

Occoquan Yacht Club
P.O. Box 469, Occoquan, Va. 22125

The Daymarker

July, 1988, Vol. V, Issue 6

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Upcoming Events

June 25 - 4th Annual 4th of July Dock Party
 July 4 - Cruise to Washington to see Fireworks
 (This will be an individual decision)
 July 23-31 - Week Long Summer Cruise



Commodore's Comments

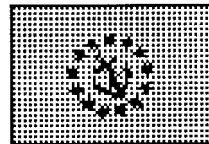
Ron Tilmon

Well folks, Chapter Two of the Labor Day cruise to Tides Lodge saga. I'm afraid that I have some bad news. After I received the contract, it contained a clause that required that boats be present in the slips for all four nights of the holiday weekend. After further lengthy discussions with Tides Lodge people, it seems that it isn't good enough to be willing to reserve four nights, pay for four nights and only stay two or three. They won't budge on the full period occupation rule as they would lose money, e.g. , two nights of non-use of their restaurant and bar, etc. On deliberation of their apparent lack of interest in having boaters interest, I became exasperated. "Rules are rules and there are NO exceptions!" If we don't want to play (and pay) by their rules, so be it...they'll just find someone else who will. So, our (my) reservation for Labor Day has now been cancelled and that trip is off. The Executive Board has met and is choosing a place that we know will be alot more hospitable.

Well, now for a little upbeat news. We have, since the last Daymarker, had two very successful cruises - Memorial Day to Colonial Beach and the Alexandria Waterfront Festival. Our twelve boat raft up just off of Colonial Beach and Reno's Restaurant was a sight to behold and drew a lot of comments from the general visitors and towns people. I'm sure you will get more info elsewhere in the Daymarker. We also had a very good time in Alexandria except for some of us who played plumbers helper on a marine head and also dealt with three

dead batteries. Luckily, I had a lot of help available from my fellow OYCers in the raft up. So, you see, raft ups can be fun and helpful when problems arise.

Bottom line, if you haven's joined or participated in our waterborne events, you're missing out on a lot of fun and commraderie.



Vice Commodore's Comments

Terri Petrey

Can you believe that it's already July? Where is the time going?

I hope you all received your invitation to the July 4th Dock Party on the 25th and were able to attend. Last month I completely neglected to remind you of when and where it would be. My Mom says that senility runs in my family and I'm beginning to believe her. Please forgive me! This month I will try not to forget anything - but I'm not promising anything! That's called an absolute positive-negative.

Following the dock party, there have been some suggestions that an impromptu overnight to the Dunes or Mat-tawoman be considered. So consider it and if you would like to join those who will probably venture out, please do. Usually the impromptu outings turn out to be the best!

The 4th of July Cruise to Washington will be left up to the discretion of the individual member. Some of our members will not be able to take Tuesday off nor do they want to

take the chance of cruising back down the Potomac with the crazies who are always in such a rush to get home. Personally, I can't blame them because just anchoring out and watching the mad procession home scares me to death each year. I'm sure there will be some of you who will want to go or will be able to go and if you do, please let me know how it went so I can tell everyone about it. Don't forget to keep your eyes open and your ears tuned for good "pot pourri" stuff!

The following two weeks after the 4th will be left open for individual cruising and getting ready for the Week Long Cruise which, this year, has been planned and organized by Steve Worcester, our new Commodore for Power. Further in this issue of the Daymarker, Steve has given you the schedule which he has set up. If anyone has any questions, please don't hesitate to give him a call or call one of your Board members. I am really looking forward to this trip. At this moment we have 9 boats planning to join us. If you change your mind and decide that you would like to attend all of the trip or part of the trip, give Steve a call so that he can notify the various marinas with a new boat count.

As mentioned in Ron's article regarding the Labor Day cruise to Tides Lodge, these plans unfortunately have had to be changed. Alternative suggestions have been made for visiting to one of the following places: Solomons, Cobb Island, St. Mary's River or Tall Timbers. If anyone has any other suggestions we would gladly welcome them. Please give Bill Petrey a call at 922-6300 (work) or 690-6577 (home) with your ideas. Time is drawing near and due to fact that this is a popular holiday weekend, most marinas will want to have reservations made well in advance.

Lastly, I just wanted to apologize (again) for the lack of news on the Occoquan Blessing of the Fleet on June 4. I was constantly in touch with the people I had been told were in control of this event. It wasn't until the day of the event at 11:00 a.m. that I was informed that some other organization was in control and that it had been postponed altogether. This is the kind of thing that drives me bananas but I feel I have absolutely no control over! Oh well, no one said it was going to be easy — and it isn't!!!

Happy July boating and I look forward to seeing lots of you at the June 25th party and out on the river cruising!



Secretary's Comments

Ned W. Rhodes

The Board met June 16th to discuss and finalize plans for the Fourth of July Dock Party that will already have been a success by the time you read this. At this last Board meeting the following items were discussed that are of general interest.

- OYC has decided to withdraw their sponsorship of the Fall Sailing Regatta due to a lack of interest on the part of any of the sailing members of the club. We went ahead and sponsored the Regatta last year without any participation from OYC sailors and the Board decided that since there appeared to be no Club interest this year, that we should withdraw our sponsorship.

- With the Christmas party only six months away, the Board has initiated a search for a suitable location. Since the sand barge appears to be booked for that time of year, we have had to start looking at our second and third choices.

- Rich Ellis provided copies of the Second Quarter Income Statement for the Club. There was some discussion concerning the item "Swim Platform"?

- Ron Tilmon, Titular head of the Occoquan Yacht Club, informed us that the Labor Day Cruise to Tide's Lodge is off due to a lack of interest on the part of Tide's Lodge. Alternative sites are being considered and will be reported here when more is known.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for July 14th at a place and time TBD. Contact a friendly Board member for further details.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Last month I neglected to welcome some new members to the OYC. So at this time we want to emphatically welcome Henry Lovell and junior members David and Kristen aboard HANKY PANKY and berthed at Fairfax Y.C. We also want to welcome John and Marjorie Lawson aboard Y KNOT III and berthed at Harbour View, Peter Jacobson aboard SANDWICH VI and berthed at OHM, John and Susan Harvey aboard MY TYME and berthed at Harbour View, Bill and Nannette Haire aboard OUR DREAM and berthed at OHM, Bob and Carolyn Ginnings and junior member Gorden aboard ALDEBARAN and berthed at OHM, Guy and Deborah Ferrante aboard QE III and berthed at OHM, Tom Pesnick aboard O CHEFE and berthed at OHM, Frank Sidlauskas aboard CLASSIC LADY and berthed at EZ Cruz and Gordon and Anita Murchie and junior member Scott aboard SEA WARRIOR and berthed at Harbour View. The word is spreading up and down the Potomac that the OYC is the place to be!!! Congratulations for joining the fastest growing Club in the entire Washington-Maryland area, not to mention the most fun!

MEMORIAL DAY CRUISE TO COLONIAL BEACH

The long three day weekend of Memorial Day started off with the most beautiful weather.

After a leisurely cruise down the Potomac to Colonial Beach, we were greeted by HANKY PANKY and SUNSHINE who had already set anchors and were anxiously awaiting our arrival. The boats were rafted about 50 feet from the beach and Reno's Restaurant. All of the rest of us arrived enmass (POWER PLAY, 2ND OBSESSION, AFTER HOURS, SOUTHERN NITES, SLOW POLK, L'IL BIT, JOIE DE VIVRE, POOR RICHARD, MAGGIE LYNN and our one sailboat ALI'I KAI) and for about an hour it must have been quite a sight watching us scurry around the decks, passing fenders, securing lines and shouting instructions. All of us have different rafting techniques, (some of us have stranger ways than others) but once the boats were all secured and we were comfortable with our job, it was finally time to relax. After

a quick snack it was time to inflate all of the dinghies so we could go ashore and "boardwalk" or just bask in the sun on a "real beach". What a sight we were from the beach! Twelve boats, varying in sizes from 19 feet to 46 feet. The comments from the passerbys was even more interesting since most people didn't know that some of the sunbathers were part of the boating group.

Later that evening we all ventured ashore to Reno's for a little evening entertainment and refreshment . Once inside we were approached by Lorene Rich from the Fredericksburg JOURNAL wanting to know what was going on with all the boats and who we were. After gladly telling her who we were and that we had just decided to spend our Memorial Day in Colonial Beach, she became so "tickled" and delighted that we had chosen her city to visit that she took pictures of our entire group. (I am still trying to get a copy of that picture so that I can share it with the membership).

Once we returned to the boats, our first evening was spent just relaxing and listening to the live band at Reno's bar and watching the people on the boardwalk watching us.

On Sunday morning we were awoken by a bullhorn announcing that "Racers should take their positions at the waters edge in 15 minutes for the start of the Fredericksburg Triathlon" starting at 7:30 a.m. We had ringside seats and watched 100 swimmers jump into the COLD morning waters and swim for what seemed like forever (1-2 mile course). As we watched and drank our 4th and 5th cups of coffee, we cheered the last swimmer on and upon reaching the beach he turned around and waved to us. He was an older gentleman but he stuck it out until the bitter end and our hearts all went out to him for his tenacity. From the beach the racers proceeded to ride bicycles then run a course. There was so much activity that we never saw who won the race hours later. The rest of the day was spent with everyone doing their own thing from going for a run on the boardwalk, to long walks into town, sunning on the beach, renting kayaks, going for cruises into the inlet side of Colonial Beach and Mattox Creek or just napping. It was decided that dinner would be at *Steve's* so 19 of us headed uptown for an evening out. Our group literally filled the back room of *Steve's* but a good time was had by all. We were even asked by a patron in the restaurant if we were a large family having a reunion or some kind of organization. I guess when people see such a large group having such a wonderful time being together it gets their curiosity up. Afterwards, we all waddled back to our boats where some of us just wanted to get into something more comfortable and others decided to go into Reno's for some evening entertainment and dancing.

Monday morning brought us another beautiful morning. We all slowly woke up and relaxed and took our time breaking up the raft up to return home. We all hated to see it end but we knew it wouldn't be the last time we would have a good time together and believe me it won't!

ALEXANDRIA WATERFRONT FESTIVAL

This was another event that was not announced to the membership in any kind of detail because details were not furnished until the last minute. But thanks to Pat Utter and

Captain Dave Rutherford we were taken care of very quickly and efficiently. Another great time was had by eight boats in the OYC at the Alexandria Waterfront Festival.

Anchorage was established by POWER PLAY, SOUTHERN NITES and SLOW POLK on Friday, June 10th. Saturday morning brought IRISH MIST, JOIE DE VIVRE, 2ND OBSESSION, and SANDWICH VI. HANKY PANKY was anchored elsewhere but we knew they were with us.

The Alexandria Red Cross was encouraging boaters to arrive by water and offering for a \$25 donation, water taxi service, free showers, a ditty bag containing a festival burgee, six tickets (two for each day) to the festival), and two additional tickets for a continental catered breakfast on Sunday morning. Their thought was that if they offered the boaters some comforts than they might be encouraged to come in. The same kind of deal will be offered next year so watch your Daymarker next year for details and maybe even some better deals?

Festivities ashore included concerts, craft and food vendors, fireworks both nights, all surrounding a central display of the America's Cup on loan from the San Diego Yacht Club. On the water there were a number of tall ships and Naval vessels open to the public for tours and/or rides.

Our group toured everything and relaxed in the sun most of the day. Saturday night everyone went into town for dinner. Some of us went to a *La Bergerie*, which is a rather dressy restaurant , to give our fond farewells to friends leaving the area and the rest went to some of the local grills and pubs. It was really funny watching those of us who had dressed up , being dingied ashore and trying to be lady-like while climbing up a 6 foot dock ladder.

Sunday brought the parade of sail for the tall ships and the procession of Naval vessels , all leaving for their home ports . As if things weren't crowded enough on the river, everyone else also decided to leave too. (kind of reminded me of the 4th of July?)

NATURES CORNER

Mate Mer

We have five families of geese visiting on a daily basis for feeding. Believe me the Cheerios work wonders! Thanks to all OYCers who took care of their feeding while we were out of port. We weren't back a half hour before they came alongside for "Mom and Dad" to feed them.

Notes From the Poopdeck

John Piper

Every now and then I wonder if anyone reads what I have been printing in the Daymarker for the last several years. I had always assumed that if I made a glaring error, someone would bring it to my attention. Thus, no feedback from the readers was tantamount to approval. Or is it?

Last month I printed the tide tables with the height of the tide in meters. Our normal 3 foot tide was reduced to 0.9, etc. No one noticed! Pause now, while you go back and look at last month's Daymarker. By gosh, it was in meters. Now

the question is did you blindly accept the less than normal tide as gospel because it was printed, or are the tide tables of no interest?

Now for a followup to an old article that I printed at least two years ago.. I had suggested that you check your electrical connections at least once a year for looseness. This weekend, I unplugged the shore power and checked mine. I was able to turn every screw just a bit, say one sixteenth of a turn. One of the connections had corroded causing a high resistance and the wire had been hot. Trimming it back and reconnecting it properly fixed the problem. Check those connections and you may just prevent a fire!

How well do you know your boat? What is normal for your vessel? Case in point—we developed a small leak (which is another whole story). The first clue was the bilge pump running more often than normal. Do you have a feel for what is a "normal" amount of pumping? After a cruise, do your stuffing tubes drip for a while adding to the bilge. Would this hide a leak?

The first thing we checked was the through-hull fittings to see if a hose was leaking. Do you know where all of your hull penetrations are? This includes the rudder post(s) and the depth sounder. Any of these could leak. Next we checked the fresh water system for leaks. Can you find every line and fitting? We checked the amount of water consumption for several days and determined that the fresh water system was fine. Do you know what is a normal amount of water use? Can you measure the amount in your tank?

Get to know your boat. When you know what is normal and where things are located, you are much better equipped to spot a problem and fix it before it becomes major.

EDITOR'S NOTE

I have been requested to supply this information again and since I think it is worthwhile information, here it is:

CHANNEL LISTINGS

Distress-safety-calling	16
Ship-to-ship (safety only)	6
Working channels for recreational vessels*	9, 68, 69 71, 72, 78
Marine Operator	24 to 28 84 to 87
—For Great Lakes, St. Lawrence Seaway, Puget Sound and Strait Juan De Fuca and its approaches	88
Navigational (Bridge-to-Bridge)	13
—Mississippi River	67
Weather (Receive only)	(162.550) WX-1 (162.400) WX-2 (162.475) WX-3

* VHF Marine Channel 76 has been designated for Digital Selective Calling (DSC) purposes only, effective Sep-

tember, 1985. Your cooperation in NOT using this channel as a working channel will be appreciated.

CHANNEL 16 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In an emergency, make a Marine Distress call using the following sequence:

MAYDAY - repeat three times for Immediate Danger to Life and Property

PANPAN - repeat three times for Urgent, No Immediate Danger to Life or Property, then:

1. Give name of vessel and call sign
2. Give position.
3. Describe emergency
4. If no answer, repeat, then try another channel.



RULES OF THE ROAD

Past Commodore Karl Day

This month we will look at some diagrams and practical examples to try and clarify some of what I have written in the past two months.

Figure 1 (see next page) is a classic meeting situation, one that we encounter every weekend. The two vessels shown are clearly on reciprocal courses and about as "head-on" as they can get. In a situation like this, there is no such thing as right of way although there are some who believe the bigger boat wins. Obviously, if a very large vessel which has some difficulty maneuvering or which due to her draft requires being in the middle or deepest part of the channel, discretion dictates that it is prudent and courteous for the smaller vessel to make the bigger move. The normal procedure is for each to move to the right, thereby allowing a passing port side to port side. This complies with the concept of vessels remaining to the right side of a channel under most circumstances. It could occur, however, that for one reason or another you prefer to alter course to the left and pass starboard to starboard. This is legal and can be done safely if the other vessel knows your intentions.

This brings up another topic, the use of horn signals which we will discuss in each particular case. In a meeting situation on Inland Waters, either boat may initiate the passing signal. If you desire to pass port to port (Fig. 1) Vessel A should sound a short blast on the horn. A short blast should be one of about one second duration. This compares with the prolonged blast which lasts 4-6 seconds. In situations such as these on Inland Waters, there is a requirement that the two vessels reach an agreement before maneuvering may be accomplished. In this instance, if Vessel B agrees to your plan to pass port to port, she would respond with a short blast. With this agreement, you would conduct the maneuver. If, for some reason, however, you had desired to pass starboard to starboard, then your signal would have been two short blasts. Vessel B's response, if she agrees would have been a like signal - two short blasts.

What if Vessel B does not agree with your proposed passing plan? She should respond with the Danger Signal which is 5 or more short blasts of the horn. It is neither polite to respond by giving the other boat the "bird" nor does it clarify the navigational situation although it may seem satisfying to your ego. Why might Vessel B give the Danger Signal? Her skipper may know of dangerous shoals, underwater obstacles, or other hazards that exist in the direction you are planning to maneuver. She also may have intentions of turning in some direction and the overall maneuver would be more efficient or safer if you chose another alternative. If you receive the Danger Signal in response to your initial overture, what do you do? If practicable, sound the opposite signal. If this is agreeable to Vessel B, she will respond with a like signal and the two vessels would pass each other as indicated. To be perfectly legal, vessels should not pass each other until agreement is reached even if they have to stop dead in the water, exchange ambassadors, and negotiate. In reality, small boats usually have enough maneuverability and/or maneuvering room to effect safe passage without too much difficulty, especially if they comply with the "keep right" philosophy.

Fig. 2 shows a situation, that of one vessel overtaking another that has more significance. We all know how the "free spirits" love to put the pedal to the metal beyond Daymarker 12. Those of us that are show or, in my case, too stingy to pay for the gas it takes to go fast, are always being run down from behind. The problem in the overtaking situation is letting the guy ahead of you know what your intentions are. Are you going to pass on the left or right? What if he is planning to make a turn just as you struggle (or leap as the case may be) over his wake and are committed? Wouldn't it be better to have all of this figured out before you make your move? Of course it would and it is relatively simple to do so. Try blowing your horn. If you plan to pass on the right - leaving the vessel ahead on your port side, sound one short blast. If he hears you and agrees, then he should respond in kind. If he disagrees, then he should sound the Danger Signal and the same procedure as in the meeting situation is followed. If, on the other hand, you prefer to pass on the left, leaving the other vessel on your starboard side, sound two short blasts of the horn. Again, his agreement with your proposed passing would be a like signal. Simple, eh? Perhaps a way to remember this is - leaving the other vessel to port (one syllable word) sound one blast; leaving the other vessel to starboard (two syllable word) sound two blasts.

A caution is in order, however, the number of boaters on the Potomac and Chesapeake who are familiar with the Rules is small. Many times, if you signal another boat, the response is either a wave or an obscene gesture. If you get what seems to be an intelligent and appropriate response, be wary. It is wise to make your next move with caution and be prepared for anything. The other evening I was astonished when a large power boat, looked like a Hatteras, came blowing up behind me just before Daymarker 6 in the Occoquan and actually slowed down before sounding two short blasts. I fumbled for the horn button, tooted twice, and the Hatteras very promptly and professionally drive by on my port side leaving me to starboard. Made my little heart go pitter patter. Just because many people do not know the rules is no reason

not to practice them. If it should ever occur - God forbid - that you are involved in an accident and it falls to a court or to the U.S. Coast Guard to attribute blame, it will be strongly to your advantage to have known the Rules and to have complied with them regardless of what the other guy does. Ignorance is no excuse.

An alternative to blowing your horn that is frequently used on rivers and other congested waters is bridge-to-bridge communication which works fine and eliminates tooting that could be confusing when there is a lot of traffic. Many times, skippers of large vessels, comfortable in their pilot houses cannot hear your blasts. They are monitoring Channel 16 however. If you are coming up on a tug, for example, just call him and tell him you are XYZ yacht coming up astern and plan to pass him to port - or starboard - as the case may be. He'll be happy to respond and appreciate your courtesy and professionalism.

Now lets look at Fig. 3 which represents a more complex situation. We are on Vessel A. Vessel B is in a position which is defined as overtaking. Vessel C is crossing from right to left. Vessel B could be seen as crossing from left to right with regard to Vessel C. From what we have learned, Vessel B must give-way to Vessel A and to Vessel C since she is overtaking A and Vessel C is in her Danger Zone. Vessel A must give-way to Vessel C since C has the same relative position as A that she has to B. In this scenario, Vessel C is clearly the stand-on vessel and should maintain course and speed. Vessel A should not try to pass in front of Vessel C but, rather, should slow if necessary and turn right so as to pass astern of C. Vessel B should carefully appraise the situation and recognize the dilemma facing Vessel A (she needs to maneuver to avoid C but theoretically should maintain course and speed as the stand-on vessel relative to Vessel B). Since the overtaking vessel has the lowest priority in the hierarchy (remember On Narrow Roads) it is correct to assume that it is her obligation to avoid Vessel A at all costs. Even if both A and B have to stop dead in the water or reverse their engines to do so, they must yield to Vessel C. This brings up another important signal. Three short blasts of the horn are used to let other vessels know you are reversing or "backing down" as some call it.

One final comment on Fig. 3 and we'll take a break. Remember when I pointed out under Rule 13(d) that a change of bearing relative to the boat being overtaken does not alter the responsibility of the boat doing the overtaking? Note in Fig. 3 that if Vessel B proceeds to position B1, she is now within the Danger Zone of Vessel A. This does not place her in the privileged position of becoming the stand-on vessel and thus relegate Vessel A to give-way status. On the contrary, Vessel B remains obligated to keep clear of Vessel A until well ahead or clear of interference.

That's enough for now. Keep a sharp lookout, abide by the Rules, and enjoy safe boating. Toot, Toot, Toot!!!



Restaurant News

The Occoquan Harbour Marina Restaurant is under new Management and will be called the Harbour Inn. The goal is to have it reopened by the first of August. Hope to see you there.

OYC WEEK LONG CRUISE

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DESTINATION</u>	<u>DISTANCE (MILES)</u>	<u>OVERNIGHT AT</u>
1 (Sat.,7/23)	Depart OHM (11:00 a.m.) Smith Creek	70	Pt. Lookout Marina; pool
2 (Sun.,7/24)	Oxford; Avon River	55	Mears Yacht Haven; pool
3 (Mon.,7/25)	Baltimore	55	Inner Harbor Marina; NO pool
4 (Tues.,7/26)	St. Michaels	44	St. Michaels Harbor Marina; pool
5 (Wed.,7/27)			
6 (Thur.,7/28)	Annapolis	31	City Dock Marina; NO pool.
7 (Fri.,7/29)	Solomons Island	55	White Sands-Vera's Spring Cove
8 (Sat.,7/30)			

** Sunday, return to OHM. All of the above proposals are subject to reservations and marina availability.

A WORD TO THE WISE

On a beautiful evening last Summer, I was a guest aboard a Chris Craft 410 Commander. A dozen or so of my colleagues from work had spent a delightful afternoon cruising on the Potomac. Having departed earlier from Hoffmaster's we were enroute back up the Occoquan. It was very dark but this only seemed to enhance the beauty of the river as the lights in the distance glimmered on the water. It was hard to conceive that such a glorious night concealed the real possibility of tragedy. I was sitting on the foredeck chatting with several friends, the cool evening air washing over us - the aroma of a campfire on the riverbank punctuating our passage. We were abeam of the little island between Daymarkers 6 and 8 and coming up swiftly to the slight left turn to Daymarker 10. Ahead I could see the lights of Fairfax Yacht Club and Jim Dugan's marina. Suddenly my heart leaped into my throat. A huge black shape blackened the horizon. I shouted to the helmsman who immediately gave the Chris Craft a hard right rudder. At the last instant, as the first of two unladen sand barges slipped by not 75 feet away, I saw the slight flicker of a flashing orange light on the bow of the lead barge. From the new angle, I could see the lights on the tug, now visible against the dark river bank rather than lost in the clutter of lights I had been admiring only seconds before. I don't know whether it was CAPT. TOM or MR. SHEP since it was too dark and things were happening too fast to pick up on the name of the pushing vessel. The tug and its barges disappeared into the night without the slightest indication that we had been seen. We came very close to being one of those ugly statistics that we read about but most of us think "It couldn't happen to me".

There are some facts that apply to this situation and some lessons to be learned. First of all, a vessel - the tug in this case - pushing ahead or towing alongside - is required to display two masthead lights displayed vertically. Unfortunately, these lights had not been picked up by anyone aboard our vessel because they were lost in the background. Second, it is required that the lead barge or scow, when being pushed ahead by a tug, display a flashing yellow light on the bow. This light must be visible for at least two miles. The light on this scow was barely visible at less than 50 yards! I called the operators of the barge service and they told me that the lights they used were the type used to mark highway barricades and that the use of such lights was not only common on the river barges but considered an acceptable practice by the U.S. Coast Guard. "Unfortunately", I was told, "the batteries tend to get weak and it may be that the tug operator failed to notice or failed to replace the weak battery. They are supposed to keep fresh batteries on board, however".

In conversation with Coast Guard Group Baltimore, I learned that the information I had been given was essentially correct. On large barges with their own generating capacity, high intensity flashing lights are used but on scows such as those that serve the Virginia Concrete plant next door to OHM, there is no generating capacity so the battery operated

lights are considered acceptable. This does not, however, relieve the operators of the responsibility for keeping the batteries fresh and providing the brightest possible light. Although the Coast Guard has instructed the crew of CUTTER CAPSTAN to monitor the lighting of these barges to insure compliance, they can't be everywhere and there is still the possibility - no, the likelihood - that another poorly lit barge will make its way down the Occoquan.

A similar word of caution is in order if you should come up behind one of these tugs pushing a float of barges ahead. You can tell such a float because the tug is required to display two yellow lights arranged vertically in addition to its regular running lights. The float of barges may be several hundred feet long ahead of the tug. If you should come up behind and attempt to turn too quickly ahead of the tug, you could well run into the side of the float - another way to ruin your boating season.

These tugs pushing barges of sand and gravel into the Occoquan serve a valuable purpose for the rest of us. They do a pretty decent job of keeping the channel dredged. They also can be a great danger, however. There is no doubt in my mind that the largest pleasure vessel on the Occoquan would come out the loser if it collides with a barge. Remember the line from Don Quixote "It matters not whether the stone hits the pitcher or the pitcher hits the stone, its going to be bad for the pitcher". If you are operating at night, keep a sharp lookout and understand that oncoming navigation lights are often hard to see when there are lights in the background. Don't become a statistic and give any of us the chance to say "I told you so". If you see barges operating with inadequate lights, please let your Board know. I have no doubt that the operators of these barges are professionals and do not intend to endanger anyone. In an imperfect world, however, people make mistakes or overlook things and it is far better to over react than to under react when it comes to safety afloat.

To err is human and to forgive devine but a collision on the water at night is often tragic - especially because it is almost always avoidable. Remember that the responsibility for avoiding a collision at sea is a shared one. Do your part and have a safe boating season.

Further Adventures of Normal Nautical

Well Norman Nautical finally got underway this past Memorial Day in his boat *Time Machine*. How do I know, well he and I met on the way out to Occoquan Bay. My friends and I had the fifteen foot sailboat out for the day and he had his 50+ cruiser with all his friends. About 50 feet astern of me, he decided that he could safely go on plane, which he proceeded to do. With the appropriate hand signals, I attempted to inform him that there might be a small problem due to 1) he would be 15 feet away from me at the time he generated maximum wake and 2) there was not a lot of room for me to manuver my boat to take the wake at an angle so that I would not be swamped.

After he slowed back down to chat, I was treated to a discussion on his philospfy of boating, which was, "Why

don't you buy a bigger boat so that it doesn't matter!" Then Norman roared off to enjoy his day on the water and other adventures. If you have seen Norman on the water, let us know so that we can chronicle his adventures here.

POT POURRI

Mort and Dot Ray aboard PARADISE left for the Bahamas via the ICW. After a brief vacation in the Bahamas they will be setting up residence in Florida.

Close on their heels (or is it sterns?) is Stu and Christa Upson aboard GRAMPS who will also be visiting Biminis and the Bahamas before going to Florida to set up a new residence.

And believe it or not, George and Eileen Kiesel and their two girls will be cruising down the ICW on their way to Florida where they will be living in Melbourne. It has been very hard saying goodbye to these fine people and we will all miss them very much but they have promised to keep in touch with us and some of us have even promised to visit them in July or August.

Diane Wood aboard L'IL BIT dinged her props while on an outing and was towed to her docks by ORCA from Hoffmaster's. She said her only fear was that she would see a fellow OYCer. I don't know why she said that. Had an OYCer seen her, I have no doubt she would have been helped immediately too!

JT has joined the ranks as one of the few people (and certainly not a regular) to take a swim during our raft up at the Alexandria Riverfront Festival or was she pushed off by RT?

Also to make our Memorial Day memorable was SW who fell in once, and MW who fell in two times. (These two are not related!) I think it is becoming contagious!

SP has given new meaning to the word "rafting up". During the Colonial Beach raft up the winds started picking up. Our anchorage space was rather limited but SP made good headway until his first mate DW threw what she thought was a long line. She quickly found out that there were two lines and that SP's boat was quickly being blown into another anchored boat (and it wasn't one of ours!) SP quickly dove into the water and with one rope in his teeth and literally towing his boat, he managed to get his lines over to the boat he was going to raft up to. But what sticks in my mind was the sight of DW with a fender in her hands sitting on the bow looking at the boat they were being blown into and looking over at us wondering what she should do next.

BP was our ship-to-shore dinghy master. For only 6 years old he wields a mean paddle.

When 9:30 a.m. Monday morning came and everyone was quietly lounging on their boats wondering when the raft up should be broken up, BP (not the 6 year old) announced

"Harvey Wallbangers were being served on the promenade deck of POWER PLAY " and 19 bodies were seen literally walking on water to be the first in line to be "refreshed".

New members HL and K? aboard HANKY PANKY took a bunch of us for a lovely cruise into the backside inlet of Colonial Beach and Maddox Creek. It was so relaxing that 3 of our male members were seen sleeping like babies on the floor in the salon. I hear some great pictures were taken and will be added to our OYC scrapbook for posterity. For future reference - if you are looking for a quiet and peaceful anchorage, then Maddox Creek is the place to be.

MM looked like the "creature from the deep lagoon" after getting caught in a floating kelp bed (or maybe it was hydrilla).

Bill, Linda and Dawn Covington paid a brief visit on Wednesday, June 15th. They will be stateside for the summer and will be boating out of N.C. They send their regards to all.

Past Commodore Bill Shaw and his wife Paula have written to tell us that they have joined the Poquoson Yacht Club, which like the OYC is primarily power oriented. They are enjoying their new friends but really miss the OYC. They have been able to keep up on everything that has been happening with the Club through the Daymarker. Bill informs us that the license plate OYC has been given up for a new 7 letter tag with RELIANT on it. In any case, OYC is now available for anyone who wants it. If anyone of our members is up their way, give them a call. They say they always listen to Channel 16.

Congratulations to Dale and Rita Jacobs on the incredibly fast sale of SUNSHINE. Now they need to get a new boat fast since they had planned on going with the group for the week long cruise.

Rumor has it that RT has a new cooking utensil that he keeps in his boats head? A porcelain wok?

During the Alexandria Waterfront raft up it was heard that "Our titular Commodore kept his head in his head" and "RT's boat was in an abysmal state of maintenance". And someone said the OYC has got no class?

The raft ups are so much fun and a great time to get to know people but it's really hard to get to know someone when the only time you seem them is when they are dinghying their pooch ashore for a "walk"? DW and MW

Classified Ads

8000# 4-wheel boat trailer for sale. It will carry a Sea Ray 26' and has been in the water three times. If interested please call Peter Jacobson, 971-3600 (day), 866-4891 (evenings).