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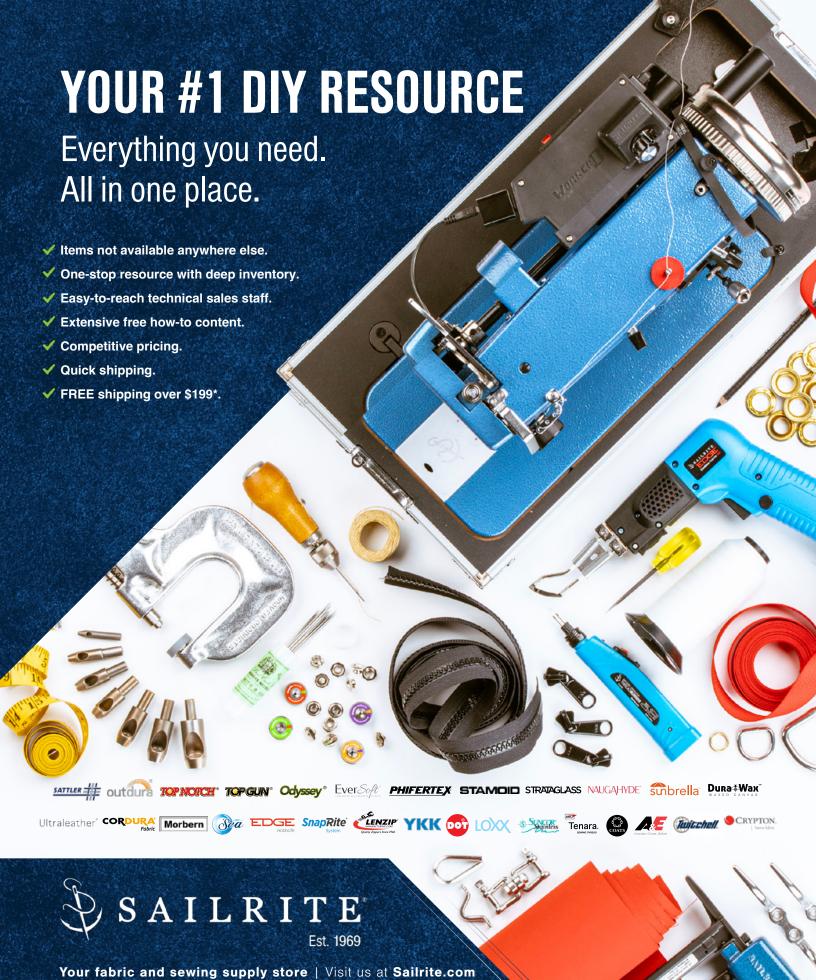




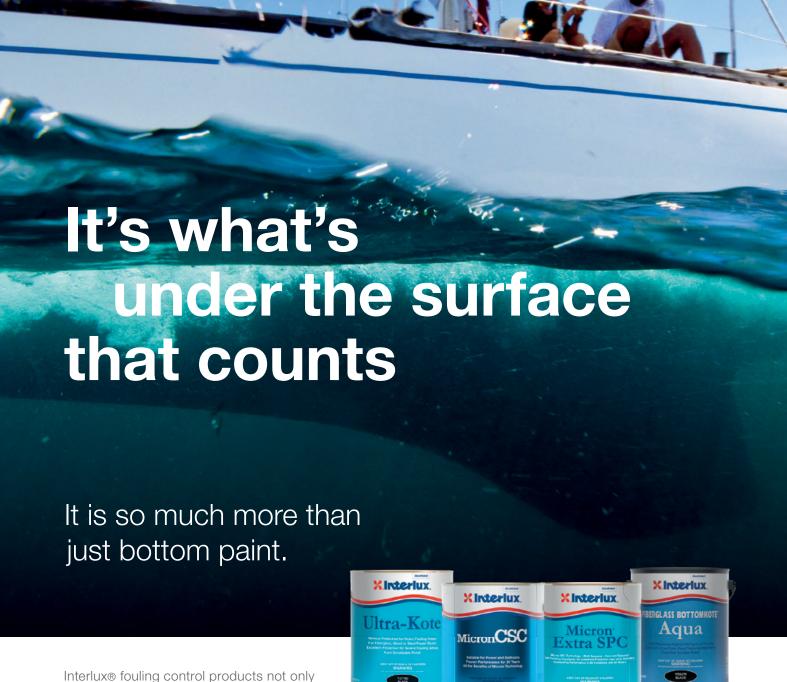


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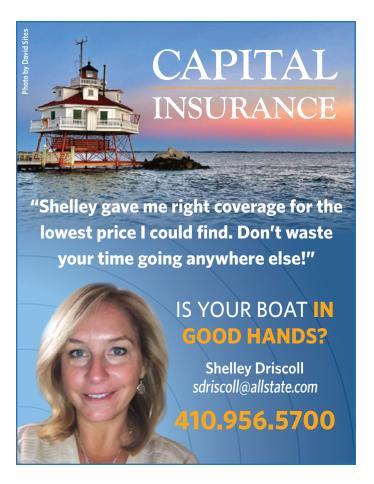
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# THE IMPORTANCE OF BOAT INSURANCE

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### **Unpredictable waters**

The open water can be unpredictable, with unexpected storms, collisions, or other potential accidents. Boat insurance can give you financial protection if there is damage to your vessel, providing coverage for repairs or replacement.

### Damage and injury

Accidents on the water can result in damage to other boats, docks, or even injuries to passengers. Boat insurance offers liability coverage, which can pay for damages or injuries you're liable for while boating, up to specified limits, and lawsuit costs if you're sued. This includes damage you cause to another watercraft or if someone on or near your boat is injured and you're found to be legally responsible.

### Theft and vandalism

Unfortunately, boat theft and vandalism are realities that boat owners face. Boat insurance has comprehensive and collision coverage that can protect you against events outside of your control, including theft and vandalism.

### **Incurred medical payments**

Accidents on the water may lead to injuries for you or your passengers. Boat insurance offers a range of optional medical payments coverage limits, helping to cover medical expenses if you are in an accident or someone is hurt on your boat, regardless of fault.

### Peace of mind for financing

If you financed the purchase of your boat, most lenders require insurance coverage to protect their investment. Having boat insurance not only fulfills these requirements but also gives you peace of mind knowing that your financial interests are safeguarded.

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# Cruising Backwards

eventeen years ago, I flipped through Sail Magazine and saw a one-page article about Annapolis. I rolled my eyeballs before reading it. This was long before the great Wendy Mitman Clarke became editor-and-chief there, and I'd assumed that those (then) Boston-based sailors wouldn't "get" Annapolis. The short article, written by Cindy Wallach, turned out to be terrific.

She must live here, I thought. I found her through her blog and emailed her: "Why are you not writing for SpinSheet?" She responded, "I don't know. Why am I not writing for SpinSheet?" A beautiful friendship began.

By the time I met Cindy, she had been living aboard with her husband Doug for a decade, including a yearlong cruise to the Bahamas and Cuba. They lived on Back Creek in Annapolis on their St. Francis 44 catamaran *Majestic* with their toddler, Zach, and a dog.

A television writer and producer by trade and a sailing journalist by passion, Cindy is a particularly talented, versatile writer. I would ask her if she could interview some cruisers. "Sure," she'd say. How about a gunkholing story? "Okay." Safety feature? "Roger." Do's and Don'ts of cruising? "Yep." Benefits of multihulls? "Cool." Cruising with kids? Sailing with pets? Cooking onboard? "Yes, yes, yes." She writes it all well. And her photos shimmer.

I knew the day would come when, again, Cindy would throw off her dock lines. Having counted on her excellent stories and beautiful pictures for so long, as her editor, I felt secretly relieved every time the family delayed their cruising plans. I wanted to keep her as a Chesapeake contributor forever. Alas... the family sailed south in 2021 for a three-year adventure to the Caribbean, which Cindy documented with flair for SpinSheet.



In a surprising turn of events, last year, the *Majestic* family moved off their catamaran, put her up for sale, and after a few months in the western part of North Carolina, moved to Chapel Hill. Her youngest, Naia (now 14), who's been home-schooled thus far, will attend school in the fall.

How did they make this life-changing decision? "The way we cruise is backwards from others," says Cindy. "We did it, had our kids, and went cruising with them. We always knew we didn't want to grow old on a boat. We're ready for more creature comforts... Our parents are aging, so we need to be closer at hand."

She also admits that her son Zach (now 20), "the water baby," thrives under sail, whereas Naia, who sometimes suffers from seasickness, dreams of living on a farm with chickens and goats. As a cruising family they had "checked all the boxes and were ready to travel by other means," she says. "We love sailing for sailing's sake. I'd love to

sail in circles around the Chesapeake, but we're done traveling under sail."

Our longtime cruising writer will pen a few more SpinSheet stories before she moves on to greener pastures (seriously, hopefully with goats). We will savor her sailing tales while we can (see page 46).

Cindy feels confident that a fitting new owner for *Majestic* will come; she and Doug worked hard to ensure a solid and sail-ready boat for the next owner (to learn more search "*Majestic*" or "St. Francis 44 MK II" on multihull-company.com). In the meantime, she says, "I'm available as sailing crew if the opportunity arises."

Thank you, Cindy, for your friend-ship and many years of SpinSheet contributions. Your 160-plus articles and countless photos have made this sailing rag more interesting, inspiring, attractive, and *fun*. We will miss you!





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### Readers Write

# 40 Years on the Chesapeake

Having sailed the Chesapeake Bay for 40 years, the two recent SpinSheet articles ("Fifty Years on the Chesapeake") by Gail Marcus caught my attention.

I moved to Annapolis in 1970 and decided the family needed a small cruising sailboat to explore the Bay's coves, ports, and channels. My enjoyment of sailing the Chesapeake lasted the next 40 years, beginning with two years on a Bristol 24, the Morgan 28 *Encounter*, and finally going into the Pearson 33 *Second Encounter* for 21 years.

The Morgan with a tiller and pivot centerboard was the most fun to sail, as it recalled my one-design racing in years past. The creature comforts of hot water, a propane stove, and A/C on the Pearson made it most livable for Bay excursions. Annapolis was my home port for the first 20 years and Solomons for the last 20.

All navigation was done with paper charts, depth sounder, knot meter, and compass. By the time I acquired a GPS, I knew the sailing waters well enough to find it intriguing but unnecessary.

Gail's recollections fell in place with mine including anchoring in the small cove on Poplar Island soon after to be lost to erosion. I had to chuckle at her remembrance of the evening's entertainment listening to the radio "ship to shore" phone calls waiting for the Marine Operator telling us that it was our turn to place a call and knowing much of the Bay would listen.

To me the most significant change on the Bay over my 40 years was the weather; climate change? In the 1970s, if we went on a weeklong cruise, we could count on four or five days of good sailing and perhaps one or two rainy or windless days. Those cruises might encounter a late afternoon line squall coming in from the northwest and blowing stink for about 20 minutes as it crossed the Bay.

Weeklong cruises in the later years had maybe three days of good sailing and the other days rainy or windless and beastly hot with a late afternoon thunderstorm. I thought perhaps my memories were just nostalgia for the "good old days," but I went through my cruising logs and found they substantiated my memories.

Thank you, Gail, for sharing your memories and helping me recall mine.

Ken Thorn Carrboro, NC



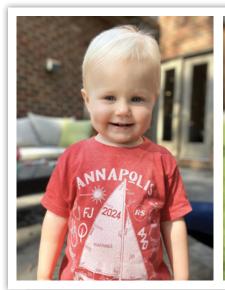
### An Omission and a Thank You

In our January issue Club Notes article "Universal Sailing Club Celebrates the Season," we omitted the author's name. Dr. Deborah Jackson-English, USC social chair, wrote the article. When she contacted us about the omission, we posted the article at <u>spinsheet.com</u> with proper attribution.

### Dr. Jackson-English says:

as a recent SpinSheet subscriber, novice sailor, and writer...

I feel a deep sense of pride having contributed to the content, first rate teamwork, and creatively designed pages that hold compelling sailing stories, appropriately arranged photos, information and resources. In part, SpinSheet has been my motivation flavor of late. As a first-time contributor I'm optimistic about our growing relationship. Thanks again from USC members, friends, and me. Happy 30th Anniversary to SpinSheet!"





### **Future Sailors Club**

Here are two friends of our editor, Nora in Knoxville, TN, and Beck in Dallas, TX (both two years old), wearing their new tee shirts from the Annapolis Sailboat Show. We look forward to taking them sailing on the Chesapeake one day soon!



Send your questions, comments and stories to editor@spinsheet.com

# SpinSheet Will Host Three Weather Webinars (Psst! Sign Up Early for a Discount)

hat if learning more about weather and forecasting would make your sailing life more enjoyable and safer? We at SpinSheet believe it would, which is why we will host three webinars by Mark Thornton of LakeErieWX March 5, 12, and 19. SpinSheet readers are welcome to sign up "à la carte" per session or for a bundle of all three.

As well as teaching at Cruisers University and acting as a forecasting consultant for high-end racing events and teams, Mark has taught several weather courses for SpinSheet readers over the past few years as well as being our guest on the SpinSheet Happy Hour on Facebook and YouTube Live. Our readers have benefitted greatly from his expertise and thorough presentations—plus, as a sailor, he understands our on-water challenges.

Mark has sailed for more than 30 years and currently owns Osprey, a Mainship 34 Pilot. His interest in weather forecasting grew from his experiences cruising and racing on the Great Lakes. A 2006 graduate of the Penn State University Certificate of Achievement in Weather Forecasting, Mark is the president of LakeErieWX LLC, a company dedicated to providing marine weather education and forecasting resources for recreational boaters.

The first in our 2025 series on March 5 will cover "Interpreting Surface Weather Maps," starting with an understanding of the current large-scale weather pattern and how it will evolve over time. Surface weather maps provide this information, but use a confusing array of symbols, meteorological shorthand, timekeeping systems, and color schemes. Learning to interpret surface weather maps will improve your forecasting skills and increase the safety and comfort of your outings.

Next up: "Thunderstorms and Weather Radar" on March 12. The presentation will examine the types of thunderstorms, the ingredients that lead to their formation, and a wide range of resources for predicting thunderstorm development. Once thunderstorms are underway, the best resource for monitoring their movement and evolution is Doppler Weather Radar; you will learn how Doppler weather radar works (along with a few of its quirks) and how it can be used to monitor the development, intensity, and speed of approaching thunderstorms. Reduce your chances of a hair-raising or wind-swept encounter with severe weather by attending this presentation.

The last session, March 19, covers a topic that most sailors think they understand (but do they?): "Understanding Weather Apps." The presentation will explain how weather forecast models work, how your



weather app processes the data, and the positives and negatives of relying solely on apps. A better understanding of your weather app will improve your marine weather forecasts.

The sessions cost \$35 each or \$90 for the bundle. Early birds who register by February 15 using the discount code "SpinSheet-Save10," will save 10 percent. Registration includes live webinars and access to the recordings through June 30.

Learn more at spinsheet.com/ weather-webinar. Questions? Email mark@lakeeriewx.com.









## Nominate an Admiral of the Chesapeake by March 31

he Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has created a new public nomination process for the Admiral of the Chesapeake Bay award to try to solicit a broad range of nominations for individuals who have organized communities, led restoration efforts, and helped improve the overall health of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed.

Instituted by Governor J. Millard Tawes in 1959, the Admiral of the Chesapeake Bay is a lifetime achievement award bestowed by the governor upon individuals who exhibit an extraordinary commitment to the conservation and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay.

The department updated the process to try to solicit more nominations as a way to honor former historian and community organizer, Vincent Leggett, who died in November. Leggett was honored as an Admiral of the Chesapeake Bay in 2003 by then-Governor Parris N. Glendening. Leggett worked throughout his career to highlight the often undertold stories about African American maritime life and Black watermen on the Chesapeake Bay.

The new public nomination form will help ensure the department and Governor are more aware of individuals whose work may not be well publicized but have significantly benefited the Bay and Maryland's environment. The nomination period will close March 31. The nominations will be reviewed by a new committee of staff volunteers at the DNR who will make a recommendation to the Secretary. Award winners will be announced publicly when chosen, and this is anticipated to take place by June 1. Previously, nominations for the award were made directly to the Governor and Secretary of the DNR and then chosen based on internal discussions.

"The Admiral of the Chesapeake Bay is among the most important awards we bestow in Maryland, and we want to make sure we're receiving nominations from every part of the state that encompass the diversity of people and activities that improve the Chesapeake Bay," said DNR secretary Josh Kurtz. "We're reforming the nomination process to make it more accessible to all."



On behalf of Gov. Larry Hogan, Lt. Gov. Boyd Rutherford presented Capt. Eldridge Meredith Admiral of the Chesapeake Bay, a special lifetime achievement award, on his 91st birthday. Photo by Anthony DePanise, State House

Previous Admirals of the Chesapeake Bay (there are more than 100) include Captain Eldridge Meredith, a waterman and charter boat captain who worked in and around the Bay for 80 years; Tom Horton, a news reporter and photographer who has written about the Bay for more than 40 years; and John Page Williams, a master naturalist and environmental educator who worked for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation for 46 years. You can find a list of previous Admirals at dnr.maryland.gov.



# **Local Safety at Sea Seminars**

If you are looking for the best safety training around, you'll find two opportunities in the Chesapeake region this spring. For sailors going offshore and anyone interested in being safe on the water, especially for overnight or coastal cruising, Safety at Sea is a must.

US Sailing's Safety at Sea seminars are the gold standard. The program is led by experienced offshore sailors, and a wide range of attendees are encouraged to enroll. While it was created originally for offshore sailing racers, cruising sailors and powerboaters are most welcome.

Topics include man-over-board prevention and recovery, communications, heavy weather boat handling, safety gear and equipment and their proper use, weather forecasting, and emergency medical treatment.

The Martine Trades Association of Maryland (MTAM) will host Safety at Sea March 29-30, at the US Naval Academy. Three US Sailing Certificate courses will be offered: Offshore Sailing, International Offshore Safety with Hands-On Training, and International Hands-On Only Training. Be sure to check your Notice of Race to verify which certificate is required if you are signing up in order to qualify for a regatta. Participation space in the hands-on training is limited. If you are seeking training without certification, please call (410)269-0741 for more details or email jstefancik@mtam.org. A Safety for Cruising course will also be offered (no certification). Learn more at mtam.org/safety-at-sea.

The Capt. Henry Marx Memorial US Sailing International Safety at Sea course will be offered on March 1 at the Mariners' Museum and Park in Newport News, VA. Space is limited, and ticket sales end February 17 at 4 p.m. Prerequisite online training, Safety at Sea Offshore Course (units 1-15), can be found via the US Sailing website. The Safety at Sea Offshore certificate must be dated within 365 days of taking the hands-on course. Register and find more information at marinersmuseum.org.





# Sailing on Bliss

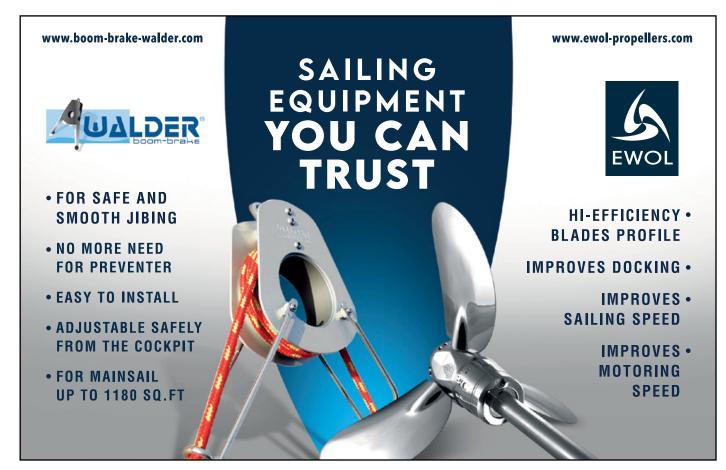
A couple who met through sailing shares their tale in honor of Valentine's Day.

bout a dozen years ago, a new sailor named Russ Borman reached out to our editor to discuss contributing a few articles to SpinSheet, which he did. Since then, he's lived the cruising dream, first solo and later with a partner in sailing and life. In honor of Valentine's Day, February 14, Russ and his partner Kelly Smith answered our questions:



When you first wrote for SpinSheet, you were new to sailing. How did your sailing progress from there?

Russ: I had learned to sail, bought a boat, and later moved it to Annapolis. Having sailed only around the Chesapeake for two years, in 2015 I took the bold step of singlehanding to Florida, mostly on the ICW. I spent that winter living aboard down south and realized I loved it, so in May 2016 I returned to Annapolis, sold my Virginia condo, and began living aboard full time. I've been living on a boat since.



### How and when did you meet Kelly?

Having grown tired of single life, I decided to look online for a compatible sailing partner. Kelly was living in Texas and had also come to the realization that she wanted a partner with whom to live aboard and cruise. We met online in a Sailing Singles group in the fall of 2020 at the height of Covid, trading plane rides every few weeks to make sure we were suitable sailing and life partners. After several "sailing dates," we both decided to fully retire and go cruising together full time.

### How did sailing enhance your relationship?

We are both passionate about sailing and life on the water. Those key criteria served as the foundation for our relationship. The rest was making sure we were compatible. Being together 24/7/365 in a 42-foot space either works or it doesn't, and you find out pretty fast. Kelly's an accomplished sailor and lived aboard in a previous life. Parts of us coming together were easy, while other parts were mildly challenging. We learned how to compromise and co-exist and have chosen to be partners for life living on the water.

### Can you summarize the sailing adventures you've shared thus far?

When Kelly decided to move aboard, I bought a bigger boat. Together we've sailed more than 12,000 nautical miles in four years aboard Bliss, our 2004 Hunter 420. Our trips have taken us from Maine to the Florida Keys, as well as four trips to the Bahamas where we've stayed three months each time.

### What's your advice to other sailing couples?

Russ: To me, what sets happy sailing couples apart is the ability to work together on most things, while working separately where each has strengths. Work at being a cohesive couple while retaining your individuality. It's important for both people to be capable of operating the boat to make journeys easier, or in case of emergency. Kelly and I split helm time pretty evenly, which allows us to spend long days on the water without either person getting

fatigued. Otherwise, all the things that apply on land also apply on the water.

**Kelly**: Living harmoniously on a 42-foot monohull requires adaptability, communication, and teamwork. While we do have our moments of frustration on occasion, the following tips have worked well for us:

- Communication and respect are key elements to any relationship on or off the water. Discuss plans and concerns openly. Make decisions together.
- Allow individual personal time and space for hobbies, reflection, etc.
- Stay organized and minimize clutter which minimizes stress.
- Responsibilities—some divided based on strengths and some shared. Nice to change roles on occasion or help your partner with their role.
- Be patient and flexible; give each other support as needed.

### Anything else you'd like to add?

As with any couple, there will be conflicts. Always remember that life is short, so enjoy it while you can.







## **New Wildlife** Refuge for the **Chesapeake Bay**

ecretary of the Interior Deb Haaland and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service director Martha Williams joined partners and community members to celebrate the establishment of Southern Maryland Woodlands National Wildlife Refuge as the 573rd and newest unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

The 31-acre parcel near Nanjemoy in Charles County, MD, is the first of several intended donations by The Nature Conservancy that over the next few months will permanently protect and conserve more than 300 acres of interior forest and riparian wetlands habitat, supporting northern long-eared bats, forest-interior songbirds, box turtles, and several species of salamanders that are of conservation concern. The service will continue working with partners and willing sellers to secure voluntary conservation of up to 40,000 acres of important wildlife habitat within four watershed-based focus areas in



Anne Arundel, Prince George's, Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties.

Following the announcement, Chesapeake Conservancy president and CEO Joel Dunn issued this statement: "Chesapeake Conservancy is proud to be a contributing partner in the creation of the Southern Maryland Woodlands National Wildlife Refuge. Nearly 15 years in the making, this is the first national wildlife refuge established in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in more than 25 years and the first in Maryland in over 60 years.

"This is one of the most pristine landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay

watershed's Western Shore, and it faces many threats. Our forests continue to be converted at a rate of about 54 acres a day, and more than six million acres of the forest and wetland resources in our watershed remain vulnerable to development. We are losing our iconic landscapes.

"This new refuge offers an opportunity to halt and even reverse biodiversity loss in this important place, and in a way that fully integrates and respects the leadership and rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities."





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## Sail Selina II's Final **Season on the Bay**

fter a remarkable 25-year journey of captivating visitors and locals alike, the beautiful Sail Selina II will set sail for her final season of tours in St. Michaels, MD, in 2025. Captained by Iris Robertson, granddaughter of the original owners, this historic 1926 Crosby Catboat has become a fixture in the St. Michaels maritime culture.

"We're incredibly grateful to have had the privilege of sharing the magic of the Chesapeake Bay with so many people over the years," said Captain Iris. "From family outings to romantic sunset sails, each journey has been a testament to the enduring charm of this incredible region. While it's bittersweet to announce that this will be our final season, we look forward to creating unforgettable memories during this special farewell season.

"I love sailing *Selina* and especially driving her," she says, "but what I love so much more is to drive her with others aboard. Ninety-five percent of our guests have never sailed, and Selina embraces and instantly charms them. As a catboat, she's half as wide as she is long, making her very stable. In fact, she was built to make my grandmother feel safe."

The Selina II has become a local legend, featured in numerous media projects, including photo shoots for JCPenney and J. Crew, as well as television appearances on PBS's "Get Out of Town" and "Eastern Shore House Hunters." Known for her gleaming mahogany, polished brass, and timeless design, she has symbolized the Chesapeake's rich maritime legacy.

To commemorate this milestone, a series of special events, tours, and celebrations have been planned throughout the 2025 season. Guests can expect exciting farewell voyages, themed cruises, and opportunities to learn about the history of Selina II, her role in the community, and her place in Chesapeake Bay's sailing legacy. On May 3, Capt. Iris will host a 1920s Flapper Gala, with dancing, dining, news about Selina II's next chapter, and a toast to a quarter-century on the Chesapeake. Learn more at sailselina.com.







### **SOLOMONS** Sunday, 3/9

4-6 p.m. SMSA

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### **HAMPTON**

Saturday, 3/15 4-6 p.m. HAMPTON YC

SPONSORED BY



### **ANNAPOLIS**

**Sunday, 4/27** 4-6 p.m. EASTPORT YC

CASH BAR



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## February

through Feb 5
Navigating the High Seas: The Literary and Historical Worlds of Horatio
Hornblower

Three Wednesdays: January 22, 29, and February 5 from 6 to 8 p.m. Join the Politics and Prose Bookstore for an immersive exploration of C.S. Forester's Beat to Quarters (The Happy Return), the first novel in the acclaimed Horatio Hornblower series.

AMM Winter Lecture Series
7 p.m. at the Annapolis Maritime
Museum. Topic: A Reckless Night - A
Path to Freedom. Speaker: Dave Gendell.
Pre-registration is strongly suggested as
space is limited. Registration fee of \$10 per
person at the door; first come, first served.
Free admission for First Mate (\$150) and
above. Available both virtually and inperson.

# 6 Beyond 2025: What Is Next for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Lecture

A group of Chesapeake leaders led by Martha Shimkin, director of the Chesapeake Bay Program Office at the Environmental Protection Agency, and Anna Killius, executive director of the Chesapeake Bay Commission, have worked to identify the future of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and what is next for the conservation efforts in the Chesapeake. 5:30 p.m. at the Van Lennep Auditorium at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (also available virtually). Suggested ticket price \$8. AMM Winter Lecture Series 7 p.m. at the Annapolis Maritime Museum. Topic: Resilience in Practice - Adapting to Sea Level Rise in Annapolis. Speaker: Cameron Ramey. Pre-registration is strongly suggested as space is limited. Registration fee of \$10 per person at the door; first come, first served. Free admission for First Mate (\$150) and above. Available both virtually and in-person.

# 15 Film Screening and Discussion with Gary Jobson About "Unfurling the World"

Join the Annapolis Sailing School Keelboat Club for an afternoon with Gary Jobson, including a screening of his film about Irving and Electa Johnson, "Unfurling the World," at 2 p.m. followed by discussion led by Jobson. Free to members; \$25 for public.

# 19 A2N Seminar: Rigging, Sails, Sail Preparation, and Repair Kits

One of the "What To Expect" seminars for the Annapolis to Newport Race. 6 to 8 p.m. at Annapolis YC.

AMM Winter Lecture Series 7 p.m. at the Annapolis Maritime Museum. Topic: Pictured in Time - An Artist's Journey Around the Chesapeake. Speaker: Neil Harpe. Preregistration is strongly suggested as space is limited. Registration fee of \$10 per person at the door; first come, first served. Free admission for First Mate (\$150) and above. Available both virtually and in-person.

20 Book Club Discussion: "Confessions of a Grinder" At the Annapolis Sailing School. Free and open to the public.

20 Unpacking History: Black Packinghouse Workers and Owners in the Chesapeake Lecture

Shoreside communities like St. Michaels were once home to countless packinghouses that processed seafood and produce for more distant markets. Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum chief curator Pete Lesher will share stories of the Black workers and packinghouse owners who drove this local industry. 5:30 p.m. at the Van Lennep Auditorium at CBMM in St. Michaels (also available virtually). Suggested ticket price \$8.

CAPCA Monthly Meeting
6:45 to 8:30 p.m. at Annapolis
Elks Lodge in Edgewater, MD, and
online via Zoom. Topic: Taking Action
to Protect the Chesapeake Bay. Free.
More details at capca.net

AMM Winter Lecture Series 7 p.m. at the Annapolis Maritime Museum. Topic: Chesapeake Invaders - The Ecology and Economics of Blue Catfish on the Bay. Speaker: Jay Fleming. Pre-registration is strongly suggested as space is limited. Registration fee of \$10 per person at the door; first come, first served. Free admission for First Mate (\$150) and above. Available both virtually and inperson.

For more details and links to event websites, visit spinsheet.com/calendar



# February Racing

**AYC Frostbite Racing Series 2** Hosted by Annapolis YC.

### through Mar 30 ILCA Frostbite Racing

Hosted by Severn Sailing Association, Annapolis, MD.

### March

### Capt. Henry Marx Memorial **US Sailing International** Safety at Sea Course

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Presented by The Mariners' Museum and Park in Newport News, VA, and Landfall Navigation. \$325, ticket sales close Feb. 17. This hands-on training course will prepare you for survival offshore in demanding situations and emergencies. Register: marinersmuseum.org

### **US Coast Guard Auxiliary Safety Review**

At Fawcett Boat Supplies (919 Bay Ridge Road, Annapolis, MD, 21403) from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. RSVP to info@fawcettboat.com. Seating is limited, so sign up early.

### **Interpreting Surface Weather Maps Webinar**

Join marine weather expert Mark Thornton for an online lesson in decoding the confusing symbols on surface weather maps to gain a better understanding of the large-scale weather pattern and how it will evolve. 7 to 8:30 p.m. Attend this one webinar (\$35) or the bundle of three (\$90) to include learning about Thunderstorms and Weather Apps.

# SpinSheet Crew Party -

Find a boat to sail on or find crew for your own boat at the SpinSheet Crew Party. Sailors of all levels, including newcomers, are welcome to join the fun. Southern Maryland Sailing Association in Solomons, MD, from 4 to 6 p.m. Free and open to the public. Cash bar.

### **Thunderstorms and Weather Radar Webinar**

Join marine weather expert Mark Thornton for an online lesson in forecasting thunderstorms and tracking their evolution. 7 to 8:30 p.m. Attend this one webinar (\$35) or the bundle of three (\$90) to include learning about Interpreting Surface Weather Maps and Weather Apps.

### **CPR/AED** and First Aid for Boaters

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Selby Bay Yacht Club in Edgewater, MD. \$100 for CAPCA and Selby Bay Yacht Club member; \$115 for all others. This course meets the CPR and First Aid requirements for USCG Captain's License. The certification has a two-year expiration date. The program is taught by American Heart Association Certified Instructors who are all experienced boaters. To register for the class, contact Capt. Alan Karpas: Alan@SafetyInstituteOfMD.com

### SpinSheet Crew Party -**Hampton YC**

Find a boat to sail on or find crew for your own boat at the SpinSheet Crew Party. Sailors of all levels, including newcomers, are welcome to join the fun. NEW VENUE THIS YEAR: Hampton Yacht Club, from 4 to 6 p.m. Free and open to the public. Cash bar.

### **Understanding Weather Apps Webinar**

Join marine weather expert Mark Thornton for an online lesson to give you a better understanding of how your weather apps work and how to interpret the data. 7 to 8:30 p.m. Attend this one webinar (\$35) or the bundle of three (\$90) to include learning about Interpreting Surface Weather Maps and Thunderstorms.

### **Annapolis Oyster Roast and Sock Burning**

12 to 4 p.m. at the Annapolis Maritime Museum. Rain date March 23. Celebrate the spring equinox and the beginning of boating season each March by burning those nasty winter socks. GA tickets \$50 for adults, \$10 for children ages 5-10, ages 5 and under are free. VIP tickets \$125.

Watermen's Story Swap Join local author and emcee Brent Lewis, as well as a panel of local watermen, for a lively evening of stories of the past and present drawn from lives spent on the water harvesting from the Bay. 5:30 p.m. at the Van Lennep Auditorium at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michaels (also available virtually). Suggested ticket price \$8.

MTAM Safety at Sea Presented by the Marine Trades Association of Maryland dt the US Naval Academy in Annapolis. Three US Sailing Certificate courses will be offered: Offshore Sailing, International Offshore Safety with Hands-On Training, and International Hands-On Only Training. A Safety for Cruising course will also be offered (no certification).

# March Racing

### through Mar 30 **ILCA Frostbite Racing**

Hosted by Severn Sailing Association, Annapolis, MD.

through Mar 17 **AYC Frostbite Racing Series 2** Hosted by Annapolis YC.

Do you have an upcoming event? Send the details to: editor@spinsheet.com









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All times listed are in Local Time, Daylight Saving Time has been applied when appropriate. All speeds are in knots. Tides & Currents predictions are provided by NOAA.gov

















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<b>5</b> W	05:47AM 11:36AM	01:52AM 08:33AM 02:06PM 08:22PM	0.8F	<b>15</b> Sa	07:49AM	04:33PM	0.9F	25 Tu	04:09PM 09:37PM	06:26AM 12:55PM 06:47PM 12:55AM	1.6F -1.1E 0.9F
<b>6</b> Th	07:02AM 01:03PM	02:57AM 09:42AM 03:16PM 09:21PM	-1.0E 0.6F	<b>16</b> Su	08:29AM 01:59PM	05:10AM 11:05AM 05:13PM 11:35PM	0.8F -1.0E	W		01:34PM 07:31PM 01:41AM	1.2F
7	12:22AM 08:13AM	04:07AM 10:51AM	1.7F -1.0E	<b>17</b>	09:08AM 02:22PM	05:58AM 11:40AM 05:55PM	0.7F	<b>27</b> Th			1.8F
F		04:39PM 10:23PM			08:58PM	40:4044	4.05	<b>28</b> F	05:30AM 11:59AM 05:54PM		-1.7E 1.8F -1.6E 1.6F
<b>8</b> Sa	09:16AM 03:37PM	05:22AM 12:01PM 06:00PM 11:27PM	0.5F	<b>18</b> Tu	09:51AM	12:16AM 06:48AM 12:16PM 06:37PM	-0.7E 0.6F				
<b>9</b> Su	10:13AM	06:30AM 01:00PM 06:58PM		<b>19</b> W	10:42AM	12:57AM 07:41AM 12:57PM 07:23PM	-0.6E 0.5F				
<b>10</b> M	11:03AM	12:29AM 07:26AM 01:43PM 07:40PM	1.8F -1.1E	<b>20</b> Th	11:45AM	01:41AM 08:37AM 01:47PM 08:15PM	-0.6E 0.3F				

### **Current Differences and Speed Ratios**

Secondary Stations Baltimore Harbor	Time Differences Min. Min. before before				Speed Ratios		
Approach	Flood	Flood	Ebb	Ebb	Flood	Ebb	
Cove Point, 3.9 n.mi. East	-3:29	-3:36	-4:08	-3:44	0.4	0.6	
Sharp Island Lt., 3.4 n.mi. West	-1:39	-1:41	-1:57	-1:43	0.4	0.5	
Thomas Pt. Shoal Lt., 2.0 n.mi. East	-1:05	-0:14	-0:22	-0:20	0.6	0.6	
Pooles Island, 4 miles Southwest	+0:59	+0:48	+0:56	+1:12	0.6	0.8	
Turkey Point, 1.2 n.mi. Southwest	+2:39	+1:30	+0:58	+1:00	0.6	8.0	

**20** 12:47AM 04:07AM -0.5E 06:58AM 10:51AM 0.9F 
Th 02:35PM 05:50PM -0.7E 
09:48PM 11:42PM 0.2F

Corrections Applied to Baltimore Harbor Approach

Secondary Stations Chesapeake Bay Entrance	Min. before Flood	ime Dif	ferences Min. before Ebb	Ebb	<b>Speed</b> Flood	Ratios Ebb
Chesapeake Beach, 1.5 miles North	+0:29	+0:48	+0:06	+0:00	1.0	0.7
Chesapeake Channel, (bridge tunnel)	+0:05	+0:38	+0:32	+0:19	2.2	1.2
Stingray Point, 12.5 miles East	+2:18	+3:00	+2:09	+2:36	1.2	0.6
Smith Point Light, 6.7 n.mi. East	+2:29	+2:57	+2:45	+1:59	0.5	0.3
Point No Point, 4.3 n.mi. East	+4:49	+5:33	+6:04	+5:45	0.4	0.2

Corrections Applied to Chesapeake Bay Entrance







10 01:13AM 03:34AM 0.5F 06:03AM 09:03AM -0.6E 11:43AM 03:28PM 1.1F 06:57PM 10:15PM -1.0E



**FEBRUARY 2025 CURRENTS** 



# Meet Rick Lee Finding His Bliss As told to Beth Crabtree

### A dream that staved with me

The other night after watching a documentary on finding your bliss, my wife asked me what my life would be like without sailing. It caused me to pause and reflect. "I can't imagine that now," I replied. I had experienced sailing and the wind carrying me across the waters when I was younger, and it had always been a dream of mine to learn to sail. I then took up sailing 19 years ago when I turned 50. It has become my passion and joy.

On that milestone birthday, I decided I would put in the effort to learn sailing. I had previously taken some sailing lessons at Belle Haven Marina, in Alexandria, VA, but never followed up with getting out on the water. Then I found the Downtown Sailing Center (DSC) in Baltimore and signed up for the basic keelboat course there.

### Perseverance wins the day.

It took a few years to get experience on the water, as my career and life kept me from getting down to the docks. I am an hour away from access to the Bay, so that didn't help either. However, I knew in my heart I wanted to keep doing this and eventually learn to sail the cruisers that were available at the DSC.

After a couple of years of sailing the J/22s and Sonars I became a keelboat

skipper and began to get more involved at DSC. Next, I signed

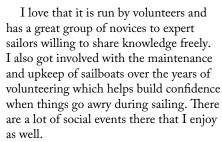
up to become a cruising skipper and with training, practice, and perseverance eventually began to do overnight trips and raftup events regularly. Discovering the Chesapeake Bay with all it has to offer us here locally is just another benefit to learning to sail.

I took the ASA 103 Coastal Cruising class in 2010 and participated with ARC to sail the DelMarVa circumnavigation as a skipper. I continued improving my sailing skills by doing several more DelMarVa circumnavigations in the following years.

Once I committed to developing my sailing resume, I started doing bareboat charters in the Caribbean with my friends in the sailing community. This month we will take our eighth charter in the islands. We will sail in the BVI after having visited Grenada, St. Martin, Antigua, Martinique, St. Lucia, the Grenadines, Guadeloupe, Abacos (Bahamas), and Puerto Rico in past years.

### **Baltimore Peninsula Sailors**

This past year I became involved with a new sailing club that opened in the Baltimore Peninsula at Port Covington Marina called Peninsula Sailors, mostly focused on cruising and education.



Lee sailing in Croatia last summer.

Since I do not live really close to the Bay, I find being in a sailing club is better than owning my own boat and, not to mention, much more affordable.

# Advice for someone who wants to learn to sail.

Sailing is a constant learning experience, and it has enriched my life tremendously. It's never too late in life to learn new skills. I plan to work on my international sailing license (SLC) next so I can charter in the Mediterranean.

Don't be afraid to give sailing a try, you just might fall in love with it like I did! I can't imagine not having sailing as a part of my life now! The wind, the water, the friendships. This is my bliss. Oh... and my wife!

Read more about the Peninsula Sailors club on page 57.

Find more articles, new sailor profiles, and videos at **StartSailingNow.com** 



# Start Sailing in 2025!

f you dream of learning to sail but aren't sure where to start, go to SpinSheet's special section for new and would-be sailors at <a href="mailto:spinsheet.com/">spinsheet.com/</a>

start-sailing-now. There you will find all kinds of useful information, such as what to wear, basic sailing lingo, different types of sailboats, and how to find a sailing school.

For anyone looking to start sailing or improve their skills, be sure to pick up the April issue (or go online to find it), for our feature article on sailing schools for adults. In the meantime, our Start Sailing Now web page has a good list of questions to ask any school you're considering.

Meanwhile this winter, while keeping warm by the fireplace, start reading sailing books and watching videos online for inspiration. Some of the sailors that we've interviewed for the pages of Start Sailing Now were inspired to learn to sail just from watching video by content creators!



Although many sailors consider February to be the off-season, there are a number of hard-core sailors out on the water frostbiting. Frostbite races are winter sailboat races. Usually they are shorter in distance than summer races, sailors are required to

stay in the cockpit, and no boat may fly a spinnaker. All of which means frostbiting is a great way to try sailing. If you are invited to frostbite, say "yes," and pull on your long johns, wind-resistant top layer, lifejacket, and warm hat.

# Find a Sailing School

ew sailors or those returning to sailing may want to seek instruction or coaching at a sailing school or club. Many such organizations exist on the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. They offer certifications for beginners, returning sailors hoping to brush up on seamanship skills, cruisers seeking bareboat chartering or navigation experience, and racers wanting to hone their skills. The following is a sampling of schools and clubs that offer sailing instruction on the Chesapeake. For a more complete list of schools offering certifications outside this region, visit US Sailing or American Sailing.



### Chesapeake Bay Sailing Schools

- Annapolis Sailing School annapolissailing.com
- Annapolis Naval Sailing Association ansa.org
- **Blue Water Sailing School** bwss.com
- Captain In You Sailing Schools, Inc. captaininyou.com
- DC Sail dcsail.org
- Gratitude Sailing Institute gratitudesailing.com

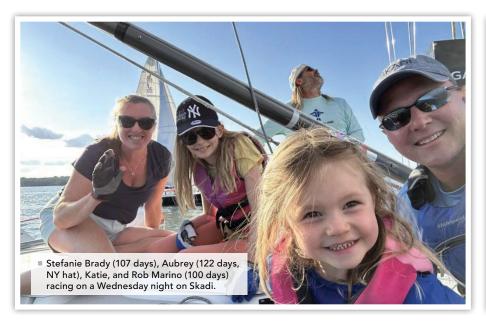
- J/World Annapolis jworldannapolis.com
- SailTime sailtime.com/annapolis
- **Sail Solomons** sailsi.com
- West River Sailing Club <u>learn2sailwrsc.com</u>

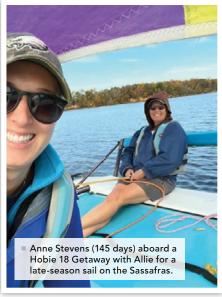














# Congratulations, SpinSheet Century Club 2024!

e wrapped up our 11th SpinSheet Century Club season on December 31. A total of 120 boaters rose to the challenge of logging 100 days on the water within the calendar year. We dedicate extra pages in the January, February, and March issues to celebrate their achievements and inspire future club members.

Only two SpinSheet staffers reached the 100-day goal this year—Eric Richardson and Lenny Rudow (FishTalk editor)—and most of the Century Club members who logged 100-150 days, if not all, reached this goal while balancing it with full-time jobs.

Two club members shared the top honor this year, a leap year, both logging 366 days on the water: David Sites and Catherine Tobin Kraus. Readers may remember that David logged 365 days in 2023, making his grand total 731 consecutive days on the water, making him our first Super Centurion. Will anyone ever beat him? I guess we'll find out around 2028, the next leap year.

Although we celebrate the overachievers, it's important to remember that to qualify for the club boaters must log 100 days on the water; anything beyond that is gravy. The goal always has been and remains 100 days on the water within the calendar year.

The SpinSheet Century Club is open to all boaters: sailors, powerboaters, paddlers, anglers, and any combination thereof. To learn how you can join the fun in 2025, visit spinsheet.com/century-club.





### **David Sites**

### 731 Consecutive Days on the Water!

### What's the best thing about leaving the dock every day?

I never know what I will find on my trip. Some days I would go out with no determined destination, but something cool always seemed to pop up. I love documenting what I see to share with everyone. I feel like the more beauty of the Bay that I share, the more people will respect it and want to experience it for themselves.

### Can you name three of your favorite days on the water this year?

I had so many great days on the water that it would be hard to pick three favorites. I can say that my favorite days usually involve friends. Whether it was going to a boat-docking competition with Drew Payne and friends on the Big



Worm charter boat, sailing on the Schooners Woodwind with Jen and crew with a bunch of my friends, or teaming up with some photographer friends to document cool things that go on in the Bay. The people that I have met and the things that I have seen are priceless.

### What's your advice for aspiring **Century Club members?**

My advice for anyone that plans to participate in the century club in 2025 is to just have fun with it. Set your own goals to challenge yourself. The whole idea is to enjoy your time on the water and to maybe try new things and visit new places. I know that I definitely have.

Find the full interview at spinsheet.com.







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### 2025 Century Club Leaderboard\*

- 1. David Sites 14 Days
- 2. Michael-Anne Ashford 12 Days
- 3. Catherine Tobin Kraus 11 Days
- 4. Mike Pitchford 6 Days
- 5. Wade Moler 5 Days
- 6. James Ronayne 5 Days
- 7. Ashley Love 3 Days
- 8. David Ohler 3 Days
- 9. Billy Hannigan 3 Days
- 10. Dorian Haldeman 3 Days

As of 1/16/2025



To view leaderboard and to log your days, visit spinsheet.com/century-club









# Catherine Tobin Kraus - 366 Days

# Why did you challenge yourself to log 100 days on the water?

I originally joined the SpinSheet Century Club in 2015, but for years, personal and work obligations prevented me from completing it again. In 2022, I embraced a cruiser lifestyle, though I still spent significant time on land. In 2023, while living in the DMV area for several months, I surpassed 100 days on the water but missed the deadline to submit my information. This year, I intended to reach 100 days but not 366; unexpected events, including the illness and passing of my boyfriend's mother, altered our plans. Since we live on the boat together, his travel to the states left me to care for the vessel, which that and some other issues disrupted our 2024 plans to sail to Annapolis and Nantucket.

# How did your sailing skills improve last year?

I have been sailing for many years, but this past year I became highly proficient at "working reboatly" while living aboard, utilizing Starlink to stay connected. I also gained a much deeper



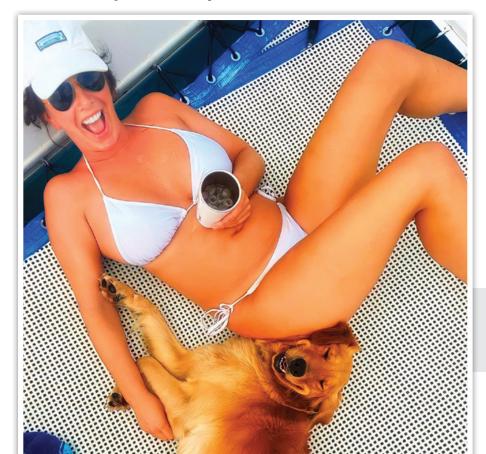
understanding of boat systems, thanks to learning from my boyfriend, who is trained as an electrical engineer, pilot, and has a US Coast Guard captain's license.

# What do you get out of doing the Century Club?

The Century Club offers me more than just an anchor to Annapolis; it's a way

to stay tethered to the roots that have shaped my journey while exploring the vast expanse of the world's oceans. Sailing is my sanctuary, but it's also my stage—a space to showcase a lifestyle I believe embodies the elusive work-life balance... Sharing my experiences, from Annapolis to the Caribbean and beyond, feels like a small way to contribute to a better, more thoughtful world.

These voyages aren't just about me they're about connecting with others who dream of setting sail, both literally and metaphorically. Whether I'm working on a network show about venture capital or swapping tales with fellow adventurers, I see my journey as a platform for inspiration. For those who crave adventure or are contemplating a leap into the unknown, I'm here to help-email me at navigatethedream@gmail.com. I hope to inspire others to take risks, share their stories, and live their dreams boldly. After all, the world needs more explorers willing to rewrite the map and chart their own courses.



To learn how you can join the fun in 2025, visit spinsheet.com/century-club.

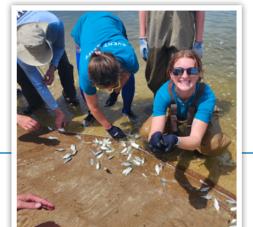


# Emma Green and Pals: Dynamos Protecting the St. Mary's River

dynamo of an operation, led by an enthusiastic Arctic scientist, that's tucked away in a cozy cove section of the historic St. Mary's River, just around the corner from where the Potomac River punches into the Chesapeake Bay.

Nearly 400 years ago, this is where the first 200 or so settlers were "planted" on Maryland soil to build St. Mary's as Maryland's first capital city. Today the city is long gone, but the area is now home to St. Mary's College and its collegiate sailing program. The tradition of "planting" continues thanks to an innovative oyster restoration operation that will help keep St. Mary's River's sailors, boaters, and watermen all happy and thriving.

Let me tell you about Emma Green, executive director of the St. Mary's River Watershed Association (STRWA), which runs an amazing volunteer-based oyster operation along the shores of the Horseshoe Bend section of the river, just next to the college.



How many volunteers? Get ready for this: 782 hands-on volunteers doing the hard work of oyster restoration. It's a community-based effort.

"We involve people in every step of the process," Emma explains, "including Girl Scouts, tech schools, day campers, St. Mary's college students, community volunteers, board members, and interns."

I don't know of any watershed group that can match this kind of support. The volunteers:

- Collect and recycle oyster shells,
- Powerwash those oyster shells for spat-on-shell production,
- Attach oyster larvae to recycled oyster shells in the group's processing center,
- Collect and bag spat-on-shell oysters for planting on oyster reefs,
- Distribute oyster spat-on-shell to their 90 volunteer oyster growers as part of Marylanders Grow Oysters,
- Haul those heavy bags of baby oysters out to the oyster reef for planting,
- Build oyster reef balls and plant them on the reef, and



 Check survival and growth rates of the new oysters via gear-free diving.

The effort's paying off. The group organizes oyster plantings three times a year. Emma estimates, "We're planting



around 1.6 million baby oysters a year." And these new oysters are thriving. A year after plantings, SMRWA's reef is densely populated, and the oysters are far exceeding restoration minimum standards. Emma's counted 241 live oysters per meter squared. The minimum is 50 live oysters/m2.

What's even more amazing is that St. Mary's now runs its own spat-on-shell production operation.

To get going every year, SMRWA buys oyster larvae from the Horn Pt. Hatchery in Cambridge, MD, and they incubate the larvae in the group's 1000-gallon tank. They carefully feed and monitor larvae growth to see when the larvae are ready to attach to shell. When the time is right, the shell is added to the tank. Presto! Millions of oyster spat-on-shell ready for planting on an oyster reef.

Note: Spat-on-shell is the process of attaching 10 or more tiny oyster larvae, each about the size of a pencil dot, onto clean oyster shell. These baby oysters are planted in a waterway to create an oyster reef).

Oh, remember that "planting" metaphor?

Just as the *Ark* and *Dove* merchant ships "planted" those first settlers in Maryland back in 1634, the oyster reefs that Emma's volunteers manage are literally planting the seeds for oyster harvesting operations. When the oysters on the Horseshoe Bend reef reproduce, their larvae swim downstream to attach to the oysters in the commercial section of the St. Mary's River.



Why the emphasis on oyster restoration? Oysters can clean and filter up to 50 gallons of water a day. Multiply that by millions of oysters and you'll have a cleaner waterway one day!

That doesn't mean all is copacetic in the St. Mary's River. There are still pervasive dead zones (areas of water where oxygen levels are so low that fish and crabs suffocate) in the deeper waters. Causes for these dead zones are the same as throughout much of the Chesapeake: development and impervious surfaces (roads, roofs, parking lots) that create the stormwater runoff that leads to dead zone creation.

Note: So far, Emma's oysters are doing well because they're nestled in shallow water along the shoreline where dissolved oxygen levels are good for oysters.

To deal with dead zones, SMRWA now runs a water-quality-monitoring program to track and document oxygen, temperature, salinity, and clarity levels. They'll use that data to advocate for the changes needed to reduce pollution insults to the river.

Emma's path to become an oyster reef builder took off in college, first as a nursing student. When that didn't resonate as expected, she transferred to St. Mary's College where she discovered marine biology and got her hands and feet wet, literally, studying oysters and all the little critters in the mud that represent the bottom of the food chain (aka benthic macroinvertebrates).

That interest led Emma to earn her master's degree with the University of Maryland's Center for Environmental Studies, which is how she ended up in the Pacific Arctic Ocean, where little is known about the food chain. One highlight from those cold days: watching walruses feasting on clams, which prompted questions about how the changing ocean conditions will affect the food web, from critters and clams to walruses and whales.



Now back in the Land of Pleasant Living, Emma enjoys her role with SMRWA because "It's an opportunity to do something good every day... something that makes a real impact on the river." She's also inspired by the chance to always be "building relationships... with the community, students, board members, college interns, and all the people who support our mission."

Can Emma share her best memory? "Oh, that's easy," she says with a smile. "It's watching the kids and students get so excited about the river." Emma's face brightens as she offers a vignette: "There was one little girl, she was part of a Girl Scout group helping out with our oyster work. It was her first time on the water and in a boat. She got so excited, everything was so cool to her, watching the little crabs, the tiny fish, all for the first time. Little ones like her just fall in love with the river.

"Later, she returned for another event, this time with her mom, who was getting on a boat for her first time. The little girl held her mom's hand, reassured her that she'd be all right, and pointed to the critters to show her mom... Those are just precious moments!"

**About the Author:** Thomas Guay, a veteran river rat, is a musicioner with the Eastport Oyster Boys, shares tunes and tales about Annapolis's golden era on the Schooner *Woodwind*, and is author of the historical novel, "Chesapeake Bound," which will be released by McBooks Press in April.



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# **Spring Cruise Planning**

### **Cruising on the Chesapeake: Tips for Sailors**

📣 By Patrick G. De Deyne

It's never too early to plan your next sailing journey, and with spring just around the corner we can start imagining the trips for this season. Here are a few tips for a sailor who is new to cruising on the Chesapeake Bay.

Captains (and passengers) have different levels of expertise and expectations, and some are willing to take more risks; therefore, when planning a group excursion or a flotilla trip it's best to identify a destination that allows for both anchoring in a creek or taking a slip at a local marina. Is the goal to seek some quiet time or to socialize with friends? Answers to

these questions may lead to different destinations.

Joining a sailing club may help you. Members are eager to share experience and local knowledge. This allows you to increase your in-depth expertise.

Select destinations that are within a reasonable distance from your home port. For instance, a 40- to 50-nautical mile trip equates to an eight- to 10-hour trip. For beginning cruises, I don't think you'd want to be sailing at night.

Irrespective of skill level: Update your charts and familiarize yourself with the navigation software. Besides using the commercial software

that comes with the multifunctional display, other options are OPENCPN, a chart plotter navigation software (which can be downloaded for free on your laptop). Obviously, paper charts are still a valuable, low-tech, and very useful option. Before you depart, ascertain that your most important systems work (especially GPS, compass, engine) and that you have enough fenders and dock lines. Always bring an extra set of clothes.

If you plan a two-day or weekend trip, ask yourself whether you want to anchor or reserve a slip in



- **Shaw Bay** (38°51' N 076°11' W) Wye River
- Whitehall Bay (38°59' N 076°25' W) Near mouth of Severn River
- Langford Creek (39°07' N 076°09' W)
   Chester River
- Boby Owl Cove (38°44' N 076°16' W) Broad Creek, Choptank River
- Cherry Island (38°33'N 076°18' W) Little Choptank River
- Smith Creek (38°07' N 076°24' W) Potomac River
- Mill Creek (37°47' N 076°19' W) Great Wicomico River



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a marina to stay overnight. The proximity of restaurants at the marina may be a deciding factor unless you want to rekindle your hidden 'Martha Stewart' talents. Don't forget that food and its enjoyment are part of the cruising experience, thus perhaps make a menu in advance if you're not eating out.

As far as marinas: There's so much choice (some advertise but others don't and are hidden gems). For instance, Onancock, VA, is a nice destination but has relatively few spots; I would call ahead and make a reservation. Solomons, MD, is a popular spot and has several options.

Last and not least: Check the weather. Don't trust your apps all the time. The weather can change quickly, and the software may not be updated in time. I find the buoy observations from NOAA and the USCG weather channels (VHF channels) still the best tools. Take advantage of observing the sky and clouds and check your barometer if you have one.

About the author: Capt. Patrick G. De Deyne has been sailing for more than 25 years in different geographical locations and is the current secretary of Club Beneteau Chesapeake Bay (CB2).



# **Cruise Planning for a Club**

A By Staff

ou might wonder if cruise planning for a sailing club is daunting, difficult, or even goes unappreciated. Nope, at least not at the Back Creek Yacht Club (BCYC).

"Planning cruises has been one of the best experiences I have had with our club and seeing the enjoyment the members have together is always very rewarding," says Tim Nelson, rear commodore and past fleet captain of BCYC.

Tim explains that the planning process begins with consideration of the cruisers' home slip locations, the number of days most cruisers can be away from home and/ or work, as well as looking back at the itineraries from previous seasons.

"We have some members that can only cruise on weekends, others who make the weekends and add a day on either side, while still others are die-hards that enjoy a 10-day cruise and even extend beyond that," he says, adding, "on top of that, our home slips are dispersed from the Magothy River to the Choptank."

When determining destinations Tim says, "Members like new experiences, so we don't want to repeat too much. However, we do have favorites and find ourselves circling back to some of the same clubs and marina. For our 2025 cruises we are trying to stay in the Middle Bay, since two seasons ago we traveled north of Baltimore and last year we headed south.

Tim concludes, "One thing I can say for sure is that it doesn't really matter where we go; it's the people we go with that make the difference!"

Which is better—an anchorage or a marina? BCYC's current fleet captain, Jerry Chappell, explains their club's strategy for

choosing. He says, "During our cruises, we like to drop anchor one or two nights, but we prefer not to do so two nights in a row. Since some of our members join the cruises by land for happy hour or dinner, and since many restaurants are closed on Mondays, generally, our itineraries have us rafting on Mondays.

"For most of our marina destinations we schedule two nights, which allows the cruisers some time to explore the locale or enjoy the marina amenities. One or more members may host a happy hour and/ or dinner one night. This could include making bar or restaurant reservations or providing a main course while the other attendees bring an appetizer, side dish, or dessert. We sometimes have other planned activities such as a bloody Mary contest, a scavenger hunt, yoga on the lawn, and more."

Chappell continues, "We also make sure to consider the distance between our stops so that people aren't spending an inordinate amount of time on the water each day. Especially on the last day, we want a reasonable travel distance for boats.

"Some of our recent destinations have included Eagle Cove on the Magothy, Annapolis, Rock Hall, St. Michaels, Oxford, Solomons Island, Cambridge, Maryland Yacht Club, Baltimore Yacht Club, the Wye River, and the Little Choptank. I can't say that we've ever been to a destination that I didn't want to go back to!

"Finally, I have to second Tim's comment: 'One thing I can say for sure is that it doesn't really matter where we go; it's the people we go with that make the difference!"



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# Don't Wait To Register!

ven though sailors are frostbite racing and those whose boats are winterized are worried about heavy snow on their decks, now's the time for parents and families to start planning their children's summer season. No kidding! Summer sailing programs fill up quickly, starting now, so do your research and sign up soon. In this season, organizers of youth programs are busy hiring staff, assessing their safety equipment, adding new and interesting twists to their programs, and polishing up boats in anticipation of summer sessions jam-packed with fun, learning, and exploration. They're busy and ready to answer your questions. Registration is open now for most programs.

Read on to learn what's new at regional sailing schools and what to look for in a camp. The ads on these pages are a great place to start when seeking summertime fun for your child. For a more comprehensive school list, visit startsailingnow.com and click on "finding a sailing school."



















### What's New for 2025?

We checked in with several regional sailing schools and camps to learn what's new for the 2025 sessions. Here are several highlights:

# Brendan Sailing Celebrates its 40th Anniversary

Brendan Sailing summer camps will return to Annapolis Sailing School and St. Mary's College in June and July with the addition of another week of day camp in St. Mary's this year. Celebrating its 40th anniversary this summer, Brendan Sailing camps are specifically designed for children with learning differences, providing an environment where they can build confidence, develop teamwork skills, and foster independence.

Through hands-on sailing lessons and outdoor adventure, campers

experience personal growth and a sense of accomplishment that extends well beyond the shore. With camps selling out fast last year, parents are encouraged to mark their calendars for February 12 when applications for this year open. It's the perfect opportunity for kids from 11 to 18 years old to embark on a transformative summer of learning and fun. Find more at brendansailing.org.

## More Boats and Counselors at Belle Haven Marina

Anne at Belle Haven Sailing Marina School says, "Our fleet of both Sunfish and Flying Scot sailboats has grown, and we've hired more camp counselors this year to open even more spots for campers! This means we're better equipped than ever to accommodate friend and neighborhood groups."

### Pram Camp, Scholarships, and More From Youth Sailing Virginia

In 2024, Youth Sailing Virginia (YSV) added Pram Camp to its summer programs and now welcomes kids as young as eight years old to register for week-long half-day sessions. This summer YSV aims to reach









even more kids and introduce them to the joy of sailing.

Removing financial barriers continues to be an integral part of the YSV mission. They offer numerous scholarships for those who need help and want to attend the summer camps. Simply request an application; the staff will assist in the process.

YSV welcomes area organizations that work with youth to reach out to collaborate and create transformative experiences this summer for underserved youth. To date YSV has curated programming for kids with Hampton City Schools, Boys and Girls Club, 200+ Men, G.I.R.L.S Club Hampton Roads, and Jack and Jill of America to name a few.

### **Hampton Yacht Club** Welcomes Back Head Performance Opti Coach

HYC's waterfront director Max Plarr reports, "Juan Manual 'Paton' Briones will return as head performance Optimist coach this spring. Under his leadership in 2024 the team excelled in the fleet and team race disciplines at claiming one Atlantic Coast Championship, second at Team Race Nationals, and third in Opti Team Cup in Berlin for Team USA. Paton is committed to coach the next generation of great sailors on the Southern Bay."

The HYC motto is "Not all classrooms have four walls." Junior program registration opens February 15.

### DC Sail Brings Back Schooner Camp

DC Sail will bring back its Schooner Camp in 2025. A week-long day camp aboard a 65-foot double-masted schooner, American Spirit, incorporates a beautifully custom-crafted STEM curriculum into the daily activities along with learning how to sail a tall ship!

Campers are not required to have swim skills, though this is encouraged for all of DC Sail's programs. Campers wear their lifejackets while aboard the vessel at all times. There are safety railings and netting that surround the deck (no swimming).

The camp's benefits include the pure excitement of "Big Boat Sailing"











and learning about marine engineering: complicated rigging and the unique naval architectural design, mechanical and engine functions, local maritime history, flora and fauna studies, hourly evaluation weather and water conditions, plotting charts and navigation, USCG Rules of the Road, and gaining a lifelong appreciation of the human and environmental impact on our fragile waterway systems.

Campers attend from all points of the DelMarVa, share the days on the water with new friends outside of their school and neighborhoods, and work as fellow crewmates to manage the boat. Campers may attend as "buddy sailors," with their friends, siblings, cousins, etc. (Schooner

Camp is available and age-appropriate for youth ages 12 to 18.)

### Washington Sailing Marina Summer Camps

Summer Sailing Camp in Alexandria, VA, along the Potomac River is fun and learning all tied up in a week. The Washington Sailing Marina Summer Sailing Camp has been offering weeklong day camp sailing programs to youth in the DC metro area for more than 60 years.

If you want your child to be outside, meeting new friends, communicating and navigating, and learning a life-impacting skill such as sailing, this camp is the place to be. The school has programs for first time sailors ages eight and up, returning sailors who have experienced sailing and just want more, and advanced sailors who may be considering competitive sailing.

Director Amy Zang, who just celebrated her 30th summer at the Washington Sailing Marina, shares her expertise in education and passion in learn-to-sail programs bringing together an excellent summer program for both campers and staff.

"I pride myself on the longevity of our campers, coming back summer after summer because they *love* it, and becoming staff so they can pass the fun along."





WASHINGTON SAILING MARINA

Youth Camps | Adult Weekend Lessons Full Day Sailing and Windsurfing Camps Week long sessions begin in June (Ages 8-15)

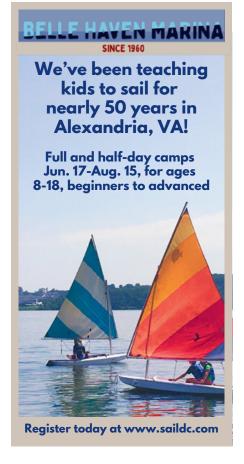
1 Marina Drive Alexandria, VA 22314 | 703.548.9027 amy@sharethewind.com | boatingindc.com/washington-sailing-marina



### Frequently **Asked Questions** From Parents

If parents aren't sailors themselves, they may have a lot of questions about what their children will do all day at camp, such as "Will they sail in the rain?" or "How are your instructors certified?" Many schools post frequently asked questions on their websites; others have a list they send with their welcome packets. We posted six common questions and answers at spinsheet.com/parentquestions.

### JUNIOR SAILING IN ST. MICHAELS **Summer Sailing Camp For Kids 6-17** Full Day Classes June 16th - August 8th Join us for our Annual Junior Regatta August 7th! MILES RIVER YACHT CLUB Junior Sail Program Bob Foley 301.785.5638 | milesriveryc.org





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youthsailingva.org/summer-camps











### Four Key Questions for Choosing a Sailing Camp

What's the focus of the program?

Some kids want to focus on hard skills for the youth racing circuit. Others want to mess around in boats, pick up some basic seamanship skills, or maybe learn a bit about Bay ecology. Talk to the school/camp staff and be candid about what your family is looking for. Will the kids have time to mess around on standup paddleboards, try fishing, learn the basics of navigation, or try powerboating?

What's the temperament of the child?

Let's set the kids up for success by taking time to understand what they really need. Some children are intense, competitive, and love structure. Others are playful, creative daydreamers who thrive in a relaxed atmosphere. Some are independent—happy to go away to camp on their own. Others feel more secure with friends or siblings.

Tell me about the staff and the boats.

Is the program accredited by US Sailing or American Sailing Association? What is the instructor-student ratio? What type of boats will the kids sail? How old is the fleet and how well is it maintained? What qualities are important to the director when hiring instructors? What percentage of staff are returning counselors/ instructors? What are the safety protocols?

Does this camp fit my family's schedule and budget?

Think twice if the program doesn't fit well into your already busy family life or your family's budget. With so many great regional programs, parents should be able to find one that is conveniently located, within budget, fits the parents' work schedule, meets the kids' needs, has excellent counselors, and offers exciting programming.







### —— SAFETY SERIES: PART

## Lessons Learned from Onboard Mishaps

A By Captain Cheryl Duvall

Te have all experienced onboard mishaps, from minor inconveniences to adrenaline-rush moments. Just search "sailing mishaps," and you'll spend hours watching chilling sea misfortunes. These stories should serve as lessons we can apply to avoid similar calamities. Sailors are problem-solvers, sometimes in terrifying conditions, and we can glean wisdom from others.

I recently interviewed a few members of the Chesapeake Area Professional Captains Association (CAPCA) about their lessons learned from onboard mishaps. These captains generously shared a few tales and astute insights to keep us safe on the water.

### Know and maintain your vessel

"Avoiding mishaps begins with knowing and maintaining your vessel," says Captain Priscilla Travis.

"Equipment failures frequently occur because maintenance has been overlooked." Checking fluid levels, belts, bilges, and thru-hulls before each outing should be commonplace, as should visually inspecting rigging components and lines. Preparing annual budgets that include routine maintenance can assist in keeping memories fresh and your vessel seaworthy.

Pre- and post-cruise checklists, for your own boat or a chartered vessel, are extremely helpful. Nothing can take the place of knowing your vessel. If you hear, see, or smell something that doesn't seem normal, check it out.

### Instill a culture of safety

Captain Mary Ann DeGraw recently retired after teaching sailing offshore and near shore for 30 years. She never had a student go overboard or sustain a serious injury. Captain DeGraw attributes this track record to establishing a culture of safety, beginning with the basics, including how to step onto a boat (passing items), securing long hair, no bare feet when working or moving, and using heels of hands on winches.

Another CAPCA member, Captain Doug MacNair, is a firm believer in instilling a culture of safety. He worked commercially on the Chesapeake Bay and learned the importance of emergency drills:

"We trained the crew on specific personnel overboard (POB) procedures, including

using a harness and a sling to retrieve a live swimmer in the water. At times we'd do a final exam of sorts, when you pile one emergency on top of another, such as POB followed by an engine failure, followed by fire, because you seldom have just one emergency."

He somberly recounted the time when one of his crew went overboard due to a lifeline parting. This crew member wore hearing aids and glasses and wasn't a strong swimmer:

"He came to the surface but couldn't see or hear well. It was a windy day, and we were under sail making eight knots with a full complement of passengers. But the other crew members knew what to do. They pointed, threw throwables and lifejackets into the water, and donned









## YOUR SAFETY STARTS HERE.

their lifejackets. We had drilled with four crew, but now we only had three. Despite being down one crew member and under sail, we got the crewman onboard. Building and maintaining a culture of safety will prepare you for the unexpected."

You don't need to be a commercial boat operator to practice safety drills, from verbal quizzes to practical applications. POB, fire onboard, abandoning ship, injured crew, and VHF protocols should all be exercises that you review with crew.

### Be vigilant about weather

Chesapeake sailors know that weather can be quite fickle, especially during humid summers. My husband and I avoid sailing to a schedule, which mostly keeps us from going out when conditions are dicey. Still, I'm usually the one that doesn't reef early enough, despite regularly checking weather when underway. So, I was especially empathetic when Captain Davis Jones regaled this story about his return from Kent Narrows on his Catalina 425.

"The winds were at 10 knots from my stern, so I pulled out my Code Zero, set my course, and relaxed. Gradually the winds built, but apparent wind remained below 12 knots. As we approached Rock Hall, I started to furl the headsail and realized that the true wind was much higher than I thought. The lower half furled fine, but the top half of the sail blew back out, making it impossible to furl as the winds had built to well over 15 knots. I donned my PFD and dropped half the sail into the water which then tried to pull me overboard.

Finally, I hauled the sail onboard, but one of the sheets had wrapped itself around the propeller and wouldn't budge. Thankfully, the engine wasn't running, but I would need propulsion to make it back to the dock. So, I tied a safety line around my waist and swam down to untangle the line and make everything right.

I spent a lot of my magic karma beans that day. Had I not been able to get the sail onto the deck, had the engine been

running in gear, had I needed to maneuver, had the weather been worse... While the only damage was to my pride and some wet shorts, the incident was a wake-up call to pay attention to both apparent and true wind speeds, and reef before you think about it."

I'm sure we all have a weather story to share as a lesson learned. One of mine appeared in the June 2023 issue of SpinSheet ("High and Dry on the Fourth of July"). It was embarrassing at the time, but I learned a bunch, and I'm hoping other sailors did too.

### Situational awareness

Sailors who return to port safely after an onboard mishap are usually the ones who are situationally aware. These sailors review the route ahead of time, noting tides, depths, and air draft. They know the rules of the road and navigate by looking up more than looking down, checking weather often. Furthermore, they take care of their health including their rest, to avoid fatigue that can compromise decision-making.



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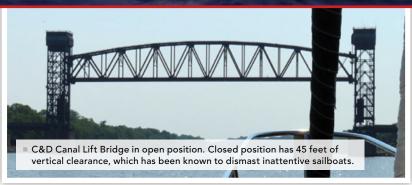
Captain McGraw is a big believer in resting when off watch. She described a dismasting that occurred on a chartered boat in the Gulf of Mexico. Her situational awareness kept her four students safe. She was below when the mast fell, with a noise and jolt that felt as though they had hit a floating container. After trying unsuccessfully to raise the mast with a topping lift, it took over an hour to cut away the mast in white-capping seas.

With the VHF antenna under water, they were unable to call the US Coast Guard. They kept the boom but pitched the mast overboard while recording latitude and longitude. More than 24 hours later, they arrived safely in Fort Myers. Afterwards, she reviewed Nigel Calder's "Repairs at Sea" and noted that she had done exactly what he advised.

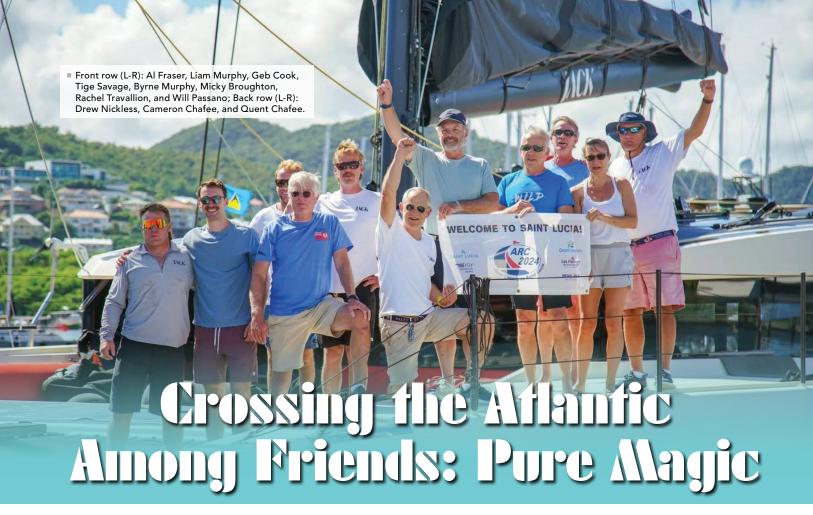
"A mishap can turn into a disaster very quickly, and how we cope with the event can make all the difference. Captain DeGraw's dismasting incident is a good example: she handled it well and no one got hurt," added Captain Travis. "The famous world cruising couples who inspired my generation—the Hiscocks, the Roths, the Pardeys-had no serious accidents, and they began in the time when navigation and safety gear was primitive. Same with the new generation of worldcruising couples and families: very few serious accidents. Thousands of boaters go out in all types of conditions and nothing happens. The bad stuff makes the headlines, and hopefully, people learn from the stories."

Indeed we do.

**About the author:** Captain Cheryl Duvall is a USCG Licensed Master, Inland 100 GRT, and program director for Chesapeake **Area Professional Captains** Association (CAPCA). She recently joined Watermark, so you may have seen her as Captain Ms. Claus during the Jolly Express season.







Then a dozen bluewater sailors, including four from the Gibson Island Yacht Squadron (GIYS), crossed from the Canary Islands to the Caribbean with the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) last fall, not only did they cross the line first in their class, but they also celebrated the magic of a cohesive crew ending a long journey. SpinSheet asked GIYS sailor Byrne Murphy several questions about their journey:

## How did the idea of doing the ARC originate?

Byrne: Upon graduating from college in 1981, I fulfilled a lifelong dream of long-distance bluewater passagemaking. I sailed from Marblehead, MA, to Auckland, New Zealand, by way of the Panama Canal. The goal was to visit as many islands and archipelagos as possible, to not be in a big hurry, and to follow the trade winds all along the way. I earned my way around the ocean.

The voyage took 16 months, included working on five different boats, and was full of adventure and mis-adventure (manoverboard after leaving the Marquesas Islands; surrounded by hammerhead sharks in Isola del Cocoa off of Costa

Rica; and tracked and followed by armed drug runners in the Straits of Florida). My voyage was meant to be continued around the world, but illness cut it short when I was in New Zealand. Upon arrival back in the US, I vowed that I would extend that cruise by crossing the Atlantic. Forty years later I thought doing so in my own boat in the ARC would be a fun adventure, so I did it

### Tell us about your boat.

After researching the challenges of shipping my Gibson Island-based boat, *Andiamo*, a Gunfleet 58, I elected to charter a boat for the ARC if I could find an interesting one. I chartered *Jack*, a McConaghy 75 catamaran, the first of its kind and size by McConaghy. To be sure she would be the right boat for the ARC, I chartered her during the summer for a trial run. I did so in Greece last June and decided it was a go for the ARC.

## Who were your crew members?

Byrne Murphy (GI), Mike "Micky" Broughton (Italy), Will Passano (GI), Geb Cook (Fishers Island, NY), Drew Nicklass (Wales), Tige Savage (GI), Morgan Hayes (captain of Jack, Thailand)), Quent Chafee (Rhode Island), Cam Chafee (Rhode Island), Liam Murphy (GI), and Rachel Trevallion (chef, Italy). In addition to relevant bluewater sailing experience, I deployed three other criteria for crew selection: 1) generosity of spirit—that's what makes the long nights, bad weather, and breakages not only bearable but incredibly fun; 2) an unmistakable track record of commitment to teamwork; and 3) a sense of humor. All selected crew members had those characteristics deep within their DNA. It made a huge difference. As we said, "Culture eats strategy for lunch.... every time!"

## Tell us about your conditions at sea.

The trade winds did not fill in right away, so it was quiet for a few days. Consequently, we were headed north and in fact were the only boat that went up north-northeast "wind hunting." We detected a front approaching a few hundred miles away. If we had not done that, given we were so much heavier than the





smaller boats, we would not have done so well. There were squalls, sometimes with quite high winds (50-mph gusts in some cases; hence the very sad and tragic event on Ocean Breeze), but in general those squalls were short-lived and manageable if you had an experienced crew.

### Did anything surprising happen along the way?

The most critical experience all along the way was the magic of the crew's cohesion... Beyond the selection process (already noted), it boiled down to creating the right culture, right from the start, even during our Zoom calls leading up to the race.

### Did the boat handle conditions to your satisfaction?

Jack handled very well overall. She was designed to sail fast and comfortably off the wind. The race was mostly well off the wind (140 to 150 degrees), whereas if we had been able to sail her at 120 degrees, we'd have reached much higher speeds. Our top speed was 17.5 knots.

### Did you eat well?

We dined incredibly well because we put a strong emphasis on it. I hired a fulltime chef for the race (Rachel Trevallion). Rachel orchestrated approximately 600 meals in the 14.5 days and nights at sea. A remarkable feat, with almost no freeze-dried components and a lot of fresh food throughout. We brought aboard four extra coolers to handle the volume of fresh food. The meals included a special

Thanksgiving Dinner, complete with all the fixins. We also had a mid-Atlantic special dinner—all to keep spirits up and energy flowing. (Sidebar: We also had a long running backgammon tournament nearly the whole race; certainly over 100 games of backgammon were played.) Lastly, each dinner featured one of the crew telling stories of his or her background, or sailing stories, or history tales relating to our trip or similar trips.

### Any memorable wildlife siahtinas?

Whales on two or three occasions, but never too close or threatening. Schools of dolphins swam with us on several occasions. Not so many birds; the usual complement of flying fish. There was no moon for most of the passage, but we often enjoyed an incredible carpet of stars across the sky. The Milky Way was bright and seemingly unlimited in scope, but it was only part of the sky—the stars and planets were everywhere.

Most nights we had Polaris to the north and the Southern Cross. We did have one nighttime shocker when the French government launched a massive rocket out of French Guyana.

### How were the shoreside events on both sides?

There were many events of all sorts, including educational seminars on sailing/racing, weather forecasting, or repairing the engine, sails, or winches.

There certainly were many social events, and many sailors obviously knew each other from prior cruises or ARCs together. There was plenty of good spirit dockside.

### Would you recommend the ARC to fellow sailors?

Yes, certainly I would. My caveat is to be sure they know what exactly the ARC is all about and how it differs from traditional RORC ocean racing. Those differences aside, to be able to cross the Atlantic in a community of boats, nearly all of them sailing with a real community spirit, and all combined with trade winds and beautiful days and nights out on the ocean: that is magic. Pure magic.

### What else should we know?

Sailing is good for your soul, and longdistance bluewater sailing is the most pure. But, as always, be properly prepared. It is still an ocean crossing.



Learn about 2025 cruising rallies at worldcruising.com.







# The Vero Beach Way

hen we were young cruisers, we joked that the Vero Beach, FL, mooring field was the happy place where the seniors went at the end of the movie "Cocoon." Truly, it's a happy place for cruisers of all ages. We have stayed here in the high season, the low season, and even the holiday season, and it always feels secure, easy, and welcoming.

Arriving for the first time back in 1998, we had no idea what to expect. These were the days of cruising before social media, or apps, or smartphones. We had a paper chart, a VHF radio, a sense of wonder, and that was about it. Just north of the Merrill Barber Bridge the marina and mooring field are on the east side of the Indian River Lagoon right on the ICW. We pulled in and did not understand the scene. How did they pack so many boats back here? How did the man on the radio plan on wedging us into this crowded mooring field?

Back then we were new to "the Vero Beach way," which is rafting up two and even three boats onto each mooring ball. It sounds crazy, but it works. Boats are requested to keep fenders out so that a new boat can raft up even if



the crew is not aboard the moored boat. Everyone has an independent bridle to the mooring ball, and it works out so that there is still ample swing room. All of this choreography is orchestrated by the Vero Beach City Marina, and they do it with a warm ease that draws boaters in again and again.

Once you have a mooring ball and raft neighbors, there is some unspoken

etiquette. Don't be a peeping Tom or an exhibitionist. A towel over a porthole can make a big difference. No loud music or loud anything. And obviously use your holding tank and take advantage of the marina's pumpout service.

The Vero Beach City Marina offers many services to transients on mooring balls. They have a protected dinghy dock with free fresh water. You can get mail, park a car, do laundry, shower, hang in the TV lounge, dispose of oil and fuel, fill up with fuel, dump your trash, and use the free WiFi. There's even a bus that comes right to the dinghy dock and will take you to town and the major shopping destinations. There's also a huge dog park adjacent to the marina where all of the dog owners hang out each evening.

It's a peaceful scene. We appreciated the serenity even more when storm fronts blew through. The Vero Beach mooring field and marina are protected from weather in all directions. We pulled in one stormy December evening with almost no visibility in a wicked squall. The voice on the radio calmly directed us to our raft mate,



and within minutes we were tied up securely and so happy to be there snug and safe while the storm raged all night.

Another Vero arrival had us sleep deprived after a multi-day passage from the Caribbean. We slid into Fort Pierce inlet in the pitch dark, slept for three hours until the sun came up, and motored up the ICW to Vero just after dawn. It felt like coming home, and not just because it was our first time in the US after a long stretch away.

The overwhelming feeling whenever we pull into Vero Beach is, "I am happy to be here." Once you have been up and down the East Coast a few times, and around the islands, you have an extra appreciation for how easy, well-run, convenient, and safe Vero Beach is as a destination for cruisers.

We returned to Vero Beach yet again last year, keenly aware that it might be our last time there by boat. This place has been a constant for us. As rookie cruisers on a smaller catamaran, we met some folks who would become lifelong dear friends here when some older

couples set us up on a "play date." We have had family fly in and out to meet us here. We have celebrated holidays here, and we started staging the big move off of our boat/home of 20 years in this harbor. We didn't even have to discuss it; it was just a natural choice. We knew that Vero Beach was where we needed to nest down one last time to move things off the boat and prep for our last haul out.

While our to-do list was long, we spent extra time just watching the pods of dolphins play around the boat. We got up early to listen to the birds and the hushed exhales of manatees. We chatted with the dock hands and made a point to take long walks through the dog park in the evenings. We met fellow cruisers in the laundry room and swapped salty tales. Apparently, we were right when we were fresh faced 20-somethings coming into Vero Beach for the first time. This is where we end up when our long movie finishes, and that's a very sweet ending.



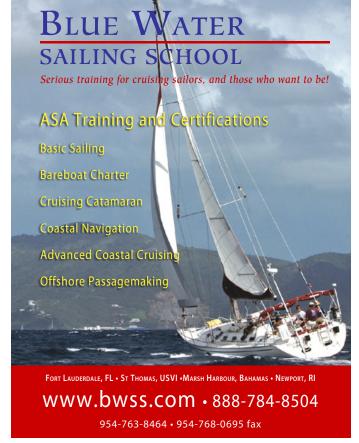
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## Screaming Banshees, Dodging Storms, and Caribbean Sailing Perfection

📣 By James Lane

The sailed to St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands (USVI) from Martinique and put the hook down in Redhook Bay. The voyage was one of the most intense sailing experiences of our lives, which is really saying something.

We set off from St. Anne's Bay shortly after a squall that pulled us along at a good clip all the way to sundown. The wind was fresh off the beam and the seas were kind until well after sunset. As night set in and we took on the dog-watches, we entered the Dominica Channel with all the bright-eyed innocence of a couple of kids day-sailing in a dinghy in Harness Creek. It didn't take long to get schooled.

The Dominica Channel is 22 nautical miles wide and 7000 feet deep and carries a 2000-nautical-mile fetch across the Atlantic Ocean. It's a brutal body of water that on any given day can lay waist to most small vessels. We did it at night. The only things that changed when we entered the channel were the wind velocity, the angle, size, and shape of the waves; in other words, everything.

The seas were not only angry; they were down-right infuriated with screaming banshees in the rig and a

10-foot broad-side slap every few seconds

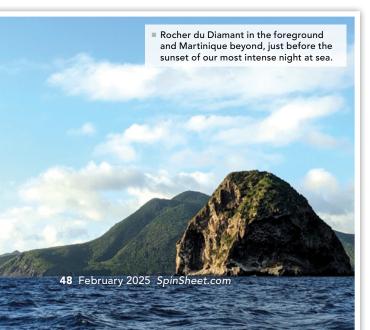
in sets of three. This went on for six hours before we made the lee of the island of Dominica, but we were about 30 nautical miles off the coast of that island, so we saw very little reprieve throughout that second day at sea.

Even though we had marching storms throughout the day, we never actually got rained on. As we got north and east of the Windward Islands, the weather settled into a more

traditional Caribbean winter feel. The wind was warm and fresh from just aft of the beam, and that second overnight was spent watching the radar and dodging storms systems the best we could.

Ultimately, we got rained on through one overnight watch each, and the third day was spent dodging one hell of a cumulonimbus that periodically popped the surface of the sea with angry bolts of lightning. When you're on an electric sailboat one of the things you don't do is sail into a charged electrical storm, so we gybed, gybed, and gybed again and ultimately dodged that big mean sucker.





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Our final night at sea was the very definition of Caribbean perfection. Orion tumbled across the sky endlessly drawing arrows as Ursa Major guarded the northern horizon well into the Virgin Island chain.

Three days, 20 hours, and 41 minutes after sailing off the hook in Martinique, we were safely moored up in Redhook Bay off the island of St. Thomas in the Caribbean Sea.

It looks as if we'll be here for a while fixing stuff, working, adding to the cruising kitty, and readying ourselves and the boat for a shot at the Northwest Passage the next chance we get.



James Lane and Dena Hankins are circumnavigating the planet Earth on a 30-foot electric sailboat. Find them at sovereignnations.net and patreon.com/user?u=92510289.



Charter Directory

hese sailboat charter companies specialize in sailing destinations such as the Chesapeake Bay, Northeast United States, Northwest United States, South America, Caribbean, Mediterranean, Southeast Asia, and South Pacific. Contact them and book your charter dream vacation today!

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Company Name	Website				Reg	gion					Boat	Туре				Trip	Туре	
Abaco Yacht & Charter Services	<u>ayncs.com</u>	•								•	•				•	•		•
Conch Charters	conchcharters.com	•								•	•			•	•			•
Cruise Abaco	cruiseabaco.com	•							•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•
Dream Yacht Charter	dreamyachtcharter.com	•		•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•
The Moorings	moorings.com	•		•			•	•		•	•		•	•			•	•
Virgin Islands Yacht Charters	virginislandsyachtcharters.com	•									•							•
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ninSheet Century Club member Americo Cottely and his wife Lisa joined a group from the Peninsula Sailors club for a mid-February 2024 charter with Dream Yacht Charter out of Compass Point Marina in St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands (USVI). Below Americo summarizes his sailing charter vacation in his own words:

### **MONOHULL OR MULTIHULL**

We selected a monohull, specifically a Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 449. I went with a group from a boat club I belong to: Peninsula Sailors. They regularly book with Dream Yacht Charter and get preferred pricing. The club chose the boats; I selected to sail on this one because I knew most of the people on the boat.

### **CAPTAIN OR COOK**

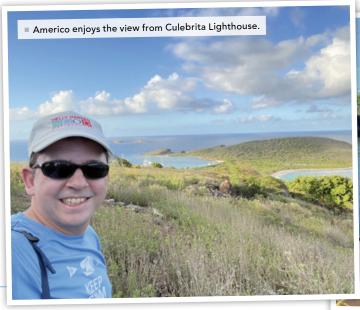
Our group had about 24 sailors in three boats: two monohulls and one catamaran. The idea was for the three boats to sail as a group and help each other as needed. We sailed with eight on our boat. I was the first mate and was able to make many of the decisions regarding navigation and boat handling. We did not have a captain or a cook; we did it all ourselves. Several on the crew had chartered multiple times and were experienced with provisioning and cooking on a boat.

### THE CREW

We had three men and five women aboard (this is a good ratio as far as I'm concerned): my wife and me, a good friend, another couple, and three additional crew/friends that I've sailed with before.

### **DESTINATIONS AND ANCHORAGES**

Starting from Compass Point Marina, we did a short sail to a beach on St Thomas. This was good to get a feel for the boat and make sure everything worked correctly. After that we sailed to Culebrita in the Spanish Virgin Islands. We did immigration on the boat using the CBP Roam app on our iPhones. We sailed to Culebra and Viegues. We returned back to the other side of Culebra before returning to St Thomas. We anchored everywhere we went because we were advised the mooring balls in the Spanish Virgin Islands aren't the greatest. My two favorite anchorages were Turtle Beach in Culebrita and Flamenco Bay in Culebra.





### **SAILING CONDITIONS**

The sailing was really good for seven out of eight days. The winds were steady at 10 to 20 knots. On the day we sailed back to St Thomas the winds were on the nose and a tad light, so we decided to motorsail to get there faster. It was sunny most days. It rained once for about an hour.

### **EXCURSIONS AND HIGHLIGHTS**

We climbed up to the top of Culebrita and explored the island. We snorkeled and visited the bioluminescent bay in Vieques, and we saw the Sherman tanks on the beach on Flamenco beach in Culebra.

On land the highlights were climbing to the lighthouse at the top of Culebrita and swimming in the crystal blue waters of Turtle Beach. On sea the highlight was sailing from Culebra to Vieques. We had a nice beam reach with steady 20 knot winds. We got the boat up to 10 knots while towing a dinghy.

### **SURPRISES ALONG** THE WAY

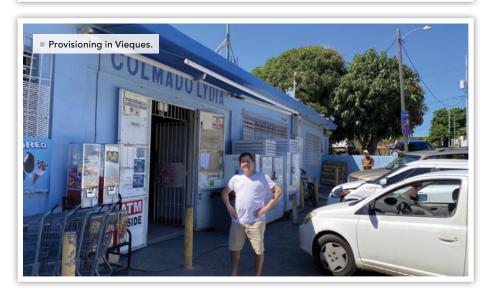
I thought we would be able to dock in Culebra and Vieques to get water. This wasn't an option. We had 100 gallons of fresh water in the tanks, yet we ended up running out before we returned to St. Thomas. I was surprised at the prices at the supermarket near the marina in St. Thomas. Expect to pay two to three times what you pay in the US. The markets in Culebra and Vieques were really good and reasonably priced.

### ON THE NEXT **CHARTER TRIP...**

I would get a boat with a watermaker. Also, I would either choose a catamaran or a bigger monohull. Eight people on a 45foot monohull was fun, but it was a tad tight.







### LEARN MORE

Find charter destinations and details and dreamyachtcharter.com. Learn more about Peninsula Sailors in Baltimore at sailbp.com.









# Modeling Life Aby Beth Crabtree

## Accomplished Annapolis sailor has been building models since childhood.

### Steady as she goes.

Rolph "Towney" Townshend holds out his hands before me. "See, they are as steady as can be," says the Annapolis sailor. Sitting on a loveseat in his living room, I observe that he is correct. At age 95 Towney's hands don't shake at all, which explains how the lifelong sailor can still create impressive half hulls and stunning model boats with intricate details.

I visited Towney in December to see his current project and ask how he got started creating half hulls and models. He was working on a model of the *Edna E. Lockwood*, a sailing log-bottom bugeye built in 1889 by John B. Harrison of Tilghman Island. The model, which Towney says will be his last, will be a gift for his daughter. He shows me at least a dozen photos of other models and

half hulls that he has made and given to friends or are on display at yacht clubs or museums.

I was first introduced to Towney's body of work last summer, when he and his lovely wife Joan held an open house for family and friends. I attended with my sailing friend, Ann, who is Joan's daughter. Stunning half hulls and model ships crowded the surface of their dining room table. An old sailing friend of Towney's pulled me aside and shared a bit about our host's life-long love of sailing (he considers himself an

Alberger for life!), his artwork, and that the Annapolis Maritime Museum had recorded an interview with him years ago (He's also written a book, "Growing up

BLINDING FURY
ERIC RICHARDSON
2024

SpinSheet staffer Eric
Richardson's Blinding Fury.

in Chestertown 1929-1945"). Here are Towney's answers to a few questions that I posed that day.

## When did you make your first model and why?

I started making models when I was 13 years old, while growing up in Chestertown. It was during the war, and after school the high school the classroom used for 'shop class,' was open for building models of American, Allied, German, and Japanese war planes. We were given templates, and when we were finished, our models were given to the corps of airplane spotters to help in the identification of the planes that they sighted. At home, for fun, I would make paper airplanes from model kits, put a firecracker in them, toss them off our porch, and watch them explode.

I began to make models of the boats that I would see in my neighborhood. Many of my friends had Hampton One Designs, although my first boat was a skipjack.



### What materials do you use and where do you source your wood?

When I was a boy, there was a furniture store in town, and furniture was shipped to it in crates. After the crates were ripped open, the lumber from the crates was put out for the trash. My friends and I would bring some home and build

Today, for my models, I use basswood. Its straight grain and hard wood are ideal for the models, and there's a nice selection at a specialty lumber store near the Bay Bridge.

The paint isn't anything special. I start with a can of white spray paint and cover the boat, let it harden for a few days, and add the color by hand with small paint brushes.

To make the sails, I use cloth that comes from a shop in Annapolis near the Naval Academy.

I don't use kits for most of the boats, although I have for some. My model of the Pride of Baltimore II was made from a kit. I've always been interested in that vessel. When the original Pride was built in the 1970s, I went to the boatyard in Baltimore and took lots of photos during its construction. I did the same when Pride II was built, so I had those photos for reference.

### How many models have you made, and how long does each one take?

I've made so many models; I've lost track of the number. Usually, each one



takes about three months if I work on it every day.

### Describe some of your models or half hulls.

There have been many. Among them: my Alberg, a Hereshoff Fishers Island, an E-Scow, a Draketail workboat, and the log canoe Magic. The Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum has displayed one of my Hampton One Designs and a skipjack. An Alberg 30 half hull that I made for an Annapolis Yacht Club past commodore was displayed in the club's model room but was lost in the 2015 clubhouse fire, so I made him a new one to replace it. I've also made half hulls to present as the Sailing Club of the Chesapeake's Ralph H. Wiley Award, which goes back to 1976.

I once revived a five-foot model of a boat that a friend commissioned to be built in France and sailed to the US. The model sat in her garage for 40 years, until it was broken, dirty, and paint splattered. I completely redid it, and now it is displayed in her home.

I've made models for each of my children, my friends, and the friends and children of my friends. Mostly I've built the boats that I see and like and ones that are important to me and my friends and family.









### Cruising Club Notes presented by





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ttention Chesapeake Bay sailing clubs: share your club news and events in SpinSheet's Club Notes section by sending a 350-word write-up and one or more clear photos of smiling faces or pretty boats to <a href="mailto:beth@spinsheet.com">beth@spinsheet.com</a>. We'd love to hear about your cruises, educational programs, and outstanding club members. Let other sailors know about all the benefits your club has to offer! Thanks to Club Notes section sponsor, YaZu Yachting! Find them at <a href="mailto:yazuyachting.com">yazuyachting.com</a> and on Facebook.

## A Cherished Tradition

By David Shinkfield

ecember marked the end of the sailing season for many with boats hauled for the winter, but for the Corinthians Association, it was a time to celebrate community and camaraderie. Our 2024 holiday party, held at the Kent Island Yacht Club in Kent Narrows, brought together 86 members and guests for a festive afternoon filled with laughter, music, and gratitude.

The party is a cherished tradition—an opportunity for Corinthians to come together and reflect on another successful year on the water. It's also the occasion for the changing of the guard. Outgoing fleet captain Gary DiVito was warmly thanked for his leadership over the past year, while Woody Leach and Ed Burke were enthusiastically welcomed as the new fleet captain and fleet lieutenant, respectively. With their energy and vision, we look forward to an exciting 2025.



Entertainment was a highlight of the afternoon. Kathleen Kryza arranged a lively sing-along of Christmas carols, with Jack Naglieri on guitar and Donna Clapp on flute providing the perfect accompaniment. Adding to the festive spirit, the Doo-Wap Gals dazzled the crowd with their vibrant attire and spirited dancing, drawing applause and smiles from all in attendance.

The Kent Island Yacht Club provided a warm and picturesque setting, complete with festive decorations that enhanced the holiday atmosphere. We all enjoyed a delicious meal, reconnected with old friends, and made new ones. As we departed, the excitement for another year of adventures on the beautiful waters of the Chesapeake Bay was palpable. Learn more about the club at thecorinthians.org.

### **Club Beneteau Chesapeake Bay 25th Season**

By Chuck Smith

lub Beneteau Chesapeake Bay (CB2) held its annual fall membership meeting on November 9 at Pirates Cove Restaurant in Deale, MD. Once again, members and guests enjoyed camaraderie, a delicious lunch, relished looking back at 2024, and got excited about the 2025 season.

The season recap saw members reflecting on training events, weekend sails, and CB2's extended cruises known as BOL, which stands for Beneteau Owners Living the Dream. In June, 12 sailboats on the BOLD cruise completed a loop of the northern Chesapeake Bay with stops in Havre de Grace, Baltimore, and several beautiful anchorages.

The club's weekend sails were a combination of raftups and marina gatherings. They began with a raftup in Round Bay on the Severn River, and in July we filled Safe Harbor Oxford with Beneteaus.

The annual Commodore's Crab Fest was held at Lankford Bay Marina. Chester River Seafood delivered tasty crabs to the marina's beautiful setting off the Chester River. That weekend we celebrated the club's 25th anniversary. The club, which was founded in March 2000, was created by eight Beneteau owners. It has grown to more than 60 sailboats and remains true to its founding principles. CB2 continues to promote the sport of sailing, provide a program of family sailboat cruising, and present a forum for good fellowship and an arena for the exchange of knowledge.

CB2 members enjoyed the annual party at the Beneteau America booth during the Annapolis Sailboat Show. The club enjoyed exclusive access to the Beneteau sailboats on display and showed its love for the Beneteau brand, which marked its 140th anniversary. The local Beneteau dealer, Clarks Landing Yacht Sales, helped make



the gathering possible, and CB2's relationship with Clarks continues to grow.

If you have ownership interest in a Beneteau monohull or Lagoon catamaran on the Chesapeake Bay, I encourage you to join Club Beneteau Chesapeake Bay. Come enjoy the camaraderie with fellow Beneteau and Lagoon sailors. To join, visit cb2.clubexpress.com and click on 'CB2 Membership Application.'



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### **CBCC Plans for 2025**

By Susan Theuns and Rich Tull

he Compass Boating Club of the Chesapeake (CBCC) has not been idle this winter. We have been brainstorming about the upcoming sailing season with ideas for events and ports of call.

We had a good turnout for the planning luncheon held in January at the Bohemia Bay Yacht Club with members driving from areas surrounding the Chesapeake Bay. This year we plan to explore both familiar and remote anchorages plus some favorite ports for restaurants and land activities. The club members have come up with many great ideas. Our first "water" gathering will be in late April/early May for the 'Get R Done' event.

CBCC is a no-fee club where like-minded people with a shared love of the water can help plan activities for Bay cruising, raftups, ashore gatherings, and exploring. If you are interested in joining a boating club that is tailored to you, please send a brief description of your experience, contact information, and expectations to <a href="Compass-BoatingClub@yahoo.com">Compass-BoatingClub@yahoo.com</a>. We look forward to hearing from you!

### **CHESSS: 2025 Off and Running**

fter a very successful 2024, CHESSS (Chesapeake Singlehanded Sailing Society) looks forward to a jam-packed 2025, starting with our traditional winter series of Gather and Gabs at local restaurants in the area. Our Spring Member Meeting is scheduled for April 3. We also plan to offer another set of very special guest speakers.

The Spring Meeting will be followed by our popular Poplar Island Race, our annual, shorthanded, pick your own direction of rotation races. Despite boats rounding in different directions, it tends to result in surprisingly close finishes. This year's race will include CHESSS Spinnaker and Non-spinnaker classes, as well as several one-design classes racing shorthanded.

Our growing membership has expressed an interest in shorthanded cruising or cruise-races. The first will be an overnight raftup on the evening after the Poplar Island Race. Additional races and cruises are in the works. For more information, visit <a href="mailto:chesss.clubexpress.com">chesss.clubexpress.com</a>.

### **The First WOW Commodore at PSC**

By Julie Day

ne night in early spring of 2023, four women got together at the monthly meeting of the Pentagon Sailing Club (PSC). Two were long-time friends who had been active in the club for several years; the other



two were relative newcomers. The topic of conversation was the formation of a women's sailing group. Nearly two years later, in December of 2024, the leader of the discussion, retired Air Force Lt. Col. Joanne Spahn, was sworn in as the first Women on Water (WOW) Commodore of PSC.

Joanne's sailing career began many years ago when she was stationed in Oklahoma City. It was windsurfing that first captured her interest. Thirty years later, as she was considering retiring from government service and wondering what she and her husband might enjoy doing next, she bought a day sailor for \$300, and both attended sailing school. After taking the ASA 101 and 103 courses, she joined PSC, where she "met many people who liked to sail" and was invited to join the PSC racing program on the Potomac. Club members encouraged Joanne to enroll in the Navy Command and Seamanship Training Squadron, an experiential leadership program for midshipmen, to further her sailing skills.

When asked how she became interested in WOW, Joanne remarked, "Many guys who enjoy sailing have wives who don't sail; there are also many fewer women skippers than men, and no channel existed at the time for women to get together to sail at PSC."

With the club's enthusiastic support, the first year WOW had the use of three boats and scheduled 10 sessions, two per month, at a nominal cost. This past year WOW was able to use five boats, added boat maintenance training, entered a women's boat in PSC's Hydrilla Cup race and designed fun sailing gear.

Joanne's plans for 2025 include a season kickoff event on March 8 to get everyone excited about the coming season. She would like to see women gain skill and confidence in sailing and find sailing partners to skipper and crew the PSC Catalina rentals. Above all, Joanne's goal is to "provide a warm, welcoming environment to women sailors, so they can achieve their sailing goals." Learn more at pentagonsailing.org/Women-on-Water-a-PSC-group and facebook.com/pentagonsailingclub.

### **A Focus on Education and Learning Together**

eninsula Sailors is a sailing community formed to enhance everyone's sailing abilities, opportunities to sail, and develop an atmosphere of comradery around learning together. We put an emphasis on safety and encourage the use of proper sailing techniques and good seamanship.

The membership consists of many sailing instructors, mentors, and seasoned sailors. Many of our members started with no knowledge of sailing and developed into skilled crew and skippers.

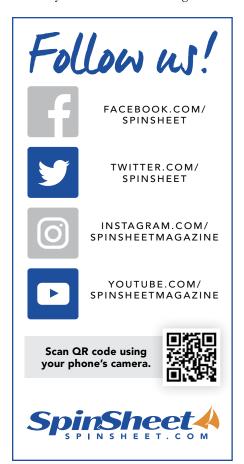
Every sail is an opportunity to learn and develop your skills on the water. We work diligently to ensure our fleet is well maintained, safe to sail, and well stocked with emergency supplies. There is always something that can go wrong on a sailboat, but training and education help us to be prepared for those events.

We are thrilled to offer our members a variety of on-the-water training courses

taken in concert with NauticEd online training.

Over the winter we will be offering numerous seminars on various aspects of sailing including engines, electrical systems, rules of the road, navigation, and even Caribbean cruising. Check out one of the area's newest sailing clubs. We are located in Port Covington Marina on the Baltimore Peninsula. For more information email us at join@sailbp.com or check out sailbp.com. Turn to page 50 for club members cruising in the Spanish Virgin Islands.







## Outstanding Member: Steve Krakauer

By Mary Ann Gordon

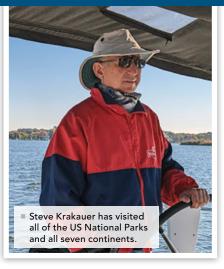
teve Krakauer is an outstanding member of The Sailing Club (TSC). Steve was introduced to sailing during summer camp in Maine when he was about 10 years old. Encouraged by their son's enthusiasm and abilities, six years later his parents bought a 27-footer, and together they explored the waters of Long Island Sound.

Steve enjoyed sailing and exploring so much that for several years he organized and led his own sailboat charters in addition to TSC trips. Friends from the club and others joined him. His first trip to the Caribbean was in April of 1995 to the British Virgin Islands. 'Spectacular' was how he described it, and it's still a favorite destination.

As a TSC member, he earned the title of club-qualified skipper in July of 1996 and served as skipper in October of that year and every year since. Steve has now joined the ranks of the club's Senior Skippers who provide mentoring and guidance for those advancing within the club's training program. There are well-defined procedures to earn advancement to First Mate, Skipper, or Senior Skipper.

Asked about changes to the club over the years, Steve noted the membership used to be well over 100; now it is almost half that. However, because so many members have stayed active in the club, the breadth and depth of knowledge that exists across our skippers and first mates is astounding. In many ways it's better than a conventional sailing school because it's all hands-on.

Because of his love of travel and exploring, this sailor has visited all 63 U.S. National Parks, and in 2024 accomplished his goal of visiting all seven continents.



Whenever he's asked what his favorite place is, his response is, "Wherever I am today!" He truly lives in the moment.

When asked about any new goals, he replied, "I'm not much of a goal-setter. As an example, the only New Year's resolution I've ever made (and kept) is not to make New Year's resolutions." However, as I'm writing this, he is packing for a trip to Alaska to see the Northern Lights!

## More "Catting Around the Bay" Planned for 2025

By Craig Ligibel

he Chesapeake Catboat
Association (CCBA) capped off
a banner year early in December
with a laid-back holiday luncheon
held at the Dock House Restaurant on
Kent Island, where the cool cats got
the chance to gather and join together
on their kazoos in playing the CCBA's
theme song much to the appreciation of
the assembled crowd.

Commodore Butch Miller reflected on the year just completed saying, "Thanks to all of our Bay area catboat members who sponsored events up and down the Bay. It takes a lot of work to put on an event for 20–30 catboaters who sail eight-10 hours from their home ports for a race or a dinner. These boats are not the speediest. We have to make provisions for not enough wind, too much wind, and sometimes mass confusion when the weather turns bad."

Miller, along with his wife Denise, sails his catboat out of his home port on the Eastern Shore.

Plans are underway for the 2025 season. A kickoff meeting will be held on March 15 at Pirate's Cove in Galesville, MD, to outline the group's next year's activities.

"We are a group of sailors with a keen interest in catboats and having fun on the Bay. We don't take ourselves too seriously, and we welcome anyone who wants to learn more about catboats and our Association," says Miller. He invites anyone with an interest in catboating to check out the group's website at <a href="chesapeakecatboats.org">chesapeakecatboats.org</a> to get the latest on what the association will be up to in the year ahead.

"Sometimes getting the group together all going in the same direction is like herding cats," Miller says with a smile. "We have a mixture of boats. Some big, some small. There's always room in one of our cockpits for a guest or two to join in the fun." Come out and join us. Prirrirr.



## BCYC-What's Up in 2025?

chieving consensus around an idea can be a challenge for any organization from conception to implementation, especially when it comes to technology. Happily, the diverse membership at Back Creek Yacht Club (BCYC) provides a ready talent pool for all the tasks that make it such a great place to belong.

Being social creatures, we tend to follow our instinct to join a group, and these groups tend to be based on mutual interests, such as sailing. As with any organization, who doesn't appreciate a one-stop shop for membership information, club happenings, and upcoming events? Thanks to a couple of club members who've spent their careers engineering solutions, BCYC members enjoy just that. Others have expertise that runs more toward the social media realm, which helps make planning a snap. These members recognize that social media tools might still intimidate others and graciously invest in tutorials, gradually winning over the most ardent techno-

Commodore Chuck Kahle credits BCYC secretary Carlos Mojica for



the idea to use WhatsApp to organize scheduled and impromptu events both on and off the water, especially for communicating last-minute changes—what a convenient way to share information!

Beyond technical expertise, our membership's talents run from artist to business and government leaders, which means there is always a variety of events being planned for our year-round calendar, both on and off the water.

Some yacht clubs provide a physical location such as a clubhouse, but with 21st century technology connecting us in so many ways, BCYC operates virtually, meaning no overhead to maintain physical (brick and mortar) structures and therefore lower dues for members. Our focus is 100 percent about having a good time and the club is "all about the people."

If sharing your love for sailing with a group of like-minded individuals is on your 2025 to-do list, take a look at the BCYC calendar of events at backcreekyc.org and consider attending an event to get to know us a little better. #welcomeaboard











## **HSA-1 Names Terry and Michael McCauley 'Sailors of the Year'**

Terry and Michael McCauley its 2024 Sailors of the Year. The couple, who have been members of HSA-1 for three years, cruised last summer from their home slip in Rock Creek in Pasadena, MD, to Block Island and Newport, RI and back aboard their 2006 Hunter 41DS, Sea Whisper.

The 41-day trip was the couple's first cruise north of the Bay. "We'd cruised the Bay extensively over the last seven years and had previously taken a 31-day trip to North Carolina via the ICW, so we thought a cruise north would be something new and interesting," says Michael.

This was the first time for Terry to sail offshore. She recalls leaving the Delaware Bay for the Atlantic. "You could easily tell that we'd left the bay; the water was bluer, the waves were different, even the air smelled different."

During the trip they visited friends and relatives and explored towns and anchorages, spending about half the nights on the hook and the other half divided between mooring balls and slips. Highlights included attending a family reunion near Atlantic City, anchoring near the Statue of Liberty, taking in two Broadway shows, anchoring in Coney Island Creek and dinghying to shore to walk to Coney Island Park and boardwalk, sailing the East River through Manhattan at 11 knots under mainsail only in about eight-knot winds, and reaching Block Island, their intended destination.

Michael says, "Occasionally we had to wait for good wind and current conditions; fortunately we are both retired, so there was no need to rush or take chances with the weather. AIS and our 'marriage saver' headsets were both hugely helpful. Being flexible with our itinerary allowed us to go where the wind could safely take us and explore areas we discovered on the way."

How did the McCauleys find the Hunter Association? They met another Hunter owner at a boatyard while they were both having work done on their boats, and he recommended the club! Learn more about HSA-1 at hsa1.org.

### **Feeding Hungry Club Racers**

By Betty Caffo

avre de Grace, located at the top of the Bay, has a longstanding and friendly yacht club. The "newest" iteration for the Havre de Grace Yacht Club dates back to 1978. Thursday night racers get pretty hungry after a rigorous sail. What to do? Find the best chef in town—or even on the whole Bay—and feed them.

Candi Bossoli, our club's social director, prepares tasty feasts for sailors, and the cost is included in our modest membership fees. Seriously, if we divulge what a bargain our club is, we just might get overrun with new members. Candi, with help from husband/racer Bob and sailing mom Pat, prepares five "socials" each season. She has been doing this as a volunteer for over 10 years, feeding 60-70 hungry club members at each meal. On the water, Bob and Candi race their Catalina, *Vela*.

Asked why she does it, she said, "Food brings people together." Candi actually has four volunteer jobs—each designed to keep up her various skills and interests. The yacht club cooking fulfills her love of cooking and "playing with food." But she is also an American Legion president where she coordinates efforts for Wreaths Across America, a ski club treasurer where she uses her accounting skills, and a member of the local Board of Appeals to fulfill her interest in legislation.

With a modest budget, Candi shops for sales and builds her dinners around the best and cheapest protein she can find. Some favorites have been pulled pork for which her husband smokes the meat, beef stroganoff, taco bar, and lemon pepper chicken—real gourmet treats, and all from "scratch." She also serves side dishes, salads, and desserts. Her husband is known as Beer Bob since he keeps a supply of beer and water for every Thursday night race. As Candi stressed, we can't have sailors fainting from dehydration! She and Bob keep all the equipment in their basement, and Candi gleefully said she bought the supplies from Goodwill. A bargain woman, indeed. Learn more about Havre de Grace Yacht Club at hdgyc.org.



## **Multiple Education Awards for ABCW!**

merica's Boating Club Wilmington (ABCW) takes the values of safety and education seriously as indicated by recent awards presented to our club by the education officer from America's Boating Club Mid Atlantic. Our club has received three District 5 Education Awards for the past year. District 5 supports 26 clubs located throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia.

First Place, the Commander's (Electives) Award is presented to that club showing the greatest percentage increase in completion of the elective courses taught. Members were congratulated for their completion of courses including Marine Electrical Systems, Sail, Cruise Planning, and Instructor Development.

Third Place, the Henry E. Sweet Excellence in Education Award is presented for the greatest percentage increase in completion of the advanced grades and

elective courses, including Advanced (Piloting) Marine Navigation.

Third Place, the Workboat Award is presented for the most work in teaching members both elective and advanced courses. It is based on the total number of members who have completed these

In addition to the three club awards above, two of our members achieved Educational Proficiency recognition. Congratulations to our squadron education officer, Bill Barber, and instructors Randy Williamson and Bill Zimmerman, who planned and provided the instruction of courses for our members.

In January, members enjoyed an informative and entertaining zoom presentation by Allyson Ropp on The Bridge to France: The Life of One of the Mallows Bay Ghost Fleet Vessels. Ropp is a maritime archaeologist. Her research focuses on the relationships between factors influencing wooden shipwreck degradation, specifically



John O'Reilly presents Commander's Electives Award to John Bailey and Randy Williamson. Photo by Richard Butler

microbial communities, water chemistry, historical uses, and archaeological depositional activities. She has worked on submerged archaeological sites around the world.

ABCW continues to improve boating skills through education and promotion of safe boating practices. Our members thoroughly enjoy being together as we are like-minded mariners. To learn more, visit abc-wilmington.com or contact us at wspsboaters@gmail.com.





## **CBYRA High Point Standings 2024**

he Chesapeake Bay Yacht Racing Association (CBYRA) announced its High Point standings for 2024 to recognize excellence among its members racing on the Chesapeake. Here are the standings in Cruising One Design and for Juniors as announced by CBYRA. If a class or region is missing, there were insufficient qualifiers for an award in 2024 or the class had not yet reported its tallies.

Congratulations to all 2024 CBYRA High Point qualifiers and winners! We look forward to following your on-the-water scores in 2025. Stay tuned to our March issue for PHRF class standings and special awards.

Sailors must be members of CBYRA in order to qualify for High Point standings. Besides providing awards for the best and most active sailors on the Chesapeake, CBYRA also organizes the racing calendar (Green Book) and offers educational opportunities and grants for competitive sailors and teams. Learn more at cbyra.org.

- 1. Pat Seidel, Laughing Gull
- 2. Lanny Helms, Windswept
- 3. Mike Nikolich, Skybird

### **Cal 25**

- 1. Alisa Finney, Fahrvergnugen
- 2. H. Marie Harkenrider, Arctic Tern
- 3. Barton Goldenberg, Love Shack

### Harbor 20

- 1. Garth Hichens, Sugar
- 2. John Heintz, Endurance
- 3. Kenneth Appleton, Brilliant

### J/105

- 1. Ray Wulff, Patriot
- 2. Peter Bowe, Good Trade
- 3. Fredrik Salvesen/Cedric Lewis, Mirage

- 1. David Johnson, Avenger
- 2. Dan Watson, Avita
- 3. Jamie Gregory, One Love

- 1. Daniel Wittig, Turbo Sloth
- 2. Bert Carp, Eleven
- 3. Connor McKee, Numbnutz





















## Junior Sailing High Point Standings

### **Opti Overall**

- 1. Trey Waters, (Red), Annapolis YC (AYC)
- 2. Andrew Allgeier, (Blue), Hampton YC (HYC)
- 3. Brandt Adams, (Blue), HYC

### Red

- 1. Trey Waters, (Red), AYC
- 2. Emory McAllister, (Red), AYC
- 3. Adam Butz, (Red), AYC

### Blue

- 1. Andrew Allgeier, (Blue), HYC
- 2. Brandt Adams, (Blue), HYC
- 3. Daniel Skutch Tyson, (Blue), AYC

### White

- 1. Samantha (Sammy) Feinstone, (White), AYC
- 2. Tucker Johnson, (White), HYC
- 3. Sebastian Cole, (White), Severn Sailing Association (SSA)

### Radial

- 1. Will Mohler, SSA/AYC
- 2. Christopher Hanson, SSA
- 3. Robert Carey, Tred Avon YC

#### C420

- 1. Teddy Bower/Clarke Garrett, Fishing Bay YC (FBYC)
- 2. Justinas Petkauskas/Madeleine Garrett, FBYC
- 3. V. James Biles/Rylee Landry, AYC





■ Photo by SpinSheet



or 32 years sailors from all over the Chesapeake Bay (and beyond) converged on Solomons to celebrate their passion for racing sailboats. The Southern Maryland Sailing Association (SMSA) hosted a three-day regatta known as the Screwpile Lighthouse Challenge.

Screwpile was famous for its great racing as well as water balloon fights, swimming, and pink bikinis while waiting for the afternoon sea breeze to fill in.... and parties. A day of great competition on the racecourse was followed by a dip in the pool and a few beers or mud slides waiting for race results and fun (sometimes wild) awards parties with the regatta's famous Mount Gay Rum drinks, cold draft beer, live bands, and party shenanigans... and of course, the Mount Gay red hats which are proudly worn at regattas all along the Eastern Seaboard.

Hosted at Zahniser's Marina in Solomons, Screwpile attracted 174 boats in 2004. It was the place to be in late July for three days of great racing, great parties, and fun in the sun.

Last month, the SMSA board made a tough decision to discontinue hosting Screwpile. It's been a shock and disappointment to many. Regatta chair Jim Keen reported the sad news to SpinSheet staff citing a trend of disappointing numbers of participating boats over the last several years. He noted that numbers were not getting better, so the club made the decision to discontinue rather than downsize.

Keen praised his predecessor, LG Raley, for the great job he did as Screwpile chair

for its first 27 years. He expressed gratitude and appreciation for the hundreds of SMSA volunteers and the many generous sponsors who made Screwpile possible for 32 years. Lastly, he thanked the estimated 1000-plus Chesapeake racers who came to Solomons to race and help make Screwpile such a fun and memorable regatta.

In learning of Screwpile's termination, Lin McCarthy, longtime publisher of Southern Bay Racing News You Can Use, race committee volunteer, and SpinSheet reporter, shared her thoughts:

"I am so sorry to hear this news but fully understand the decision. There are so many wonderful memories of Screwpile among racers, supporters, and friends. You have worked so hard and cared so much to provide good racing for those who, first and foremost, love to race. We'll just have to keep those memories fresh and share them often."

SpinSheet editor Molly Winans adds, "SpinSheet staffers hold a special place in our hearts for the Screwpile, as we've been involved from the very beginning. We have fond memories of zipping out of the Patuxent on the SpinSheet photo boat, seeing pelicans, hearing Navy jets, and partying like rock stars among racers, wearing SpinSheet anchor tattoos.

"Thank you, SMSA volunteers, for dedicating so many hours and years to hosting a favorite summer regatta and inviting Bay sailors into your club. Although it may feel sad to say goodbye to a cherished tradition, what if it opens a clean lane—breathes new life—into your club and summer schedule? I tend to think that good things come from change, yet it's hard to envision them at first. We at SpinSheet are always happy to cover your racing events and keep our readers posted. All the best to our SMSA friends in 2025!"

## **Southern Racing Schedule**

re we *over* the cold yet? Many Chesapeake sailors escape to warm climes to scratch their racing itch. Here are some favorite destinations:

February 8-9—Davis Island J/70 Winter Series, <a href="yachtscoring.com/emenu/16864">yachtscoring.com/emenu/16864</a>

February 8-9—Sarasota Viper Winter Series #3, viper640.org/events

February 24—Caribbean 600, caribbean 600.rorc.org

March 2-8—Bacardi Cup Invitational Regatta, bacardiinvitational.com

March 6-9—St. Maarten Heineken Regatta, heinekenregatta.com

March 27-30—J/70 Midwinter Championship, yachtscoring.com/emenu/16834

April 10-13—Charleston Race Week at Patriot Point, charlestonraceweek.com

April 26-May 2—Antigua Sailing Week, sailingweek.com





## Sailfaster Podcast:

## Starting and Tacking With Guillaume Seynhaeve

Sailfaster recently featured Annapolis's Guillaume Seynhaeve in a fascinating discussion about maximizing boat speed, race starting strategy, and managing the complexity of keelboat racing. Hear the full episode on Apple Podcasts or watch it on YouTube.

## How do you handle the complexity and intensity of a big fleet race?

**Guillaume:** Sailing is an extremely complex sport. I focus on controlling the basics—boat speed, positioning, and reading the shifts. I've seen teams obsess over details that ultimately distract from what really matters. Work on the fundamentals, and as you perfect those, you can refine the margins. The successful racers are the ones who can separate what is in their control from what is not. It's about managing what you can and navigating the rest.

## You're renowned for your driving skills—how would you describe your approach to helming?

I sail significantly by feel. You can't see the wind; you can only sense it and how the boat reacts to it. Instruments have their place, but over-relying on them can create bad habits. A good helmsman understands the subtleties: when to anticipate a puff, how to let the boat glide, and when to let the keel and rudder work for you. Sailing is about responding to the environment instinctively, not waiting for instruments to confirm what you should already know.

## What's your preferred starting strategy in a large competitive fleet?

My philosophy has evolved over the years. Once I would have said you have to win the start to win the race. But now I think differently. Winning the start isn't necessarily about being first boat across the line—it's about setting yourself up to be in a position where you can sail your own race. That's my definition of a good start. Are you at speed? Do you have the ability to tack or continue in a clean lane? If you have those, you're good.



If five boats are fighting for the pin, that's a high-risk situation. Only one will come out ahead. I've learned to position close to the favored spot but not necessarily in the thick of it. I'd rather be the second- or third-best starter with speed and a clear lane than risk everything for the perfect start and end up stuck.

Speed is king. If you're at speed and everyone else is fighting for position, you can roll a boat or extend enough to hit the first shift cleanly. I always think about having an exit strategy: tacking out, going bow down for speed, or staying the course. Ultimately, the ability to adapt and execute your plan is what's key. It's not about where you start but how well you start.

## Tacking is a key focus for you—what's your approach to it?

I focus on the jib. It gives me a reference point for my entry and exit. In light air, you might back the jib, but it still tells me when I'm past head-to-wind. It tells me when I'm supposed to be slower in my exit. In heavy air, the jib release is when I know I'm entering that head-to-wind point of sail. I do get frustrated when a jib trimmer leaves the rail and releases the jib too early, disrupting my timing and reference point.

The rate of turn should be consistent every time. If not, your jib trimmer will struggle to anticipate the speed of rotation. Don't alter your approach due to nearby competitors. For example, if I'm lee-bowing someone, I'll say 'tack' with intensity to time it right, but that doesn't mean you should change the rate of turn. If you do, everything can go wrong; you might oversteer, slow the boat too much, or lose control entirely. It's a balance between feeling the boat, using visual references, and working in sync with the crew. And of course, sometimes tacks won't be perfect, but good enough is often good enough!

Subscribe to the Sailfaster series, the number one podcast for racing sailors, wherever you find your favorite podcasts.



### Small Boat Scene

## Fast Puts the FUN in Fundamental!

📣 By Kim Couranz

nnapolis is fast becoming known as one of only a few hubs in the country for youth skiff sailing, thanks to the combined missions and efforts of Severn Sailing Association (SSA) and Skiff+. SSA has long been known for outstanding small-boat one-design racing for all ages and for fostering a love of sailboat racing that will last a lifetime in its Junior Program participants. Skiff+, run by high-performance sailor and coach Caroline Atwood, helps sailors grow their capabilities using skiffs such as the 29er as the sailing platform.

Sailing fast is fun, as evidenced by the recent development and rise of many lighter-weight asymmetrical spinnaker classes. Atwood's mission to inspire young sailors to master the fundamentals of sailing, using skiffs as the sailing platform instead of a more traditional doublehanded boat like the 420, is gaining traction. Sailing a skiff like the 29er can serve as a pipeline to high-performance Olympic classes such as the 49er, 49erFX, and Nacra 17.

When Atwood was looking to bring her work back to the United States from Hong Kong, where she had been coaching, she explored potential markets. Annapolis made sense to her for a couple of reasons: it's home to strong junior sailing (especially Optimist) programs, and there's a large adult one-design small-boat sailing community. She has found those two elements-which are proxies for sailor interest and parent support-key to a strong skiff location.

"I aim to reach athletes who aspire to represent the United States on a global stage in high-performance one-design boats," said Atwood. "SSA has a strong history in the Olympic classes, so I thought they might be interested in supporting a way for young sailors to train up to new Olympic classes."

Atwood reached out to SSA Junior Program director Travis Carlisle and operations manager Madde Vachon to see if SSA might be willing to serve as a base for Skiff+ clinics and coaching. For SSA, it was great timing. Carlisle and Vachon



were eager to explore new ways for young sailors to develop their skills, and having an expert like Atwood eager to deliver topnotch coaching and charter boat availability made saying "heck yes!" an easy decision.

"Caroline came in with a plan and a vision including introductory clinics and team high-performance practices that were a good match for what we were looking for," said Vachon.

In late 2023 and throughout 2024, Skiff+ hosted several clinics at SSA to introduce interested sailors to the 29er, as well as afterschool and weekend practices for more committed sailors. 29ers were also included in SSA's fun and popular "Adventure Sailing" class during its summer junior program, where young sailors get to learn sailing in several different established onedesign classes.

Plans for 2025 are even bigger, including at least two introductory clinics (including an all-girls clinic!) this spring, to help sailors get a "taste test" to see if they want to commit to more time in the 29er. 29ers will again be part of the Adventure Sailing experience. And, SSA's summer junior program will include two-, four-,

and eight-week race team options in the 29er that will be led by noted 29er coach Eric Scherer. While sailors looking to step up their involvement in skiff sailing are encouraged to bring their own boat, there are other options: SSA has two boats and Skiff+ has two boats that can be available for program participants.

Opportunities for sailors to compete in skiff regattas are growing, too. 29ers will have a fleet in the three Annapolis-area Junior Race Week events (West River SC, June 30; Annapolis YC, July 1; and SSA, July 2). The US Sailing Junior Women's Doublehanded Championship (Ida Lewis Trophy) will include a skiff fleet in 29ers this June.

If you are or someone you know is a junior sailor looking to learn the fundamentals of good sailing and sportsmanship, while going fast and having fun, sailing skiffs is a great option to consider!

### More information:

U.S. 29er Class: us29er.org/the-boat-2 SSA Junior Program: severnsailing.org/

junior-program Skiff+: skiffplus.com

About the Author: Kim Couranz has earned several national and world titles in Laser Radials (ILCA 6), Snipes, and Lightnings. She has also raced J/22s, J/24s, and Ynglings on an international level.





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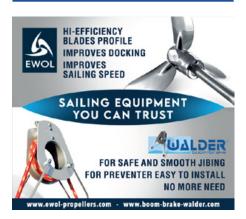
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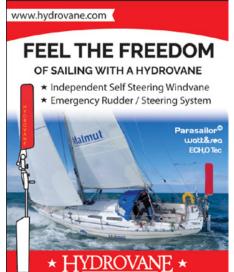
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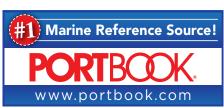
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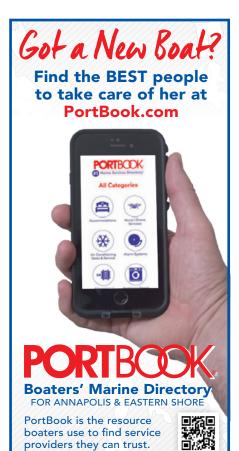




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### **Partnership**

Helly Hansen and The Ocean Race announce the renewal of their long-standing partnership. With the extension of the partnership, Helly Hansen will provide professional grade apparel for the entire race organization, including partners and the on-water race management team, for two consecutive race cycles through 2031, with the first race cycle to include The Ocean Race Europe in 2025, The Ocean Race Atlantic in 2026, and The Ocean Race (around the world) in 2027. The partnership between Helly Hansen and The Ocean Race unites their shared passion for sport, bringing together the world's best sailors and putting them and their gear to the test in some of the most extreme ocean conditions around the world. The two organizations also have a shared dedication to sustainability and a commitment to respect and protect the environment. As the partnership progresses, Helly Hansen will continue to support The Ocean Race's Racing with Purpose program, a platform that utilizes the unifying power of sport to educate, inspire, and accelerate action towards a healthier ocean. As part of the partnership, Helly Hansen will launch an official merch collection, which will be available for race fans both online and in Ocean Live Park, the international stopover race villages, starting with The Ocean Race Europe in 2025. hellyhansen.com

### **Donation**

Back in December, the **Annapolis Boat Shows** made their annual donation to the **Marine Trades Association of Maryland (MTAM)** at the organization's holiday party. John Stefancik, executive director of MTAM, shared how the funds are allocated. He says, "We use these funds to run all activities of the association. Chiefly we use them for:

- Lobbying the Maryland General Assembly on matters related to the industry, to develop legislation beneficial to the state's economic interest in recreational boating.
- Creating a pipeline of workers to gain entry into the marine trades through our workforce development program.
- Producing quarterly events for our membership. The next one is our Legislative Meeting in early March. In 2024 this function featured such speakers as DNR secretary Josh Kurtz, State Senator (now Congresswoman) Sarah Elfreth, and CBMM President and CEO Kristen Greenaway.
- Running our annual shrinkwrap recycling program for members all around the state.
- Producing our yearly Guide to Boating Chesapeake Bay."

For more information on MTAM and its programs, visit mtam.org.

### **Award**

Fairwinds Marina, located on the scenic Magothy River, has been recognized as a 2024 Marina of the Year award winner by Marina Dock Age magazine. Honored in the Building and Growing category, Fairwinds Marina stood out for its commitment to innovation, customer satisfaction, and community engagement. Owned and operated by father-daughter duo Larry and JoAnna Goldberg, Fairwinds Marina has transformed over the past decade into a thriving hub for boating enthusiasts. The marina, situated on five acres, offers 140 slips and features a host of amenities, including a ship store, service station, fuel dock, Freedom Boat Club, and seasonal waterfront outlet, Fairwinds Dockside. The award recognizes the marina's extensive facility improvements, which have enhanced customer experience and set a new standard for small marinas. Highlights include rebuilding and reconfiguring docks, wave attenuator installation, enhanced electric and security systems, and sustainability initiatives. JoAnna Goldberg, a U.S. Coast Guard-certified captain, has also distinguished Fairwinds Marina through unique employee training programs. She provides on-thewater boating education to ensure all staff, regardless of prior experience, are confident and knowledgeable about marina operations. fairwindsmarina.com

### Welcome to the Team

Crusader Yacht Sales announces its new managing broker: Denise Hanna. Hanna is a Certified Professional Yacht Broker who has been in the yacht sales industry since 1995. She is currently a board member for the Yacht Broker Association of America. She has won a number of awards throughout her career and has also represented many brands over the years, including Taswell, Valiant, Tartan, Sabre, Beneteau, Lagoon, Jeanneau, Dufour, Fountaine Pajot, and was the national sales manager for Beneteau Sailboats from 2012 to 2014. She has mastered the ability to introduce families to sailing or help couples choose the perfect cruising boat to spend their retirement on. Her expertise, hard work, and dedication go beyond the sale of the boat, and her level of service to her clients builds long-lasting relationships. We are delighted to welcome her to our team! crusaderyachts.com

Send your Chesapeake Bay business news and high-resolution photos to kaylie@spinsheet.com

# SpinSheet 1995: Ask the Spin Doctor

Early readers of SpinSheet may remember the "Ask the Spin Doctor" column. Here's an entry from our second issue in October 1995:

### Dear Spin Doctor,

Tam relatively new to the sailboat racing scene, and I received my very first Mt. Gay Rum hat at Mt. Gay/Yachting Annapolis Race Week last month. I would like to know more about the care and feeding of a Mt. Gay hat. I am also curious about any etiquette concerning the hats. Now that I have one, I don't want to look like I don't know what I'm doing.

~ Hatful of Questions



### Dear Hatful,

ongratulations on passing one of the first unofficial initiation rites of sailboat racing. Mt. Gay hats are increasingly difficult to come by, and that only serves to increase their value.

Regarding care and feeding: in their quest for the perfect broken-in and faded red hat, many sailors have resorted to artificial means far too hideous to discuss in the hallowed pages of this magazine. The Spin Doctor only respects those who break in their hat naturally. Dip in the Bay and then begin wearing it everywhere. Leving the hat (in a safe place) outdoors for several months or years is also an option. Skip the bleach or any of the cheesy home "speedy break-in" methods that will, undoubtedly, be forced upon you wherever sailors gather.

The question of etiquette is a difficult one, but I have a few simple rules which, if we follow, will make life much easier. First, never, ever, under any circumstances steal another's Mt. Gay hat. Stealing another sailor's hat is not only illegal and unethical, but it often leads to the breaking of rule #2 which is: don't wear a Mt. Gay hat from a regatta you didn't do. It's okay if you did the delivery or served as "shore support," but if you were at your cousin's wedding during 1991 Block Island Race Week, forget the hat. Getting busted on bogus hats is very uncool.

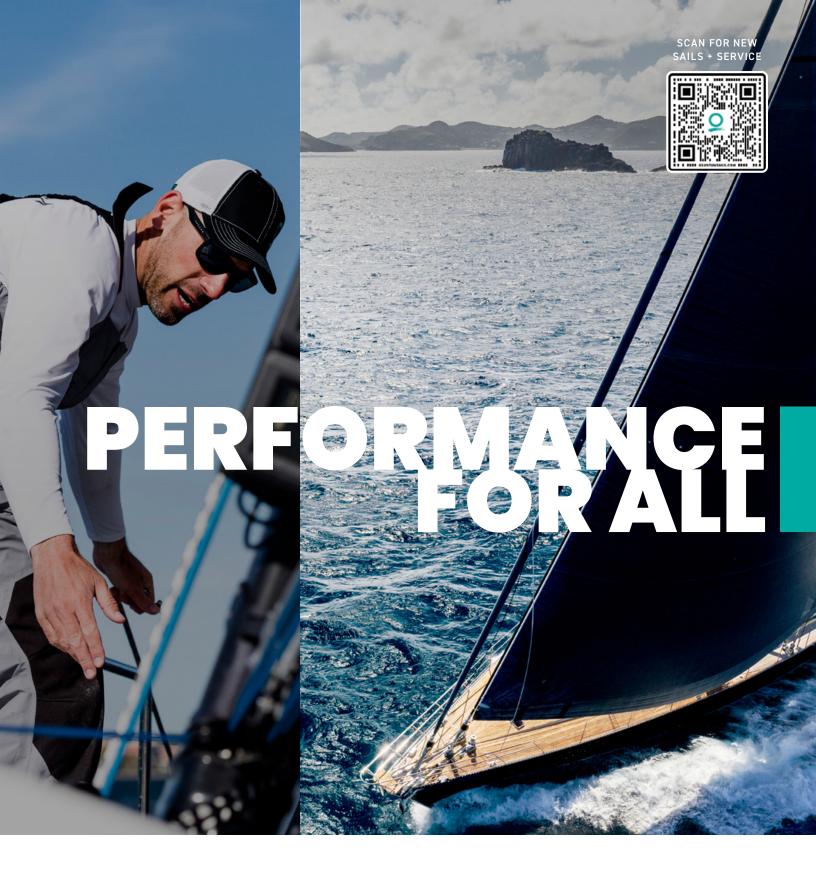
The Spin Doctor himself has a shelf in his closet loaded with crisp Mt. Gay hats from his younger days. I am planning to break out those hats in, oh, about 25 years or so. Today 1994 Solomons Race Week hats are as common as St. Mary's College alumni at Marmaduke's but in 2020... way cool.

Note from 2025 SpinSheet editor to the 1995 Spin Doctor—the time has come to break out the hats!









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