
CHANNELS -- SPECIAL E-MAIL EDITION

January 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 the editor atsanlar@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

Stuart Ullman Ah, the easy carefree life of a Whitbread sailor, I am thinking---it is January when you read this, and a cold, wet evening in December as I write. I am sitting inside Potowmack Landing, warming my body with the shelter of the building around me, and my spirits with a good frothy beer. Both of us, I think, are looking out at a damp winter, the air clammy and dense, the days short and darkened by thick clouds. We wish we could be sailing somewhere warm. Somewhere south. But that is just what the Whitbread racers are doing, isn't it? Leg 3 of the race, from Fremantle to Sydney, has just started in my time and leg 4, from Sydney to Auckland, will be underway in yours, but it amounts to the same thing: wonderful sailing around Australia, 50 or 60 degrees (which sounds tropical to me right now), with 15 to 25 knot winds. Sounds idyllic, doesn't it? A leisurely sail for those boats. Gentle. Lazy. Sailing in the Whitbread would be a blast, right? Nothing to it.

Well---to be fair I guess I should add that the race is not all skirting Australia in moderate winds. The Whitbread is the most grueling, difficult sailing race in the world, and perhaps the most grueling sports event of any kind. The local entry, Chessie Racing, sends daily reports which can be read on the Whitbread Chesapeake web page. (www.whitbread.org) Here are a few excerpts from the notes Grant "Fuzz" Spanhake, Watch Captain on Chessie Racing, sent home from leg 2, crossing the southern ocean toward Australia:

November 17: "The wind has shifted to the southwest, and kicked in to 24 knots. That means it is blowing off Antarctica. ... The water is like a fire hose at full speed, hitting you day and night.... Tonight we are expecting to be our coldest yet. I have everything I brought with me on, but even still my finger tips and feet are numb."

November 18th: " 29 to 38 knots of wind, pitch black night, flying along... on the edge of control as passed the Kerguelens...as Chessie's crew battle on without feeling in their feet or fingers...Chessie's crew are only sleeping between 3 and 6 hours in every 24. This has been the case for nearly 5 days now, and it looks like there is no letting up in the near

future. Today we were blessed with two snow storms, along with a 38 knots squall...I'm off now to a soaking wet sleeping bag to try and grab an hour before I go on watch again."

November 20th: "There is no other feeling in the world like hurtling along at 20-25 knots of boat speed into inky blackness, with the only light we can see being the five instrument read-outs that are like alien eyes glowing red...Today the spectra strop parted with a "large bang." Jerry had to have another trip to the "Sky Bar" (masthead) to replace the strop. The whip lash at the top of the rig is enormous in heavy air, and is even greater in light air as the seas take over the motion of Chessie."

OK. So I guess November was a bit rough. But that was last month, wasn't it? And from now on it's smooth sailing? No, not exactly. A worse leg is still ahead of them. On February 1 the fleet heads back to the Southern Ocean, even farther south than before, massive waves and giant winds and skittering among the icebergs in the frigid wet. From Auckland around the Horn to the eastern coast of South America, in boats built for speed and little else---certainly not for comfort.

Why am I dwelling on these people who are sailing so far away, halfway around the world? Because our speaker for the January meeting is a representative of Whitbread Chesapeake, who will show us the latest videos from the fleet, tell us about local participation in this race, and explain what events are planned to welcome these same people and this same fleet in April, when for the first time ever the Whitbread will be here, in our water, racing up the Chesapeake to Baltimore.

Well. I have been neglecting my drink while I wrote, and it clearly needs my attention now. But there are other things to say before I go.

This is the my first issue of Channels as Commodore, and I already feel the need to thank the 1998 SCOW board for their dedication. We held our first meeting in early December, nearly a month before the start of our official terms. At that meeting we planned the calendar for 1998, and you should be able to find it elsewhere in this Channels: cut it out and tape it to your wall, or magnet it to the refrigerator.

And note that the calendar starts immediately: there is a planned January social event, an ice skating excursion. Denise Derry provides details inside. So come join us---take the chance when it arises to throw off the grey restraints of winter. And between those chances, be grateful for quiet, warm shelter and the occasional good beer.

January 12th Program: Socializing starting at 6:30, Meeting at 7:30 American Legion Post, 400 Cameron Street in Old Town, Alexandria. Speaker: Scot Burge from Whitbread Chesapeake Inc. will bring us the latest news from Chessie Racing and the rest of the Whitbread fleet, and tell us about events planned for April, when the fleet arrives in the Bay.

Maintenance

Monica Maynard, Maintenance Director

I have the good fortune to follow Dick Dyer as maintenance director. He's done a great job and leaves his duties with our boats in good order. He deserves thanks for a job well done for the past two and a half years. By the same token, he's going to be a tough act to follow.

My goal is to make sure all our boats are in good repair, and ready for a safe sail. But I can't do it alone. I will rely on you, our members, to pitch in to keep our boats clean, safe and seaworthy. I'm here to coordinate our efforts and assure that all our boats get the TLC that they need.

We will have two boat maintenance days this year (each followed by a picnic, of course), one in the spring (April) and one in the fall (October). See you there!

Socially SCOW

Jim Metcalf **The holiday raft-up hosted by Nikki and Jack Goodman, and Pat Gerachis at the Colonies in McLean was a huge success. The sumptuous array of culinary delights demonstrated the manifold talents of the SCOW membership.**

Thanks to all who cooked, set up, cleaned up, and generally proved that "many hands make little work," and "a busy crew is a happy crew." Special thanks, once again, to Nikki, Jack, and Pat. It was a fitting way to end a wonderful year.....and hey, hey, hey, spring is just around the corner.

Submissions to Channels

Channels Articles are due one week after the monthly meeting. Please just paste your articles into the body of an email message. We will format it for you, so just give us the thoughts, not the formatting- it's difficult to remove six tabs from every line of your text, for example. If you must be fancy though, send it to us in RTF. Not everyone has the same word processor you do, and ironic as it may seem, the newer your version of wysiwyg, the less probable it is that someone else can read it -ed

Social Activities

Merri Ash As your new Social Director, I will do my very best to keep you occupied with a fun-filled social calendar for 1998. For example, January's ice skating party is being planned by Denise Derry (details elsewhere in this issue).

In February, we are going to have a **MARDI GRAS PARTY** on Saturday, the 22nd, at The Colonies in McLean, 8pm-1am. Start planning your costumes now (they are not required, but encouraged). We will have a DJ so we can dance up a storm. Cost is \$15.00 plus one item for the munchie table. Please RSVP by February 15th at 703-549-9094. We need volunteer bartenders - no previous experience required.

The re-up brunch is Sunday, March 15th, at The Colonies of McLean. Mark your calendar - details to follow.

I am also recruiting for members to serve on the Social Committee. Please drop me a line at mash08@aol.com or call me at 703-549-9094.

See you all at the parties!

Boatique Booty

Call Toni Boyd (703-549-5591) for all your SCOW clothing needs.

Winter Water Social

Denise Derry Wondering what to do, now that the holiday hub-bub is over? Please join us Sunday, January 11, 8:30 - 10:30 p.m. at the Fairfax Ice Arena, to embrace Winter Water!

Sailors love water - warm or cold - don't we? This SCOW social is during the calmest public session of the week: the hockey skaters are home watching football, massaging their feet, and the kids are home doing schoolwork. So if you haven't skated in a while, this is a perfect time to tune your rigging. They even have a machine to sharpen your skates - no excuses, please!

Phone, or e-mail Denise Derry of your intentions to attend, so she can give a rough count to the rink. They may want to arrange for additional referees to be on the ice, and extra ice packs in the freezer! Denise Derry 703-978-1666 dderry@jil.com

Skates can be rented at the rink for \$2.50 (figure skates)/\$3.25 (hockey skates). The group rate gets us in the door for \$4 per person; just let the person at the door know you are with SCOW when you pay the admission. Easy, huh? And cheaper than the movies!

We've reserved a party room off the ice rink to set up treats & sweets; phone Denise Derry if you'd like to lend your culinary flair to the event; she needs your help! We'll run it low-key like the summer Thursday night picnics. Who needs more pressure after the rush of Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas and New Year's?

Hockey teams use the party rooms right before the public skate session, so we won't have access to it until 8:50 - but we will all be skating for the first 20 minutes of the evening anyway! Small lockers can be rented for 50 cents in the main entry area.

We're looking forward to seeing you in January!

Directions: Fairfax Ice Arena is located just 3 miles outside the Beltway, and easy to find.

Take I-495 around toward Fairfax, VA, and exit on Route 50 West. Approximately 3 miles, just before Fairfax Circle, turn left onto Pickett Road, at the stoplight (Ruby Tuesday is on the corner). In approximately 1 mile you'll see the Arena on your left. Lots of additional parking is behind the arena if there aren't spaces in front.

Alternate path is to take I-495 to Route 236/Lil' River Turnpike, travel west approximately 3 miles, turn right at the Fair City Mall, onto Pickett Road. The Arena is approximately .5 miles on the right.

In case you need further direction, the address is: 3779 Pickett Road, Fairfax, VA, and the phone is 703-323-1131.

Marina Closed! Let's Go to King Street Blues

Jeff Teitel It seems that our illustrious marina watering hole, Potowmack Landing, has decided to close for the winter (again). Consequently, we need to find a new location for our Thursday night gatherings until April. After a brief discussion at the last Social No-Sail, we have decided that, until further notice, we will be meeting at King Street Blues, in Old Towne Alexandria. The address is 112 North St. Asaph Street - about 1 block from the where we hold our monthly meetings.

So, starting January 1st (for those of you not too hung over), we will be gathering at around 6:30pm every Thursday night at King Street Blues for tales of adventure on the high seas. We'll probably be on the upper floor, so look for us there. If you don't see anyone, hang around for a few minutes, one of us will probably show up.

Channels Needs You!

If you are interested in helping to produce our newsletter, Call Larry Gemoets at 703-823-2452. He is looking for someone who can devote time each month to the Desktop Publishing (DTP) effort, and also wouldn't mind an assistant (and eventually replacement) editor. If you are a DTP capable person, or a good proofreader, and can meet our "demands" (it must be on time!), then please consider becoming a member of the Channels staff.

SCOW 1998 Calendar

All Year:

Board Meetings Open to all. Potowmack Landing Chart Room 1st Monday of every month, 7:30

Monthly Meeting American Legion Hall, Alexandria 2nd Monday of every month, Social Hour 6:30, Program & Meeting 7:30

Thursday Night Social No-Sail King Street Blues, 6:30, Through April 16th

Thursday Night Social Sail -Washington Sailing Marina, 6:00, April 23 - fall

January:

11 Ice-Skating, Sunday, 8:30 to 10:30 Fairfax Ice Arena 3779 Pickett Rd. Fairfax. Info: Denise Derry, 703.978.1666

February:

21 Mardi Gras Party, Saturday, 8 pm - 1 am, The Colonies of McLean, \$15+munchies.

March:

15 Re-Up Brunch, The Ides of March The Colonies, Sunday

April:

5 Daylight Savings Begins Sunday, 2:00 AM

18 Train The Trainers Washington Sailing Marina, Saturday, 1 4 PM

18 Bay Raft-Up - Location TBD.

22 Racing Seminar Potowmack Landing Chart Room, Wednesday, 7:00 PM

25 Maintenance Day and Picnic Washington Sailing Marina, Saturday, 9 AM

29 Basic Sailing Class Series I

Land Classes: Potowmack Landing Chart Room, Wednesday at 7:30 4 Sessions: 4/29, 5/6, 13, 20

Water Sessions: Washington Sailing Marina, Saturday & Sunday 4 hour sessions at either 8:30 AM or 1:00 PM each day. 6 Sessions: May 3, 4, 9, 10, 16, 17

May:

15 Potomac River Raft-Up 3 days, starting Friday

23 Bay Raft-Up, Rhode River, Photo-Shoot Weekend 3 days, starting Saturday

30 Basic Sailing Checkout- Series I Washington Sailing Marina, Saturday

30 Social Event TBD Washington Sailing Marina, Saturday

June:

3 Cruising Boat Class Land Classes: Potowmack Landing Chart Room, Wednesday at 7:30 3

Sessions: June 3, 6, and 13 Water Sessions: Washington Sailing Marina 3 Sessions: Sat. 6/6, 8:00 am,

Fri. 6/12, 6:00 pm Sat. 6/13, 8:00 am.

10 Basic Sailing Class Series II Land Classes: Potowmack Landing Chart Room, Wednesday at 7:30 4 Sessions:

6/10, 17, 24, and 7/1 Water Sessions: Washington Sailing Marina, Saturday & Sunday 4 hour sessions at either 8:30 am or 1:00 pm each day. 6 Sessions: 6/13, 14, 20, 21, and 22.

14 Bay Raft-Up - Location TBD Weekend

20 New Member Event- TBD Saturday

July:

3 Fourth of July Bay Raft-Up - Len Zuza's in Solomons. 3 Days starting Friday the 3rd

4 Social Event- at Len Zuza's in Solomons

11 Basic Sailing Checkout Series II Washington Sailing Marina, Saturday

18 Capsize Course Series I Washington Sailing Marina, Saturday, 9:00 AM

18 Cookout/Picnic Washington Sailing Marina, Saturday, 4:00 PM

August:

1 Governor's Cup Annapolis, Saturday

8 Bay Raft-Up Weekend

15 Capsize Course Series II Washington Sailing Marina, Saturday, 9:00 AM

15 Crab Feast Washington Sailing Marina, Saturday, 4:00 PM

19 Intermediate Sailing Class Land Classes: Potowmack Landing Chart Room, Wednesday at 7:30 2 Sessions:

8/19, and 26 Water Sessions: Washington Sailing Marina, Self-Instructed 2 Sessions:

Saturdays: 8/22 and 29, 8:00 AM to 12 Noon

September:

4 River/Bay Raft-Up 4 Days starting Friday

12 Leukemia Cup Washington Sailing Marina

16 Bay & Coastal Navigation Land Class:Potowmack Landing Chart Room 1 Session: Wednesday the 16th, 7:30 PM Water Session:Chesapeake Bay 1 Session: Saturday the 19th

26 Also-Ran Regatta & Picnic Washington Sailing Marina, Saturday

October:

3 Camp Letts/Bay Rendezvous Camp Letts, 3 days starting Friday

17 Fall Maintenance Day Washington Sailing Marina, Saturday

24 Halloween Party Saturday

25 Daylight Saving Ends Sunday, 2:00 AM

November:

14 Hail & Farewell Saturday

December:

6 Holiday Raft-Up The Colonies, Sunday, 5:00 PM

Directory Update appears in this month's snail edition of Channels

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

Call 202.628.SAIL (202.628.7245) for information about club activities www.scow.org