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## CHANNELS -- SPECIAL E-MAIL EDITION

October 1998

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### Commodore's Log

#### Stuart Ullman

Finally, the weather has cooled off a little. You know what that means: fall. A glorious season. Days are shrinking. Leaves are turning. Elections are coming. No, not those elections, let's get our minds off of that for a while. I mean the SCOW elections. It's time to think about who you want on your board next year, whether you want to take a turn on the board yourself.

I won't try to tell you that serving on the board is a burdenless, blissful existence. It's not. There is work involved, work that needs to get done and sometimes won't wait. Every member of the board has a task: training, maintenance, social, river, bay, skipper. Six board positions, six areas of responsibility. Every one of them is important to the club, and every one of them takes energy and time. No matter which job you do, and no matter how you do it, there will be members that tell you that you should do it differently. But the club can't function without the board. Someone has to do those jobs. And besides, in spite everything, the truth is that it's kind of a kick to do it. I've served on three boards, as Training Director, as Vice Commodore, and this year as Commodore, and I can tell you that there is no better way to get to know the club and the club members, or for them to get to know you.

But that's not what I really want to talk to you about. I really want to talk to you about apple pies. Or maybe cherry, I haven't made my mind up yet. It's on my mind because while I'm writing this there are about a dozen pies sitting on an old (cold) cast iron stove, about three feet from my nose, which at the moment seems to be my dominant sense organ---although there are other distractions too, visual ones, which interrupt the flow of words and scatter ideas in every direction. Just across from my seat is an old dentist's chair; next to it is a long red sled leaning against the wall, with a poster stuck to it of Fealess Fosdic saying: "get Wildroot Cream Oil, Charlie!". There's a big model of a steamboat called the Emma Giles. There's a model railroad running noisily around a track near the ceiling. Ah, I see some of you nodding and smiling; you have figured out where I am, haven't you? Right. Of course. I'm in The West River Market, Country Store & Deli, a small place, easy to overlook, a place to get coffee and snack food on the way to the boat if the boat you're headed for is in Galesville.

**October speaker will be Donald Shomette, author of numerous books including "Pirates of the Chesapeake" and "Shipwrecks of the Chesapeake"**

## **Maintenance Day**

### **Monica Maynard, Maintenance Director**

Our fall maintenance day will be held on Saturday, October 17. We'll meet at 1:00 am to give our boats the TLC they need. We'll scrub them and fix all those things we haven't quite found the time to repair when we were busy sailing and doing other summer activities. There are tasks for all abilities and energy levels.

This is a good opportunity to become more familiar with our boats. Remember that as a SCOW member, these are your boats. We need your help to keep all our boats ready and sea-worthy. When you see something on the boats that needs attention, or have a question, or a suggestion, please let me know. You can give me a call or drop me an e-mail.

Come on out on Saturday, October 17. See you at the marina!

## **Training**

### **by Scott Getzow**

Well, we've had another successful year of training. As the season winds down, let me take this opportunity to thank all of the trainers for their help in making the training season as good as it has been.

The third Basic Sailing course was finished on September 20. The students were Jason Fenwick, Alyce McKelvy, Chris Farthing, Jane Farthing, Kristie Smith, Diane Munro, and Trisha Michel. By all accounts, this was one of the most enthusiastic classes this year. For the most part the weather has cooperated and we were able to get a lot of good sailing time in. The course was so popular this year that people wanted to take it well after it had started.

Another popular course was Intermediate sailing. This class, taught by Len Zuza, was not only quite interesting but also very well attended, with two students, Sabrina Bini and Paolo Zacchia joining the club the first night of class. The other students were Kathleen O'Keefe, Peter Cuniffe, Randy Scott, John Samuel, and Charissa Goins. Now the students can tell everyone they know the difference between Bernoulli and Venturi!

Last, but not least, the Bay Navigation course was held on September 19. The students were Jason Fenwick, Sharon Jones, Randy Scott, Scott Getzow, Cathy Hess and Kathleen O'Keefe. The class, team taught by Declan Conroy and Stuart Ullman, is always one of the more popular courses of the training season. Thanks again to Carrie Blankfield for the use of her boat. Who's the top trainer this year you ask? It's Larry Gemoets with a whopping 28 hours of official training time. With still a few more classes to go, the members with 20 or more hours of training include Dave Scheuermann, Dick Dyer, Stuart Ullman, Thom Unger, Ed Venere, and Marty Crowson.

## **Fowl Weather Raft-Up**

### **Allan Lewis, Raftmaster**

SCOW will be having its annual Fowl Weather Raft-Up on the weekend of October 31 and November 1. We will raft up on the north shore of Leadenham Creek (Lt:38-45.5 N & Ln:76-14W). From the Choptank River, head north up Broad Creek and Leadenham Creek enters from the western shore. Sign-up sheets for interested skippers and prospective crewmembers will be available at the October meeting. For more information, call me at (202)-358-5155 (O), (202)-244-5516 (old H), or (301)-445-3397 (new H in early October).

## **Crabfeast Follow-Up**

### **Allan Lewis**

Just wanted to thank everyone who helped make the August crabfeast a success. Victoria Hampton helped sign people up, Hope Andruss provided everything for the corn-on-the-cob, and Wilson Varga and Tom Flesher helped setting up. Others who helped with salads, deserts, sign-ins, and clean-up include Anne La Lena, Francie Stevens, B.J. McMillan, Sharon Schoumacher, Julia Clones, Cindy Peters, Susan Carrow, Terri Loges, and Marilyn Annen. If I've left anyone out, my apologies. Some people chipped in right on the spot, and your help in making the event run smoothly is greatly appreciated.

## **Fun FAQ #427: How do I become a SCOW skipper?**

### **by Denise Derry**

There is a definite path to follow to become a SCOW skipper. It isn't necessarily a long journey, or one with many twists even for the fair-weather sailor. The Cliffs Notes version is: pass a written exam, pass a water exam (cruisers need 20 hours skippering experience under their belts already), fill out a couple forms, and pay your boat use fees (\$80 for Scots, \$110 for cruisers, \$140 for both).

Now for the twenty-five cent tour:

Step 1: Contact the Skipper Director. The Skipper Director exists to distribute reams of information and grade exams. Ideally, that person likes to play "teacher," works at a company with lenient copy machine policies, and has no social life. Lacking any one of these three elements, it'll take longer to get your exam graded, but still probably not as long as it'll take you to get around to filling it out.

The key documents you will receive, aside from the exams themselves, are the SCOW Boat Policies & Procedures (P&P) and the Skipper Information File (SIF). These complementary documents are required reading for the written exam. Part of the charm of these documents is their organization. We figure, if you can navigate through them, you can get around on the River alright. A special challenge for the cruiser skipper candidates is the illegibility of the "master" for the chart exercise. My hats off to the cruiser skippers for their inventive responses on that particularly blurred section, for which I dutifully ensure that each reference has indeed been

circled. Now, at the end of my second year, two volunteers have offered their services to reformat these documents. Bless you. We'll start that as soon as I finish grading these exams....

Other information you'll receive from the Skipper Director includes a description of the Quick Stop (QS) method for the crew overboard procedure. That method could take up an entire page of this fine newsletter, so I won't explain it here. Please note that the Director is looking for your understanding of the Quick Stop, not the Rodeo Round Up you learned in Cub Scouts. If you're unsure of the QS, ask SCOW's number one QS advocate, Stuart Ullman, or ask any sailor at the Naval Academy, or break down and actually read the info sheet provided by the Skipper Director.

You may also request that the Skipper Director forward a list of tutors to help you get familiar with the club's boats as well as our sailing area. Go out with a coach at least once, no matter what your skill level; ask them questions about the written exam; try the water exam maneuvers. Remember, though, these folks are tutors/coaches to help you practice. If you want to learn how to sail, we recommend you take a class, any class, pick one: ours, WSM's, Belle Haven's, Colgate's, anybody's. Know how to sail.

Step 2: Legibly complete the written exam and return it to the Skipper Director to grade. Give the Director at least a few weekends to grade your exam - more is better. OK, I'm guilty of taking much longer than that on occasion to grade an exam, but most people take much longer than two weeks to fill out the exam. Some exams have taken as little as 30 minutes to grade, while others have taken more than three hours. Illegible handwriting with dull pencils does not help the process. Born a Libra, I try to see all sides of an answer. My beliefs are easily shaken by someone else's convictions. Although the candidate's answer may not match what my experience has shown, or even what's on my answer sheet, I realize that I just don't know everything, and maybe this answer before me has merit. I refer to Chapman's, the ColRegs and anything I have handy. There is a lot of teeth gnashing, pencil breaking, hair pulling and the like. Sometimes I just give in, and make some long-distance phone calls.

The Director will return a copy of the exam to you, and if you pass, will include a list of Check Out Skippers (COS) with whom you should arrange a water exam.

Step 3: Sail the water exam. Take along a friend or two to serve as crew so that the COS can observe your boat handling skills rather than help you sail. The COS has enough else to do watching that you aren't some wacko who would serve SCOW better on a Hobie. Actually, it's best to take along someone who isn't a great sailor, because you will demonstrate just how much you know by asking them to trim the jib, ease the traveler, grab you another cold soda from the cooler, etc. This resembles real-life SCOW sailing as well, because there are only a few skippers who may singlehand the boats, and you're not one of them... yet.

Step 4: Return the forms & fees. Send your completed Water Checkout List, the skipper agreement and application and your boat use fees to the Skipper Director. A magnanimous Director may even meet you after your water exam, at the marina, to collect these items directly and provide you with the locker combination and secret handshake. The Director will also add your name to the list of skippers held by the marina office, which will enable you to reserve a boat.

There you have it. Four easy steps to skippership. Please keep in mind along your journey, that this is a volunteer organization. The Director and coaches mean well, as do the skipper candidates. Everyone has other responsibilities -dogs, jobs, kids, spouses - well, OK, not everyone has every responsibility, but we've all got something. It's OK to nudge the Director. Hounding is not OK. Happily, I can't recall the last time I was hounded. Remember, it's never too late to sail in this area (except after dark on SCOW's Scots, that's too late), so anytime is a good time to start your skippership. Call me today, Denise Derry, 703-683-2088.

### **Hail & Farewell Party**

**Don't cower under a blanket on Friday the 13th - Celebrate, instead!**

**SCOW's Hail & Farewell is November 13, Friday, at the Fort Myer Officers' Club, in Arlington, VA. This annual, black tie event is in appreciation of the work done throughout the year by the Board of Directors, and serves to introduce and welcome the next year's Board. Directors also present awards to willing members who have stepped up to extra challenges during the year and proven themselves first-rate first mates.**

The details: 13 November 1998, 7:00 - midnight \$25 per person (yes, \$25 - that's not a typo! The Board voted to subsidize part of the cost!) Fort Myer Officers' Club (directions below) Mix & mingle, dinner buffet, program and dancing!

To reserve your seat at the table, send a check for \$25 per person (yes! bring a date!), payable to SCOW, to Francie Stevens, 3725 Woodley Drive, Alexandria, VA 22309. Make sure your check arrives in her mailbox by Friday, 6 November, or drop it off at the member meeting, Monday, 9 November.

Please make an effort to keep that date free to attend this special evening!

Directions to Fort Myer (located adjacent to Arlington Cemetery)

From Washington, DC: Cross 14th Street Bridge and follow I-395 south to the Washington Blvd/Route 27 exit (8B). Follow Washington Blvd. to exit sign to Fort Myer. Enter the fort (Hatfield Gate) and ask for Officers' Club. Or, take Route 50 West across Theodore Roosevelt Bridge and bear right immediately to exit at Rosslyn. Make first left on Fort Myer Drive, which turns to Mead after crossing Route 50, and proceed to stop sign, where a right (on Marshall) will lead to the entrance. Proceed 0.6 mile to Officers' Club and parking is on the right.

From Northern Maryland Suburbs: Take I-495 west to Geo. Washington Parkway south. Exit at Key Bridge and make a left at the traffic light (Fort Myer Drive). Proceed straight, where it turns into Mead after crossing over Route 50. A right at the stop sign (Marshall) will lead to the entrance. Drive straight ahead for 0.6 mile to Officers' Club and parking is on the right.

From Alexandria and Southern Maryland Suburbs: Take Geo. Washington Pkwy north to Route 50 exit by Memorial Bridge. Exit Route 50 at Rosslyn and make first left on Fort Myer Drive. Proceed as above.

From South or West Suburbs in Virginia: Traveling north on I-395, take exit 8A Washington Blvd/Fort Myer. Bear left onto Washington Blvd., and take the 3rd exit (1/2 mile) to Ft. Myer. Enter the fort at the Hatfield Gate and ask for Officers' Club. Traveling east on I-66, take the Pentagon/Hwy 110 exit right after Key Bridge. Immediately watch for the first (sharp) exit,

Marshall Drive. Go past entrance and to Officer's Club as above. Traveling east on Route 50, make a right at the light on Pershing Drive after passing Washington Blvd. Turn right at the Henry Gate and ask for Officers' Club.

### **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 if you dial with letters!)**

**Write us: [info@scow.org](mailto:info@scow.org)**