
CHANNELS -- The Newsletter of the Sailing Club of Washington

September 2000

September Speaker

Robert "Woodie" Woodside will speak at the September membership meeting. Woodie, who recently celebrated his 80th birthday, was one of the founders of the Sailing Club of Washington. He will talk about the history of the club and share his memories of the club's earliest days. For example, do you know the various kinds of boats we owned before the Flying Scots? This promises to be a special evening. Come out and learn about how our club began!

Commodore's Log

After a busy summer of training and new skipper checkouts, SCOW now has about 100 members who are qualified to sail our Flying Scots, our cruising boats, or, for about two dozen members, both classes of boats.

This is great! It means that over a quarter of our members are taking advantage of one of the club's greatest attractions -- our five boats. And, these skippers will be taking their friends out for sails, exposing even more folks to the fun of sailing. That is how our club, and the sailing community, grows.

When you become a skipper, you assume some important responsibilities. You become responsible for the safety of you and your crew on the water. That means, for example, not sailing in conditions in which you or your crew could be endangered -- no matter how much you have been looking forward to sailing that particular day. So, if the forecast is for small craft advisory conditions, or if a severe thunderstorm warning or watch is posted, you should reconsider your plans.

You also become responsible for the proper use of the club's boats. Over the course of this year, I have received a number telephone calls or emails from members concerned that one thing or another was not being done the "SCOW way." I actually thought I might sneak through my entire term as Commodore without having to write this column, but the number of concerns seems to have gone up in the past few months. Maybe there is something in that Potomac River water. Fortunately, nearly all of these concerns had to do with the way the boats are rigged or stowed and not with how they are operated on the

water. In any event, with so many of us sharing these boats, and with the fall sailing season upon us, I decided it was a good time for a few reminders. While these are directed mostly towards skippers, those members who spend time as crew on the boats should do their part to see that things are done properly.

Let's start with the Flying Scots. When you take out a Flying Scot, make sure that you take the sail bag belonging to your boat. This is not hard: each sail bag is labeled with the name of the boat to which it belongs and they are also kept in separate, labeled shelves in the sail lockers. Don't leave the sails in the boat after your sailing adventure is over. They should be returned to that same shelf in the locker.

The Scot sails should be "flaked" not stuffed. The battens should be removed and stored separately in the sail bag. If you are the skipper, make sure that your crew knows how to flake a sail before sending them off to fold them.

When you prepare to use the lifting harness, make sure that the shackle is tight -- I once encountered one that had been turned only once or twice and could easily have pulled out, allowing the boat to drop. When rigging a Scot, keep some tension on the halyards, to avoid tangling. Also, the jib halyard forms part of the forestay, so always make sure that it is properly tensioned (whether rigging or stowing the boat) by checking the small "T" in the bow. When stowing the boat after a sail, make sure that you return it to the proper trailer; each has a boat name on it.

Now let's turn to the cruising boats. With the exception of the large genoa or "drifter" on Rebecca, the jibs should be flaked and not stuffed. Also -- and I admit this is a pet peeve of mine -- the jib should be folded so that the tack is on the outside of the flaked sail so the next person can easily find it and attach it. It is annoying and dangerous to have to unroll a large sail on the small foredeck of a rocking boat looking for the tack, while the wind threatens to carry it overboard. On the other hand, it is easy to hank on a sail that has been properly stowed.

Remember to tie the boats to the dock properly. This means, for example, on Rebecca, that the stern line wraps around the winch and the stern spring line goes to the aft cleat. If your crew has tied any lines, check them to make sure that they are properly done. Before you leave, make certain that the batteries are turned off, that all hatches are secured and that all equipment has been stowed in its proper location. If you need to add gas, please use the proper gas/oil ratio.

The rules on maintenance are common to all boats. If you observe a condition that requires maintenance, you should immediately inform the Maintenance Director so that the work can be done quickly. This is especially important if we need to take a boat out of service until it is repaired because we need to advise the Marina not to take reservations for that boat and we need to advise any members with reservations that the boat is unavailable. We do not want disappointed members making reservations and arriving at the Marina only to find that a boat cannot be sailed because it needs maintenance work.

For example, at social sail, we opened a Flying Scot sail bag to discover a badly torn jib. It had not been reported, so nobody knew it needed repaired. A torn sail takes a boat out of service immediately, unless a replacement is available. If you discover a condition that prevents safe use of the boat, you should not sail the boat and you should immediately contact the Maintenance Director. However, before jumping aboard another boat, please check the Marina reservation book to make certain that someone else has not signed up for that boat. Also, if you discover that your boat is missing equipment, don't "liberate" that equipment from another boat unless it has been coordinated with the Maintenance Director.

If you need to know what the proper SCOW procedure is in a given situation, ask the Skipper Coordinator or review the Skipper Information File you were given when you checked out. With so many members sharing our boats, we all need to practice courtesy and think to ourselves, "What would happen if 100 other people did this?" If you ask that question and the answer comes back, "Chaos, damaged equipment, annoyed fellow club members and complaints to the Commodore," then, please, try hard to think of another course of action.

Fair winds to all!

Nominating Committee News

With the newspapers full of news from the political conventions, can SCOW's own electoral season be far behind? Yes, it is time for that annual process in which the SCOW Nominating Committee will beg, flatter, and cajole a group of fellow members to serve as club officers next year. Do you think you have what it takes to make the club better? Then volunteer to serve as an officer or director for next year. Don't be shy, nominate yourself. Or, feel free to nominate someone else who you think would do a good job (although we do get all nominees to agree before putting them on the ballot). Dale Eager has agreed to chair the committee. Dale can be reached at home at 703/536-3083 or by email at dale.eager@wcom.com.

Also-Ran Regatta

On September 23rd, SCOW will sponsor its 30th Annual Also-Ran Regatta. If you have not won a race this season, this is the race for you -- literally -- because the only people eligible to skipper in this race are those who have not won a race this season! Think of it -- you definitely have a chance to win this regatta because, by definition, your competition is a bunch of losers! You can't afford not to enter! There will be fun, prizes and lots of friendly competition. Details will be announced at the September membership meeting.

Fowl Weather Faft-Up - Allan Lewis

SCOW will once again hold its annual Fowl Weather Raft-Up on the weekend of November 4 & 5. This event has become a great way to wind down the sailing season. The past two years we have chosen Leadenham Creek off the Choptank River because it enables boats

from both the north and south fleets to raft up. I thought we would meet there again this year, but I'm open to suggestions from skippers, just as long as long as boats from both ends of the bay can participate. Sign up sheets for skippers and prospective crew will be available at the September and October meetings, or just call me at (301)-445-3397(H). Come on out and enjoy the migrating water fowl, fall colors, and your sometimes foul but always colorful sailing friends. Hope to see you there!

SCOW welcomes our newest members

(and reminds you to join us for our new member cruise)!

Seth Allon, Glen Baly, Sarah Beighley, Richard Carpenter, Pam & Ken Cruse, Todd Demaray, Steven & Gail Jeffcoat, Alain Jones, Aaron Jones, Nancy LaVerda, Dave Roberts, Sandy Natarajan, and Francis Wu.

Social Activites - Kathryn Scott

It's not too early to think about SCOW's great round of fall events and holiday parties. Mark your calendars, and get ready to open your cook books and checkbooks for the upcoming holiday social scene. More details will follow, but be sure to reserve these dates so you don't miss out on any of these great events.

September 23: The 30th Anniversary Also Ran Race (this is a traditional SCOW event, a one-day race open to any skipper who hasn't won another major race, and is a great way for even the most novice of skippers to try their hand at the tiller in a fun event at the Washington Sailing Marina.)

October 7: Group trip to the Annapolis Boat Show (a great place to shop boats or gear and meet and mingle with other sailing types.)

November 18: The Hail and Farewell (the traditional dinner dance to salute the hard work of members and officers over this sailing season and introduce the new leaders of the next season, but mostly a great excuse to get into fancier duds, win fabulous door prizes and dance the night away with new and old friends alike.)

December 1: Our Holiday Raft-Up Pot Luck at The Colonies (a fabulous evening of holiday cheer celebrated around a roaring fire with plenty of lovingly prepared delicacies created by the celebrated chefs of SCOW, and that means you.)

Over the first weekend in August, the Washington Sailing Marina was inundated by hundreds of Maryland Blue Crabs but an infestation of these feisty little crustaceans was quickly averted thanks to the hearty appetites of SCOW. Eighty-four members, their friends and family attended the outdoor Crab Feast 2000 which also featured great marinated and grilled chicken, fine vegetarian fare and sumptuous desserts. Thanks to all

who attended for making this event a great success, especially to members: Phil Bender, Tina Daberkow, Gloria & Jeremy Spilker, Sergey Tagashov and Henry Yung, who were kind enough to wrangle crabs, beer, corn on the cob and attendees in my absence.

River Activities - John Rogers

We will have one more Meet-New-Members Sail on Friday, September 15. If you are interested in coming along and have not contacted me, give me a call or send an e-mail to see if there any space. We will leave the docks around 7 PM and return by 11 PM. The August Meet-New-Member Sail was canceled due to threatening weather. However, some optimistic sailors decided to go out and get wet anyway. We are hoping for better weather in for the September Sail. By the way, while you are out and about in September, keep your eyes open for the Leukemia Club and Also-ran Races in addition to the usual Tuesday evening races and Social Sails. We will also need volunteers to help with the Also-ran Regatta, so, if you can help out, contact river@scow.org or racing@scow.org.

All Hail the Social Sail Volunteers! - Kelly Bowers

Many many thanks to the following fine people who will be the arms and legs of Social Sail in September and October.

August 31: Murat Tasar (Chef I), (needs a Chef II), Jim Haynes (dockmaster)

September 7: Deb Cooper (Chef I), Chuck Hollister (Chef II), Gladys Range (dockmistress)

September 14: Karen Zuza (Chef I), Susan Batchelder (Chef II), Jim Haynes (dockmaster)

September 21: The Five Skippers (see related article), Chuck Hollister (dockmaster)

September 28: Denise Malueg (Chef I), Roz Roszkowski (Chef II), Jim Haynes (dockmaster)

October 5: Arthur Di-something-or-another (sorry!) (Chef I), Kathleen Rooney (Chef II), Ruth Connolly (dockmistress)

A Gastronomic Shoot-Out! - Kelly Bowers

The World Wrestling Federation has the smack-down. The Bible has David & Goliath. The America's Cup had Prada and Team New Zealand. SCOW has...the Veggies vs. the Carnivores!

A loyal band of vegetarians have hosted social sail several times this summer. Despite the good-natured derision heaped upon them for their meatless offerings, they have regularly put out a spread that got positively SCARFED UP by those present. They rarely took leftovers home.

Now, it's time for the carnivores to put up or shut up! The vegetarians have issued a challenge to the meat lovers, in the persons of our own Five Skippers. And the Five Skippers accepted!

On Thursday, Sept. 21, the Five Skippers will host social sail and prove they can deliver more than veg-quips. Mark the date on your calendar to be at social sail and see whether Declan Conroy, Dan McClafferty, Mike Geissinger, Patrick Derry, and George Umberger can put on a feed that satisfies as well as our Vegetarian Revolutionaries.

***You* will be the judge.**

Skipper Coordinotes - Elizabeth Bruening

On a sunny, breezy August day with at least 12 knot winds out of the northeast, 12 intrepid prospective skippers passed the Flying Scot water checkout exam. Never mind that they had to pull a U-turn at the outer end of a T-dock. Never mind that some of them passed up the opportunity to make a hard landing and opted for a second and sometimes a third try before deciding they could dock smoothly and safely.

Years ago, a friend invited me to fly with him in a small airplane. He had recently gotten his pilot's license. We had a glorious time flying over farm, forest and village. Then it was time to land. At the last moment, with the runway just a few feet beneath us, he pulled up. "We're coming in a little too fast", he explained. We circled and made another descent. He pulled up again. The third time was a charm. Descent and speed were just right and we touched down, bounced a couple of times and rolled to a stop. Funny thing: I teased him about the bouncy landing when recounting our adventure to friends ("We landed and then we landed and then we landed again") but all the time I felt safe with him. I knew he was in control of the situation.

That's what sailing is all about--being in control of whatever situation is at hand. Sure, maybe some of the experienced sailors made their 360's and figure-8's sheeted in with the gunwale close to the water while others less experienced made them with luffing sails. Both groups did the maneuvers within their own comfort zone and with good control and judgment. That's what we try to ensure in a new SCOW skipper.

New Skippers

(Total Skippers, August 22--102)

Flying Scots--Len Collins, Maurice Crawford, Susan Donohue, Jerome Hanson, Aaron Laufer, Ben Lesser, Joan O'Kane, Larry McAndrews

Cruisers--Max Williamson, Henry Yung

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

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That's all, folks.....