T. minced onion
1 T. minced celery
1 T. finely chopped fresh parsley
1 cup finely chopped mushrooms
2 T. butter
1.5 cups chicken broth
1 cup heavy cream
2 cups tiny drained oysters
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste**

In a large saucepan, saute onion, celery, parsley and mushrooms until tender but not brown. Pour chicken stock and cream into the top of a double boiler and heat until very hot but not boiling. Turn off heat. Add oysters and vegetables with their cooking liquids. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve in a generous bowl over crisp toast or with croutons.

*** Recipe abbreviated, but almost verbatim from 'The Pioneer Lady's Hearty Winter Cookbook', by Jane Watson Hopping, Villard Books 1996**

SCOW 1998 Approved Budget

Category Budget Total

Inflows:

Administrative
Interest Earned 100
Miscellaneous 100
Administrative Total 200
Boat Use Fees
Combo 2800
Cruisers Only 1200
Scots Only 4650
Boat Use Fees Total 8650
Boatique Sales Total 700 700
Member Dues
Associate 0
Household 3225
Individual 7725
Member Dues Total 10950
River Events Total 500 500
Social Revenue
Also Ran Picnic 150
Camp L. 500
Canoe Trip 750
Crab Feast 750
Fifty-Fifty 150
Hail & Farewell 2500
Halloween 300
Holiday Raft-Up 0
July 4th 300
June Picnic 300
Maintenance Picnic 150
Mardi Gras 750
Re-up Brunch 1150
Sep 4th 300

Social Revenue Total 8050

Training Fees
Basic Sailing 3800
Bay Nav 200
Capsize Class 100
Cruising Class 1100
Intermediate Sailing 100
Racing Seminar 300
Training Fees Total 5600

Inflows Total 34650

Outflows:

Administration

Assoc. Dues 85
Bank Charges 25
DC Corp Fee 100
Miscellaneous 200
PO Box Rental 60
Postage 90
Storage Unit 720
Category Budget Total
Supplies 50
Telephone Service 520
Administration Total 1850

Bay Activities Total 500 500
Boat Asset Fund Total 2500 2500
Boatique Outlay Total 300 300
Committees
Boat Asset 50
Safety 100
Training 100
Committees Total 250
Fleet Operations
Insurance 2500
Maintenance 3500
Registrations 80
Scheduler 500
Skipper Materials 250
Slip Fees 5700
Fleet Operations Total 12530
Member Activities
Awards 300
Directories 450
Elections 300

Meeting Room 2100
Print & Post 500
Programs 300
Publicity 300
Supplies 30
Member Activities Total 4280
Newsletter
Print & Mail 2500
Production 100
Newsletter Total 2600
River Activities
Racing 200
Social Sails 500
River Activities Total 700
Social Activities
Also Ran Picnic 150
Camp L. 500
Canoe Trip 750
Crab Feast 750
Fifty-Fifty 0
Hail & Farewell 2240
Halloween 300
Holiday Raft-up 500
July 4th 300
June Picnic 300
Maintenance Picnic 150
Mardi Gras 750
Re-up Brunch 1150
Sep 4th 300
Social Activities Total 8140
Training Total 1000 1000

Outflows Total 34650