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

**November 2000**

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### **Commodore's Log**

**Ah, November. Those colorful leaves are off the trees where they looked so beautiful just a short time ago. Instead, they now are piled high all over my front lawn where they serve as another reminder of the household chores I've basically ignored again this year in favor of sailing. Still, I cannot bring myself to spend the few remaining warm days raking leaves. Instead, it is off to the Marina for one more sail before the bitter winds and frozen fingers tell me it is time to stow the gear for winter.**

**So, when that sailing gear finally is stowed, what will your favorite memory of this season be?**

**For some of you this season may have marked the first time you took the tiller of a sailboat. For others, the most memorable moment may have been when Skipper Coordinator Liz Bruening told you that you had passed the exam to skipper the Flying Scots or the cruising boats.**

**For some, it may have been taking or instructing a sailing class. For some, it may have been the first time that you set out in a club boat as the skipper, ready to show off your new sailing skills to your family and friends. For others, perhaps your first sail on Psycho or Rebecca, or when a member with a boat in our "Bay Fleet" took you for a sail on the Bay.**

**For some, it may have been skippering or crewing in your first race at the Tuesday Night Scot races or in the DDCF series. For others, it may have been the thrill of your first racing victory.**

**For some, it may have been the day you bought your own boat and first took it out. (As a boat owner, I can attest to the fact that costs associated with boat ownership are always memorable.)**

**For some, it may have been participating in one of the River or Bay raft-ups. For some, it may have been the weekly camaraderie and food at the Thursday night social sails. For example, who could forget the wonderful vegetarian meals, "red meat night," and the other great picnic dinners that our fellow members furnished every Thursday? For others, it may have been renewing friendships after the long winter at last spring's America's Cup party or the Re-Up Brunch.**

Perhaps you will remember the unveiling and christening of the "SCOW Chow Dhow," which probably should have been accompanied by a ritual burning of those beaten-up folding tables that it replaced.

I guess I have too many great memories to pick just one. It seems like only yesterday that I was waxing my boat, Needa Breeze, for the season, and now it is time to put her away again. It really is true that "time flies when you are having fun."

If you are new to SCOW this year, I do very much hope that your memories of this season are of meeting a great group of people who share your love of sailing. If you came down for your first social sail, I hope you have memories of being welcomed warmly, pointed to the food and immediately signed up to go out on a boat. Remember, though, just because the sailing season is done doesn't mean that SCOW disappears. We have social activities all year, and, if some warm winds do blow during the winter, our boats are sitting at the Marina just waiting for you to take them out for a sail.

Fair winds and following seas!

### **SCOW Annual Meeting And Elections**

SCOW's regular monthly membership meeting will be held on November 13, 2000.

As required by Article II of SCOW's bylaws, this meeting also will be the club's annual membership meeting. The primary business to be conducted at this meeting will be the election of officers for the 2001 year. In accordance with the bylaws, Dale Eager gave the report of the Nominating Committee at the October membership meeting, following which nominations were accepted from the floor and then were closed.

Ballots and an announcement of the Annual Meeting are sent by mail to all members. Ballots may be returned by mail or may be brought in person to the November meeting. All ballots must be returned by the meeting on November 14. The ballots will be counted that night and the election results announced.

Because of the voting, the Annual Meeting is closed to all but members. In addition, we do not have a program. Instead, the evening has traditionally been used as a forum for members to make suggestions or comments for the good of the club. These comments can give the new board great program ideas for the following year, so please come prepared not only with your ballots but also with your ideas to improve the club!

SCOW will elect one officer for each position and another six directors.

The candidates and the offices for which they have agreed to stand are:

**Jay Weitzel, Commodore**  
**Kathryn Scott, Vice Commodore**  
**Gloria Spilker, Secretary**  
**Susan Donahue, Treasurer**  
**Mary Bashore, Treasurer**  
**Jon Allen, Director**  
**Bill Bernhards, Director**  
**Judi Campbell, Director**  
**Matt Gaston, Director**  
**Joan O'Kane, Director**  
**Sergey Tagashov, Director**

### **Holiday Raft-up**

**7:00 - 9:00 PM**  
**Friday, December 1st, 2000**  
**The Colonies of McLean**  
**7681 Provincial Drive**  
**McLean, Virginia 22102**  
**(703) 827-8388**

### **Social Activities**

#### **Kathryn Scott**

**Join all your friends at SCOW around the roaring fireplace for an evening of heartfelt holiday celebration at the annual shore-side "raft-up" at the Colonies. The price of admission is your favorite dish, (a great casserole, dessert or vegetable plate, hard rolls, an appetizer tray you bought at Safeway). You get the idea; it's a potluck party with great food pitched in by all of you. The club provides the basics, a couple of main dishes and beverages, but we need you to make the holidays warm and yummy. We'll pin you down on what you'd like to bring later, but mark your calendars now for this great holiday event.**

**Special thanks to the dedicated club members who helped make the 2000 Also Ran Regatta a social success by providing care and feeding, cooking and registration help: Tracy Bridgham, Mona Hahn, David Johnson, Leslie Korn, Dan McClafferty, George Umberger and his faithful companion Nixon.**

**Kudos to the Hail and Farewell Committee for all their great efforts: Mary Bashore, Kelly Bowers, Bob Bruening, Melissa Ennis, Gloria Spilker, Cheryl Tenninga and Betsy Troeder. Thank you one and all.**

## **River Activities?**

### **John Rogers**

**The planned River activities are over now, but you can still reserve the boats and go sailing, stop by the Social No Sail at Clyde's, and warm up at the Hail & Farewell and Holiday Raft-Up.**

**Overall, the year was a success, with many new members, new-member sails, Flying Scott racing, Social Sails, the Smoot's cove raft-up and weekend river raft-up, DDCF races, the Also-Ran regatta, canoe trip, sailing courses, and maintenance days. Although these are not all official "River Activities," they all occur on the river or at the docks.**

**At the beginning of the year, when there was no elected director for River Activities, two others and I volunteered to help. I was elected the official "River Director" (which I assumed meant directing the river to flow down hill and directing the tides to slosh up hill). I would particularly like to thank Ruth Connolly as Racing Captain for her work in coordinating the racing and Kelly Bowers who coordinated, cajoled, wrote the guide to hosting Social Sail, and otherwise made Social Sail a success.**

**And finally, I would like to thank everyone who conceived and contributed to the creation of the new SCOW Chow Dhow, with which Social Sail has reached a new plateau.**

## **Also-Ran Regatta Results**

**Threatening skies and still winds were not enough to keep an intrepid group of SCOW skippers away from the Marina on September 23rd, where the 30th Annual SCOW Also-Ran Regatta was held. Dale Eager took first place in the open class. Liz Bruening took first place in the Flying Scot class, with Neil Shepherd second and Ruth Connolly third.**

## **Bay activities**

### **Mike Geissinger**

**As the Annapolis Boat Show passes into the dark recesses of our minds it becomes inevitable that another sailing season has come to a close. Each jack tar regrets the lost opportunities of those days when the wind and weather were in perfect confluence yet the soles of the deck shoes were locked under an office desk. Then to reflect on the days of freedom from that cubicle and the forces of "mother nature" conspired to feign the winds low and slow or pitch her full force against the bare poles of the vessel. Here's the reality: This season has wound down for the Bay activities and the season proved to have both "good news" and "bad news." The Easter Weekend raft-up on the Rhode River was a delightful opening to what looked like a promising sailing time on the Bay. With five boats in residence and a bevy of SCOW members aboard, the warmth of the fellowship overcame**

the lack of temperature outside the craft. The Fourth of July weekend was washed out by the presence of a substantial amount of rain and other types of foul weather. Labor Day followed suit with the added bonus of lower temperatures with the precipitation. There were three brave skippers who, with their crew, braved the elements and rallied their boats for the last holiday weekend. The eternal optimism of the sailor will persevere and continue to look toward next year's sailing season. The weather will be better and the winds will always be at the helmsman's (person's) back. The National Weather Center prognostication for this winter states that 2000-01 will break the series of mild winters that we have experienced for the past two or three years. Remember, crew, they also predicted a stronger than normal hurricane season with at least two or three severe storms reaching landfall. OK! They ain't nothin' but human. Next March the deck shoes will still be another year softer. All the sailing t-ees will be given that "spring cleaning" and the cargo shorts will not be starched. The gathering of "eagles" at the waterside crane for the first Social Sail will place on a semi-tepid Thursday evening and the SAILING SEASON will be underway. The bay skippers will blow out the antifreeze from the engines and shake out the "canvas" to usher in the 2001 time on the water. Don't lay low this winter. Make the most of the "off season" by showing up at the Social No-Sail's on Thursday evenings. That will sustain the effort.

### **The Sailor's Bookshelf**

If you have visited the SCOW website at [www.scow.org](http://www.scow.org), you may have noticed that pictures of a few members' favorite books appear there. One of them is the favorite of former Commodore Declan Conroy, who wrote this review for Channels:

#### **The Riddle of the Sands**

Our Commodore asked me to write a couple of paragraphs about The Riddle of the Sands and why I like it so much. I said it would take more than two to explain. But then I decided to try...

I won't tell you the story. It is a mystery after all. But I can tell you that the book is a novel of adventure and espionage about sailing, specifically about navigating the shoal waters of the North Sea coast of Germany. It has many charms. It perfectly describes a young man's first acquaintance with sailing, and not the "boating at Cowes" variety, with flannels and blazer. It explores the shifting tides, winds and sands of the Friesian Islands. It was written more than ten years before the First World War, by Erskine Childers, an Irishman who was executed by his own countrymen in 1922. It is about a weather-beaten but serviceable yacht (actually a converted lifeboat) named Dulcibella, and her young captain, swept up by circumstance into their Majesty's service. The tale is recounted in the first person by an effete young Englishman who works (if that is not too strong a word) in the Foreign Office.

Oh, and it's a funny book. The formal (to our ears) language of a hundred years ago does not obscure familiar scenes, such as that when our dazed and confused narrator first sees

Davies, Dulcibella's captain, in action: "He was everywhere at once--heaving in chain, hooking on halyards, hauling ropes; while my part became that of the clown who does things after they are already done; for my knowledge of a yacht was of that floating and inaccurate kind which is useless in practice..." When the narrator, with his "unskilled and doubtful eye" first looked at Dulcibella, "She seemed very small (in point of fact she was seven tons), something over thirty feet in length and nine in beam, a size very suitable to weekends in the Solent, for such as liked that sort of thing; but that she should have come from Dover to the Baltic suggested a world of physical endeavor of which I had never dreamed..." Well, he learns to love her, while the two young adventurers go on to rescue a fair maiden and save England by story's end. Woven throughout the tale is Childers' own passion for sailing. People talk of one book that they can read over and over again and relish each time. This is mine.

### **SCOW Says Thanks!**

SCOW says thanks to SCOW member Captain Clayton Embly for speaking on his many nautical experiences at the October membership meeting. (And he does really have a SCOW sticker on the TowBoatUS boat he captains!) And, special thanks go to Stu Robinson for organizing both the Also-Ran Regatta and the October Maintenance Day.

### **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](http://www.scow.org)

Write us: [info@scow.org](mailto: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 look kinda silly, or even totally unreadable.**

**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](mailto:channels@scow.org) by one week after the monthly meeting.**

**Kelly E. Griffin, Layout Editor (the hard part)**

**Declan Conroy, Web Publisher**

**Sam Schaen, Mailing lists**

**Larry Gemoets, Chief Go'fer**

**That's all, folks.....**