

---

## **CHANNELS -- The Newsletter of the Sailing Club of Washington**

**May 2001**

---

### **Commodore's Log**

**Jay Weitzel**

**Ah, the joy of sailing. The thrill of making the wind do your bidding as you skim across the water. The sun, high in the sky, warms your skin . . . hmmm, do you think maybe you're getting a bit too pink? Who brought the sunscreen? And I think I'm getting a bit thirsty with all this sun. What do you mean, I thought you brought the water! Say, do you think we should worry at all about those dark clouds over there? You're right, at least they'll block the sun -- so let's see if we can sail to the Wilson Bridge before we have to return the boat.**

**With sailing season here, let's take a couple of minutes to review some things that will help make a day on the water safe and fun.**

**Before you even leave for the Marina, check the weather forecast. If you have computer access, you can get the current conditions at National Airport on the web at <http://weather.noaa.gov/weather/current/KDCA.html>. Note that this web address has changed from last year. Accuweather ([www.accuweather.com](http://www.accuweather.com)) will give you their own forecast as well as the National Weather Service forecast; or try The Weather Channel at [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com). Invest in an inexpensive weather radio or just listen to the radio or TV - but make certain that the station you use updates its forecasts constantly.**

**Because of its location between the Bay and the mountains, the Washington area has a tendency for afternoon thunderstorms throughout the summer, so it is especially important to check the weather before setting off for a late afternoon sail. Thunderstorms move at fifty miles an hour or more. At that speed, a line of dark clouds that seems quite far away can be on top of you, literally, in minutes. A storm on the Potomac River can be extremely dangerous -- a harbor patrol officer told me that they have to rescue a capsized boat almost every time that there is a storm. He cannot understand why people insist on going boating in threatening weather. So, don't give the harbor police more business. Use good judgement when there is the potential for threatening weather, no matter how much you have been looking forward to sailing that day. If the forecast is for a chance of storms -- a thunderstorm "watch" -- keep an eye on the sky, know where your closest safe harbor is, and plan a !**

**course that will keep you near to it. If there is a thunderstorm "warning," it means that storms have been sighted and are approaching. In that case, you should probably be cancelling your plans. As someone once said, it is better to be on shore wishing you were on your boat than on your boat wishing you were back on shore.**

**When you arrive at the marina, check the boat thoroughly. Is the rigging secure? Are the centerboard and rudder moving freely? Is all required safety equipment aboard and functional, including one PFD for each person plus a throwable cushion? Are the sails in good condition? Never leave shore with a tear in a sail. Not only is that sail unsafe, but you will ruin it by using it. If you are in a Flying Scot, is there a paddle and bailer? If you are in a cruiser, are the gas tanks full enough?**

**Is the wind sufficiently high that you need to reef the main sail? Unless you are a very experienced sailor, it is much easier to reef a sail at the dock than while underway. It is relatively easy to shake out a reef later. As one SCOW member said to me, "If you THINK you need to reef, then you do."**

**Now, give some thought to your crew. As the skipper you are responsible for their safety. Can they swim? Is this their first time sailing? If so, they should be wearing a PFD. Before you put the boat in the water, brief them on the use of emergency equipment and their duties while aboard. Also brief them on emergency situations, like capsizing and crew overboard. While on the water, remember before tacking or jibing to tell your crew what their duties will be, including any repositioning of crew needed during or after the maneuver. You don't want to be surprised in the middle of a jibe when a crewmember suddenly and unexpectedly moves to the wrong side of the boat.**

**Before you leave the dock, make sure that you and your crew have any other equipment needed for the anticipated conditions. If it is sunny, do you and your crew have hats, sunglasses and sunscreen? Do you have water -- you can easily become dehydrated on a sunny day and not even realize it. If cool weather is expected, do you have jackets or other appropriate clothing? If there is a chance of rain, do you have foul weather gear? If you expect your crew to work the sheets, do they have sailing gloves?**

**Have you told someone where you are going and when you will be back? Skippers of the cruising boats are required to file float plans, but those are only useful if someone happens to notice that a boat is missing. And, if you have a cell phone, bring it along in case of emergency. Finally, do you remember the rules of the road? It is useful each spring to look over the rules to refresh your memory.**

**With just a little common sense and a few precautions, you can make sure that every day on the water will be one filled with pleasant memories.**

**Fair winds and following seas.**

### **SCOW Email Update**

**The SCOW email system was down for a few weeks in early April, because the DSL provider went bankrupt -- yes, our club was a victim of the shake-out in the telecom industry! As a result, the April email edition of Channels was delivered late and internal**

club emails were not delivered during this period. Many thanks to Jeff Teitel, who maintains our email system, for getting the system back up and running so quickly.

### **"Nobody Yells" at May Membership Meeting**

Are you new to sailing and intimidated by the thought of going out on the water with a more experienced skipper? Or are you an able-bodied salt concerned about how you'll handle green crew? No matter where you fit into the sailing spectrum, you'll learn how to be more confident on the water and how to make sailing safe and fun at our monthly membership meeting, Monday, May 14th when Womanship Founder Suzanne Pogell shares practical skills about sailing safely without any yelling.

Pogell created Womanship, a premier sailing organization for women by women, to empower women on the water. Since 1984 more than 22,000 women from age 18-82 have learned how to take the helm and sail in fair or foul weather. Regardless of your gender or experience level, you're sure to enjoy Pogell's talk about safe sailing under any conditions on Monday night.

The program begins at 7:30 PM but come early for some food and fun starting at 6:30 PM at the American Legion Hall, 400 Cameron Street, (around the corner from Gadsby's Tavern), in Old Town Alexandria.

And please give a special thank you to our own Sergey Tagashov for sharing his fascinating research about the Russian maritime tradition with us last month. As always, please email me at [vice@scow.org](mailto:vice@scow.org) with your programming ideas.

### **Training News Judi Campbell**

I want to thank all of our great training instructors and especially those who came out on a cold, damp, Saturday in March for Train the Trainer Day. Stuart Ullman did a great job of leading the session. The following instructors attended and participated in a great exchange of ideas and experiences which strengthens the integrity of our courses:

Liz Bruening  
Declan Conroy  
Larry Gemoets  
Randy Glantz  
Dan McClafferty  
Jim Metcalf  
Stu Robinson  
Neil Shepherd  
Sergey Tagashov  
Thom Unger  
Jan Van der Meer

**Ed Venere  
Scott Wainner**

**Also, special thanks to Mick Campbell for making the coffee and donut run.**

**Also special thanks to Barbara Ullman, Chair of the Training Committee, and that Committee, for their work in getting the Training Program off the ground for yet another season.**

**Of the two Basic Sailing classes scheduled thus far, enrollment opened and closed at the Re-Up Brunch. In other words, both sessions are full. I am considering a third offering of Basic Sailing in the August time frame since I have a waiting list that would almost populate another class. This is largely dependent on the availability of our instructors. More later on this.**

**Of the two Cruising Boat classes, both filled immediately. However, I have had one cancellation in the first class beginning April 30. If anyone is interested in this, please contact me at [training@scow.org](mailto:training@scow.org).**

**There are still openings in the one-day Capsize classes scheduled for July 14 and August 18.**

**Please let me know if you have ideas for other types of training.**

**See you on the water!**

**SCOW Skippers  
(as of April 15, 2001)**

**Flying Scots**

**Bev Ashcraft  
Mary Bashore  
Susan Berman  
Jonathan Bramley  
Tracy Bridgeham  
Mick Campbell  
Judi Campbell  
Dave Carstens  
Cathleen Chapman  
Michael Clifford  
Julia Clones  
Len Collins  
Shayna Collins  
Susan Donahue  
Jeff Elder**

**Thomas Flesher  
Larry Gemoets  
Carroll George  
Cathy Hess  
Peter Hirshman  
Ed Kaszinski  
Elan Krueger  
Ben Lesser  
Akiva Liberman  
Leif Loheide  
Dan McClafferty  
Nancy McNamara  
Ernest Nussbaum  
Joan O'Kane  
Deo Pachas**

**Larry Pfeifle  
Amy Plett  
Karen Plett  
Dave Rabinowitz  
David Richter  
John Rogers  
Rebecca Roper  
Kathryn Scott  
Neil Shepherd  
Sergey Tagashov  
Wilson Varga  
Geoffrey Wilson  
David Wolfe**

## **Cruisers**

**Bob Bruening  
Roy Cooper  
John Dickinson  
Scott Getzow**

**Graham Leadbetter  
Robert Lucas  
Daniel Ostrowski  
Jack Sherman**

**Max Williamson  
Francis Wu**

## **Both Flying Scots & Cruisers**

**Bill Bernhards  
Liz Bruening  
Declan Conroy  
Joe DePoorter  
Dale Eager  
William Gillespie  
Randy Glantz  
Chuck Hollister**

**Virginia Ivin  
Nancy Little  
Monica Maynard  
Larry McAndrews  
Jim Metcalf  
Stu Robinson  
David Scheuermann  
Jeff Teitel**

**Stuart Ullman  
Thom Unger  
Ed Venere  
Arthur Von Pieschel  
Scott Wainner  
Jay Weitzel  
Henry Yung**

## **Racing News Bill Bernhards**

**When I first joined SCOW I had very little sailing experience. But I would come down on Tuesday nights whenever I could and go out with the skippers who were racing. They taught me how to put the boats in the water, how to rig the boat, and how to adjust sails. As I got more familiar with sailing they let me take the tiller and round a few marks. They showed me how to dock a boat and what to do when we ran aground (I got to practice that a lot). In short they taught me all the basics of sailing and then some.**

**The following year these small boat races disappeared. I'm not sure why, probably because these informal races were not organized enough.**

**Well now those same informal, low-key races, in our flying scots, are back. The club started organizing these last year and they were a success. The main purpose was to get our club members out on the water and give everyone a chance to sail. Even if you have never sailed before you will be able to go out every Tuesday starting at 6:30pm. All you need to do is show up-everyone sails.**

**Not only did I learn how to sail that year, but also I was able to take SCOW's sailing test the following year and become a skipper myself (without taking the introduction to sailing course). So come down, meet the skippers offer to help put the boats in and take them out. Ask questions, make friends and learn to sail.**

**Social Activities  
More Fun to Come  
Matt Gaston,  
SCOW's Swingin' Social Chair**

Now that sailing season's in full swing, there's even more reason to socialize with your fellow sailors. And of course, the best way to do that is Social Sail. You probably know that it's every Thursday at the marina. You also probably know that it's a great way to grab a meal and a sail after work. But what you may not know is that it takes volunteers to make that happen.

And that's where you come in. Next time you're at Social Sail, or a monthly members meeting, introduce yourself to Erica Vey and Ben Lesser, your friendly neighborhood social sail coordinators. And offer to volunteer at one of the upcoming Social Sails. Each week, we need three people to make it happen -- Chef I, Chef II and a Dockmaster. And their job is to line those people up. They've done a good job, but save them a phone call and sign up with them. It's a great way to meet folks in the club, and to take an active role in keeping one of our most popular programs going. There are slots open all summer, so don't hesitate.

Other fun -- we're going to try and have some outings in conjunction with some of the Bay raftups this Summer. When the Bay fleet is rafting up near a fun port, like St. Michaels or Solomons Island, we'll try and set up a land crew to meet them ashore at one of the fine restaurants in the vicinity. Sort of a little surf and turf, or sail and tire as the case may be. I'll try to pinpoint exact dates soon, and I could use some help coordinating this, so don't hesitate to e-mail or call.

And, around mid-Summer, I'd like to try and arrange an outing to Smith Island, MD. It's an all-day outing, with a cruise across the Chesapeake from Point Lookout, and touring on the island, followed by a cruise home. Keep an eye on this space for more details. And, just to give me an idea, let me know if you're interested so I can know how big of a group we might have.

I'm also looking for volunteers to coordinate the annual SCOW Crab Feast in August and the Holiday Raft-Up (that isn't really a raftup) in December.

All interested volunteers and participants should get in touch with me via e-mail at [social@scow.org](mailto:social@scow.org) or call me at (703) 683-7855 (w); or (703) 838-0645 (h). Or just corner me at Social Sail, Racing Night, or the monthly meeting. I'm always available.

With your help, we can build on the momentum of the Caribbean Party and the Re-Up Brunch and have a swingin' social year.

## **Skipper Coordinator News**

### **Joan O'Kane**

#### **New Combinations**

**The combinations on the locks to the Flying Scot sail locker, F Dock and the cruising boats have been changed for the new sailing season. If you are a paid-up skipper and haven't received the new combinations in the mail, please call or email me as soon as possible. Many thanks to Bill Bernhards, Karen Bond, Jim Metcalf and Thom Unger for their help in changing the combinations.**

**Who knew it would take a brain trust to figure out those padlocks?**

#### **Checkout Day Sunday, May 20th**

**We have a Checkout Day scheduled for Sunday, May 20th. Although this Checkout Day is scheduled close to the end of the Basic Sailing class for the convenience of those in the class, anyone who has passed the Flying Scot written exam may schedule a checkout for that day. If you are interested in checking out on the Flying Scots, there is still some time to submit the written exam and schedule a water checkout for May 20th. But don't delay! Checkout times on Checkout Day will be scheduled on a space available basis. Drop-ins will not be allowed. Please call or email me for more information.**

**Don't worry if you can't make it to Checkout Day on May 20th. We have a second Checkout Day scheduled for Sunday, June 24th.**

**Of course, you don't need to wait for a Checkout Day in order to check out on either the Flying Scots or the cruising boats. Once you have passed the written exam, you can check out at any time with one of the board-approved checkout skippers. Just call or email me to set up a checkout session.**

#### **Boating Safety Education Certificates**

**Ever heard of CDCR 19-10-1010.6? It's the D.C. regulation that says "any person who is operating or navigating any vessel shall have in his or her possession satisfactory evidence of having completed an approved boating safety course".**

**Although SCOW has asked for several years that skippers provide a photocopy of their boating safety education certificates for their skipper files, there are still a number of skippers who haven't submitted theirs. The board decided at the March board meeting against preventing skippers from renewing or obtaining boating privileges if they haven't submitted a copy of their boating safety education certificate. However, this decision could be revisited if it becomes a problem.**

**Obtaining a certificate of boating safety education is relatively quick and painless. The D.C. Harbor Patrol will accept a certificate of completion from any course approved by the U.S.**

**Coast Guard and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA). The online test of the BoatU.S. Foundation at <http://www.boatus.com/onlinecourse> meets this requirement. It's very user-friendly and if you need to log out of it, you can log back in where you left off. It's also free!**

**For those of you who still haven't obtained a certificate of boating safety education, why not do it in time for the Safe Boating Campaign Celebration on Thursday, May 24th? For more information about the Safe Boating Campaign, take a look at their website at <http://www.safeboatingcampaign.com/>**

**And if you get stopped by the D.C. Harbor Patrol without a boating safety education certificate, don't say you weren't warned!**

**Call or email me if you have any questions about D.C.'s boating safety education requirements. I'm learning more than I ever wanted to know!**

### **River Activities** **Jon Allen**

**The 1st river cruise is on the 27th of April. We need boats and skippers to sign-up. It is a great way to meet people in SCOW. We have a rather large river fleet in the club - so, I expect more than 3 boats.**

**If you don't sign-up for crew - it doesn't mean you don't have a chance to get on a boat that night. Show up at the dock and many times there will be no shows. Contact me at [river@scow.org](mailto:river@scow.org) or by phone if you are interested in the river cruises or have any questions.**

**We are having the next one on May 11th.**

### **Bay Activities** **Jon Allen**

**The Easter raft-up was a lot of fun, despite the lack of boats. Stu Robinson on Gamgee anchored out at the Rhode river. Bob Beckman anchored Helios out at Mill Creek on the Patuxent river. It was a pleasant weekend, but I think a lot of people didn't have their boats ready for the season.**

**The next raft-up is on Memorial Day weekend. Please contact me if you desire to crew. We had bay skippers willing to take people out, but very few people signed up. The Memorial Day weekend is a 2 day raft-up. Boats can show up for one or both days. We should get some nice pictures of all the boats.**

**May 26th - Dun Cove on the Choptank**

**May 27th - Hudson Creek on the Little Choptank**

The June raft-up is the 16th. If you had trouble emailing me at bay@scow.org, use my real address: jallen@patriot.net

## **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 Call: 202.628.7245 (That's 628.SAIL) Visit us at: www.scow.org Write us: info@scow.org

### **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 suffer greatly. Blame yourself if this happens!

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 by one week after the monthly meeting. Use any means, but email is preferred.

Kelly E. Griffin, Layout Editor (the hard part)  
Declan Conroy, Web Publisher  
Kim Webb, Mailing lists  
Larry Gemoets, Chief Go'fer