

ChaNNels

The Newsletter of the Sailing Club of Washington

January 2003

Commodore's Log

As I look out on a snowy landscape and listen to the forecast of a coming ice storm, I recall the past year's sailing adventures; pleasant days and evenings aboard Tamarisk on the Potomac, racing in a fresh breeze aboard Swordfish past the Statue of Liberty on the Hudson and Upper New York Bay, manning the helm of Euphoria on the sunrise watch 60 miles offshore and bound for Cape Cod, and puttering about in the Scots after a feast from the SCOW Chow Dhow on Thursday eves. And I wonder what the 2003 season will have in store for us?

If the ideas and plans I've heard so far are any indication, the new year will be flush with new sailing adventures, great socializing among old friends and new, acquiring skills at the helm and as crew, engaging in hard labor painting, cleaning teak and scrubbing bottoms, contributing of ourselves for Special Olympics sailing and leukemia victims, and perhaps experiencing a few new nautical surprises at SCOW events to come.

As you read this, most likely you will have enjoyed the 2002 culminating event, the Holiday Raft-Up. Matt and crew set a fine example last year and leave us a good foundation on which to build. We thank you folks for your time and many efforts.

Your 2003 Board is already busy planning and seeks your ideas and volunteer time in establishing a course for a successful year to come.

Vice Commodore Susan Batchelder will be coordinating our meeting programs.

Secretary Monika O'Connor will be recording our every move and maintaining our data base.

Treasurer Graham Leadbetter will be assuring our fiscal stability.

River/Bay Director Jeff Teitel will be planning a host of events on the water both near and far.

Maintenance Man Tom Hannan will be coordinating several boat bosuns and crew to assure minimal time on the hard or stranded in the slip for our fleet.

Social Chair Rob Langford will have his hands full coordinating numerous events, the first of which will no doubt include cheering on your favorite in the Louis Vuitton and America's Cup finals this winter.

Training Maven Kris Bieg will be planning a full calendar of courses and seminars to help improve our water skills, and she needs help from you experienced skippers to assure that we can respond to the many requests of members adding to and just beginning their sailing logbooks.

Skipper Sergeant at Arms Steve Linke will be our quality control go-to guy by assuring safe and prepared boat skippers on our fleet and working closely with the training programs.

And Race Captain Kara Wald will be concerned with organizing events and going fast, and will likely be seen taking copious notes in front of the television during Louis Vuitton and America's Cup finals.

And it doesn't end there. Many other volunteers edit, manage an event, greet new members, type at the keyboard and write up plans and policies to make this sailing congregation the success that it has become and will continue to be.

You can be one of those volunteers. All these activities will need your time and energy and ideas so please be in touch with these officers and directors when the call goes out for help. Whether expert or novice, there is plenty of opportunity to pitch in, contribute, learn, enjoy and benefit from the experience.

I look forward to enjoying these activities with you, meeting new members and getting to know current members better. Our addresses and phone numbers are listed elsewhere in this issue. Call on us.

My best wishes for a healthy and happy 2003, calm seas and a steady wind to carry you.

Commodore George

January Membership Meeting
Monday, January 13
"Dress for Winter Success"

It's the middle of winter, so what better time to go sailing, right??

The January program will focus on how to dress appropriately to enjoy frostbiting or other sailing opportunities in the colder weather. Just because it's winter doesn't mean you have to put your sailing togs away and wait until May. Many people enjoy sailing year-round, even in the Potomac and Chesapeake areas. We will have a sort of "show and tell" with equipment and gear and several panelists to talk about winter dressing.

The meeting will be at the usual time and place - the American Legion Hall in Old Town Alexandria, 400 Cameron Street (check out www.scow.org for directions). Socializing starts at 6:30, with the meeting at 7:30 and the presentation at 8:00.

Psycho Repairs

Stuart Ullman, Thom Unger and Monica Maynard

Last year Rebecca stayed over the winter at the Fort Washington Marina to let the hull dry, and to do many minor chores and a few major ones to bring her back to good condition, and to make her fit for the demands SCOW makes of its' cruising boats. This year it's Psycho's turn.

Psycho is a classic Sparkman and Stephens design. If we were to list the kind of boat we might want for this club, Psycho's list of characteristics would fit that list well: she has a lot of sail area for her size (useful in our frequent light wind days during the summer months), a centerboard (for our shallow areas). She can perform brilliantly---our racing skippers know very well that with a good skipper she is much faster than her rating implies. She's also a solid boat that sails well and is forgiving of new skippers. Just over a year ago, when we had her professionally surveyed, she was declared fundamentally sound.

But Psycho is also an aging boat, and has looked it for the last several years. Her deck has deteriorated and her cabin is shabby and uninviting. Over the winter we plan to restore her deck, improve her cabin, and in general make various repairs to help make Psycho fit for all club uses. We have made a good start already, but we've just begun, there are still many tasks to do before she is launched in early April.

If you're interested in helping, please email Stuart Ullman, Thom Unger, and Monica Maynard at PsychoRepair@scow.org, and let us know what you're good at, or want to learn to be good at (umm, please limit that to sailboat repair, we can't help you with your other hobbies!)

Maintenance

“A Little Help from Your Friends”

Tom Hannan

It's been said that “both sailboats and people need a little love, and they need it when they need it, not when you decide you can give it.” Will you join your friends this coming year to see that our boats get all the love they need? We’re looking for a half-dozen bosuns (one for each boat, and one for the locker/shed area), and a support network of “experts” to get us over the rough spots. We’ll help one another get through the learning curve.

To be a bosun, you won’t need special skills; just a yeoman’s knowledge of basic tools (pliers, screwdrivers, etc.; read “novices welcome”), and great communications skills. When we come across a problem, we’ll poll our network for a practical solution, and document that for general use. These notes can evolve into a simple maintenance guide that can be used by everybody; folks’ll only call for help when they really need it.

“Messing around in boats” is understanding them as well as sailing them; many club members have recognized the need to know how things work in order get the best sailing results. Working as a team, we’ll put together a maintenance reference suitable for presentation to basic sailing

students. It can be expanded by other club members to include basic maintenance considerations for various member craft.

To sum up, we'd like to get everybody involved in maintenance, and we'd like to get ahead of the power curve by anticipating maintenance problems. If playing a key role in planning and helping to put these ideas to work appeals to you, drop a note to maintenance@scow.org, or give a call to 301-424-6296 and let us know how you want to help. You'll meet a great bunch of folks, and maybe have an affair with a boat.

Social Activities

Rob Langford

It's time to line up your social calendar! As SCOW's new Social Director, it is my opportunity to help plan out your social/sailing calendar for 2003. With that, let's start with the basics...

Social No-Sails

Thursday Night Social Sails are in their "cocoon" phase: Wrapped up against the elements, but still alive at the Crystal City Sport Pub. The "Pub" is a nice, large sports pub located near the heart of Crystal City. The management has provided us with a nice area of the bar all to ourselves.

The Pub is 1.5 blocks from Route One. There is a Metro Station within walking distance and street parking. The address to the Crystal City Sport Pub is: 529 23rd Street South; Arlington, Virginia. The phone number is 703-521-8215.

Keep the Crystal City Sports Pub in mind for watching the America's Cup in January and February. The finals to the Louis Vuitton Cup (the qualifying rounds to the America's Cup) take place on January 11 to 21, 2003. The America's Cup takes place on February 15 to March 1, 2003. All races are a best of Nine series. There is a plot afoot to get a crowd of hardy SCOW members together and watch the races at the Pub. Come experience the thrills, chills and excitement of racing on the open ocean off the coast of New Zealand! (You may see a Hobbit or two!) Watch for update announcements in January.

There are other events brewing for February and March, so keep a good watch set!

Want to Help?

Do you have any ideas for a social event? Please let me know. Anytime we can mix sailing and socializing is time well spent. If you have an idea, get in touch with me by e-mail at social@scow.org or by calling me at 703-934-7015.

Finally, I need volunteers! Come help or lead a social event at some time within the coming year. It is fun, and a really good opportunity to meet people. If you are interested in helping out, send me an email or give me a call.

With that, I will see you soon!

Training

Kris Bieg

Happy New Year to all!

Training will be starting after our annual Re-Up brunch on March 23 at the Colonies in McLean. We're looking ahead to an exciting year full of classes, mentoring opportunities and group sailing nights.

If you took our classes last year and have not yet completed the written or water skipper test, I'd like to hear from you. Our program is only a success if it meets your objectives. Some who take our classes do so in preparation for the skipper written and water exams. I'd like to hear what we need to offer to help you become a SCOW skipper. With the help of our volunteer trainers I hope we can offer a few review sessions for those still needing to pass the skipper exams. I can be reached through training@scow.org.

See you around the docks!

River & Bay Activities

Jeff Teitel

As I write this article winter hasn't even started (thought there is snow on the ground), and the new Board hasn't yet gotten together to formalize the 2003 calendar. So I don't have any actual news to report yet. However, here is what I'm thinking about for the year. Probably three or four Bay raft-up, plus a couple of day-sails. I'll be working with Jay Weitzel to set up four or five River cruises and perhaps an over-night (see Jay's article elsewhere in Channels). To prepare for this I plan to have a couple of meetings of the boat-owners - one for Bay and one for River. Since I don't want to wait until after the Re-up Brunch to get the latest membership information, I'd like to conduct a survey now.

If you own (or regularly charter or borrow) a boat please contact me with the following details. You don't have to be a SCOW member. You can reach me by e-mail at bay@scow.org or by phone at 202-271-1238.

Name:

Phone:

E-mail: (let me know if you DON'T want it to be on a mailing-list)

Address:

Boat Name:

Boat Make:

Boat Model/Length:

Fleet: (Please circle one) Upper/Mid/Lower Bay, Upper/Lower River, Trailer, Other
Marina:

Cruiser or Daysailer:
SCOW Member: Y/N
Ever Been to a SCOW Raft-up before: Y/N

If you have more than one boat please duplicate the above for each.

River Activities

Jay Weitzel

Yeah, OK, so it is cold, and wet, and icy, and snowing, and raining and I haven't seen my boat Needa Breeze for weeks much less sailed her, but, well, I can THINK about sailing, can't I? And if you have been thinking too, I'm looking for your ideas.

I volunteered to assist River and Bay Director Jeff Teitel by organizing the River Activities this coming 2003 season. Now, this is not exactly hardship duty since me, my girlfriend Kim and Needa Breeze, attend all the River events anyway. In fact, this is a great job since it means I basically recruit lots of you to come and join me for fun on the River, which means more fun for all of us.

Of course, Jeff and I are planning to organize the events that have been so popular over the past few years with our River Fleet: the monthly Friday evening river cruises and day-time weekend raft-ups. I'd like to include some of our smaller boats in the raft-ups; we normally draw only the cruisers and it is great to have a small boat or two to sail around in while the big boats are rafted. We'd also like to restart an old SCOW tradition of having at least one River Fleet overnight raft-up somewhere down-river.

What I'd like to know is -- Do YOU have any ideas for how to make SCOW's 2003 River events bigger and better or ideas for new or different River events that we should try this year? Any suggestions are welcome, even if you think they are "half-baked" they may lead to a good idea. And, I'm not just looking for ideas from skippers on the River Fleet -- if you are a member who would like to get out on the water on some event, tell me what type of event would appeal to you.

Get those emails started . . . please email me at JayWeitzel@aol.com. (Commodore Umberger owns a boat in the River Fleet, so he expects me to put on a good program.)

See you on the (when it gets a tad bit warmer) water!

The Sailor's Bookshelf

Tom Hannan

“Fighting Finish”
by Gary Jobson

Annapolitan and perennial sailing raconteur Gary Jobson has crafted an admirable accompaniment to your Taylor-Fladgate '77 and crisp walnuts before a crackling fire. The 9"x12" format brings to mind photographs, and this yearbook for the Volvo Ocean Race delivers them; over 260 in all, many full-page, almost all in ravishing color.

Subtitled "Round the World 2001-2002", the book is an exciting read as well. Jobson's mix of long-time insider (the dedication's to Ted Turner) commentary and behind-the-scenes participant quotes rushes it along at an exciting pace. The organization lets you make it your bathroom reading of choice, covering: the 7 teams and 9 legs of the 2001-2002 race, the 7 previous (Whitbread) races, and extensive crew listings and statistics.

The team write-ups, and a monograph on Volvo's picking up the reins, were eye opening. Three years of getting ready; financing, recruiting, organizing, training and shmoozing. The musical chairs reacquisition of Whitbread racers for training while new boats were built. What the sponsors sought to gain. The captains' philosophies. It's all here.

The race, though, is why we read. Fighting waterspouts and doldrums, seals and whales, bergs and growlers, the constant shifting between elation and dejection; that's what the racers experienced, and what we want to share with them. But they did it for 9 months. (My favorite quote is one scrawled above one of the pipeberths, "Is this a long race or what?") You can do it for minutes at a time.

"Fighting Finish" is a hefty book; the pages are double-thick glossy paper. After an all-day read, I couldn't believe the page count; I would have sworn it was twice as long. You owe it to yourself to go out and buy this book! Or, at least borrow the 5 Skippers' copy from Commodore George.

Details: Published by Nomad Press, Norwich, VT; 2002; 178 pp.; \$44.95 retail, \$31.47 on www.amazon.com, \$35.96 on www.bn.com.

SCOW Boats are Cover Models!

If you receive BoatU.S. magazine, take a close look at the cover of the January 2003 issue (or check out <http://www.boatus.com/news/reports.htm>).

Do these boats look familiar? Two of them are our own Ms Elli and Danschweida!

The caption on the hard copy is "Covered for winter, but not forgotten, are daysailers on the hard at Washington Sailing Marina on the Potomac River."

Thanks to Jay Weitzel for bringing this to the club's attention!

If you want to become a member of BoatU.S. and receive the SCOW discount, check out the November 2002 issue of ChaNNels or contact Larry Gemoets at larry.g@comcast.net.

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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.

Submissions to Channels:

Submit articles to channels@scow.org within one week after the monthly membership meeting. Any format is accepted, but email is preferred.

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