



OCCOQUAN YACHT CLUB

P.O. Box 469, Occoquan, VA 22125

Member: PRYCA, CBYCA Boat/U.S. Accord # GA80979Y

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Commodore's Comments

Peggy Ball

What a party! The lucky 66 OYCers who attended the 1999 Holiday Party and Change of Watch certainly didn't go home bored. It was a wonderful night of friendship, food, prizes, music, laughter and, oh yeah, the OYC singers. Picture the guys all decked out singing "A Sharp Dressed Man" by ZZ Top. Or the trio singing "New York, New York," accompanied by the OYC Rockettes. But the winner had to be the OYC rendition of "The Twelve Days of Christmas." You had

to be there, there were no video cameras allowed! (Let's just say it wasn't a "no hat" event.) A big thanks to all who came and joined in to make it another memorable OYC party.

The Holiday Party was also a chance for IPC Janine Fordham to thank all the cruise coordinators and volunteers who helped make the 1999 season such a success. She reminded us all why we join a group like OYC in her presentations of the Commodore's Cup and the Bent Prop Award. She related the story of Walt



The 2000 Board—Rear Commodore Candy Clevenger, Vice Commodore Debby Zimmerman, Commodore Peggy Ball, Treasurer Nabil Dubraque, Secretary Mary Lynn Snowman and PRYCA Delegate Jay Wilmeth at the change of watch and holiday party.

and Susan Cheatham's Mayday call in July as she presented them with the Bent Prop Award. When Susan made the call, several OYCers pulled anchors and headed over to help them and their guests. Janine remarked that it all happened so fast she doesn't even remember pulling anchor, she just went on automatic and rushed to assist. Made you feel good to be a part of a group that looks out for each other and helps make it safe for all of us out there on the water.

The Commodore's Cup was presented to Dave and Carol Moore. Members since 1991, Dave and Carol have set the example for the rest of us. They have hosted us at their home, flipped burgers and hot dogs, coordinated cruises, served as quartermaster of the day and seem to never say no when asked to help out. All of this with a wonderful smile and spirit that really is OYC. Jim and I personally feel indebted to the Moores for making us feel so welcome when we joined the club. They made sure we made it to events and were introduced to others. They certainly have set the standard we try to follow in our volunteer efforts for OYC. On a less serious note, I won't hold Dave responsible for twisting my arm to become Treasurer in 1996. I was new to the club, but it was and is my honor to serve on your board.

2000 Season

Wow! The energy coming from your new board is jump starting the 2000 boating season. I hope you have your seatbelts on when you review the draft 2000 OYC Calendar. See Page 5. There must be something for everyone, because there aren't many dates that are blank. If you ever find yourself with an open weekend, there is no excuse for not hooking up with some of your OYC friends and heading out for some fun the OYC way.

Of course, the best way to review the calendar and make your plans is to attend the OYC Planfest, January 22nd, 2:00pm at Gecko's. There will be lots of information and, of course, free food. Missed some of the 1999 events? See the article about the Photo Contest and come see 1999 in pictures. Have photos to share? See the article with the detail and rules.

I hope you can join PRYCA at their wonderful Change of Watch on January 29th. This is a dinner dance with over 200 of your boating friends from the River. See Jay

Wilmeth's flyer about the opportunity to join in. Page 9. OYC is well represented on the incoming and outgoing board. The new board includes Commodore Monica Lovell, Treasurer (and OYC PC) Steve Wexler, Member-at-Large Walt Cheatham and Delegate Jay Wilmeth. 1999 Member-at-Large Bonnie Breneman, IPC Steve Donock and Delegate (and OYC PC) Teresa Sorrenti are being recognized for their efforts as well. But perhaps one of the best reasons not to miss this event is the emcee—our own PC (that can mean many things) Steve Wexler. I can't promise you that he will be politically correct, but I can promise you it won't be dull. What more could you want? Food, friends, music and laughter!

Cheers!

We are most grateful...

Carol and I wish to express our gratitude and many heartfelt thanks to all of you for allowing us to receive the Commodore's Cup for 1999. Due to our health situation at home, we were unable to attend the OYC Holiday party and receive this award in person. We



missed a special time for sure. We have been a part of this fun organization for many years and have tried to help in many ways when we can. It almost doesn't seem fair to receive recognition for just doing what you like to do...namely be with friends and have a good time! Many thanks.

We wish each and every one of you good health and a special Happy New Year as we all go into a new century filled with many adventures just waiting to happen.

Dave and Carol Moore

The Daymarker

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Tom Coldwell, PC, Editor

Mary Ann Coldwell, Editor's Editor

Jim Ball, Circulation

News and other materials for publication are welcome from any member of OYC. The deadline for submission of materials to **THE DAYMARKER** is the 20th of each month.

If possible, please submit copy by e-mail to:

coldwell@erols.com.

Fax service is not available. Word-processed copy may be mailed on a 3.5" IBM/MSDOS-compatible diskette to the editor at 10319 Commonwealth Blvd., Fairfax, VA 22032-2613. The preferred format is WordPerfect for Windows or DOS, but we accept Microsoft Word and ASCII text as well. By the 20th of the month.

The editor may be reached by phone ashore, 703-323-1675

Millennium Dues Are Due

By now you are tired of hearing about the Millennium, but that will be mild compared to how you are going to keep hearing from the Membership Grinch if you haven't paid your 2000 Club Dues. Keep him off your back by mailing your check to him now or bringing it to the Planfest. Warning, if you haven't paid by then, he will unleash the cousin of the Y2K bug from the dark side and your computer will disintegrate in a cloud of confetti.

Dues: \$60 per Family, \$40 individual, associate (boatless) \$30.

Send check payable to OYC to:

Jim Ball, Membership Chairman

6833 Spring Beauty Court

Springfield, VA 22152-3111



Vice Commodore's Comments

Debby Zimmerman

Happy New Year! And welcome to the new millennium. Hopefully everyone will have survived the Y2K transition and be well on their way into a wonderful new year. Year 2000 promises to be yet another momentous year in the life of OYC. Those members who attended the Annual OYC Holiday Party and Change of Watch got a head start on the celebrations. It was great to see both our old friends and to meet all the new members in attendance. If you weren't there, you missed another great OYC party. And everyone had clothes on too! Most of the time we see each other on cruises and raftups wearing little or if it is late enough sometimes next to nothing. The on-shore events give everyone a chance to prove they do "clean up nicely."

Our next event, the OYC Planfest is on January 22nd at Geckos. This is not to be missed. We normally have around 80 people in attendance, all ready to coordinate or participate in a cruise or land event for the coming year. Is there somewhere you have always wanted to cruise to? Are you a party coordinator in hiding? Why not, come out to the Planfest, and sign up to coordinate your dream event. At least come and sign up to participate in those events that tickle your fancy. There is sure to be something for everyone. Local cruises, long distance cruises, two-week cruises, and land events also. Bring your calendar and get ready for another year of OYC history in the making.

January 29th is the annual Potomac River Yacht Clubs Association Change of Watch Dinner Dance. This year, our own Monica Lovell will become Commodore, Steve Wexler remains Treasurer and Walt Cheatham is a new Member at Large. OYC is well represented in PRYCA and very active in the support of yacht clubs up and down the river. Come on out and support these members at what is always a great event. Where else can you see all of your cruising friends in one place in the middle of the winter? It's not too late but reservations must be in by January 7th. Contact Jay Wilmeth for more information. Rick and I are looking forward to seeing you there.



Secretary's Comments

Mary Lynn Snowman

A Handy Person's Story.... Continued No, I don't want any cheese to go with my WhINE and yes, Randy has already told me he will never ask me for my help again (a thought which I regret).

Last month my article was too long so the editor and I decided to make it a two-part article. Here's the second part of the story and thanks for reading the first part!

The back of our boat curves and has an angle to it. Therefore, you must put into the plan the curve, the angle, the cut out for the swim ladder, EVERYTHING was to be

considered. This project was beginning to be something I wish I had paid someone else to do.

Randy and I were starting to argue over how we should measure to cut the acrylic for the back. The simplest was to hold the acrylic against the back of the boat and mark it with a pencil. (Simple for some, but not for me. My job was to hold the acrylic against the back of the boat while he marked the acrylic. Not a hard job, just one I had trouble doing.) At this point I was beginning to think that maybe it wasn't so important to have the sides up around the lower half of our boat. Maybe I didn't care if it was going to look good when the project was done. Maybe I didn't care if I was getting a little snippy in the process. (My arms were tired from holding the acrylic up over my head while he drew pencil marks. You know, the job I had trouble doing.) Maybe, maybe, maybe... I *would* like some of that cheese to go with my WhINE! However, a better offer came and we took the afternoon off and went for a much needed boat ride with some friends. (Thank you, Rudy and Cookie.)

The next weekend we finished the project. By then Randy had done some more "thinking" about the project and had discovered ways we could improve the process. Of course, the biggest improvement I could have made would have been to remember the names of the equipment we were using. Hey, what do you want? I know the difference between a screwdriver and a wrench. I can tell what's long and what's short. I know what a clamp is and how it is supposed to work. (I may not know how to unclamp it though.) But all in all I'm a pretty good helper. (At least my dad likes my help.)

We made numerous trips to countless stores to get the much needed stainless steel screws, bolts, etc., used on such a project. (They are the ones that won't rust. Right?) And after much putting it up, taking it down, drawing here and drawing there, sawing this and sanding that, drilling here and securing there, the *Abominable Snowman* proudly shows the beautiful acrylic below the rail at the lower helm.

Do I regret not hiring out? No, not really. I'm quite proud of the job that Randy and I did together. We'll hire out another project.

Do I regret not going shopping? No, I truly don't. Although I may not like working on the boat the whole weekend I do enjoy working on projects with Randy. I can go shopping some other time.

Did I learn anything new? Yep, now I know how to work with acrylic, I know how to mark with a pencil and most importantly, I know how to almost get a breast reduction—free of charge with the wrong slip of a saw!

What's New—Members and Boats

by Jim Ball, Membership Chairman

Welcome to our new, and 114th member, Nikki Clevenger, who won a free 2000 membership at the Holiday Party. Also congratulations to Mom and Dad Clevenger on the acquisition of their new Chris Craft (But Al, we all still want to know who Patrica Ann is). Finally, we understand that Santa has been good to two other OYC members and is bring them both a Silverton for Christmas—the Shipleys and the Chaffins, thereby tripling the number of Silvertons in the Club. And what are the Zsirais up to? Cheers!



Santa's helpers —OYCers gather around what appears to be a small, antler-less reindeer on B Dock at Occoquan Harbor Marina before boarding eight boats to cruise Mr. Claus to Occoquan on November 27th. Photo by Walt Cheatham, who coordinated the annual event.

Cool Cruisin' for Santa Claus

by Walt Cheatham, Senior Elf

OYC deposited Santa in Occoquan on Nov 27th after proper OYC festivities on the OHM docks. The weather was wonderfully clear and in the 60s, and a great group turned out to enjoy goodies and liquid cheer on the docks. Seven yet-to-be-winterized boats— *Lovin Life!* sporting a likeness of Santa himself on water skis being pulled by a reindeer— assembled to accompany *Abominable Snowman II* who had the honors of carrying our Santa (Bob Harvey of Occoquan who I'm sure is kin to my grandmother Harvey of Brookneal, Va).

Boats accompanying Mary Lynn and Randy included: Gary and Nicky Linck on *Lovin Life!*, Mike and Janine Fordham on *Kitt II*, Tom and Mary Ann Coldwell on *Shalimar*, Scott and Ann Shipley on *Dream Catcher*, Jim and Peggy Ball (and Jim's daughter Beth and husband Dennis, and Grandaughter Caroline) on *Cheers II*, Tobin and Joanne Jarmin of PWYC on *Moon River II*, and Mel and Karen Ray on *Friendship III*.

As we all circled the deep Occoquan harbor much further north than the usual disembarkation point than Sea Sea & Co, we got into a discussion over why Occoquan has no facilities for transient boaters. It would be such a neat thing for boaters as well as an economic boost for the town. Peggy Ball

mentioned a recent visit by a reporter from CHESAPEAKE BAY MAGAZINE doing research on our environs who was shocked to find no accommodations. We resolved on the spot to approach the Occoquan Elders and see if something can be done. If you have any ideas or contacts, please advise Walt Cheatham or Jim Ball who will delve into the situation through the Occoquan River Maritime Association (ORMA).

Meanwhile, the kids on the bank followed Santa to the Town Hall to start their holiday season as we boaters returned to our respective marinas feeling we had started ours.

The Datemarkers

Birthdays

Diana Uber, Jan 1	Jim Ball, Jan 7
Rich Ziegler, Jan 8	John Ludwig, Jan 9
Sandra Rolston, Jan 14	Tony Mirando, Jan 15
Janine Fordham, Jan 19	Vonda Barrow, Jan 20
Ed Sledziona, Jan 21	Ned Rhodes, Jan 22
Bill Walker, Jan 23	Jan Wilcox, Jan 30

Anniversaries

Joe & Carol McDonagh, Jan 1
Roger & Laurie Dahl, Jan 2
Laslo & Linda Bozoky, Jan 3
Jim & Doreen Keating, Jan 9
Al & Jan Hobson, Jan 11



Rear Commodore' Comments

Candy Clevenger

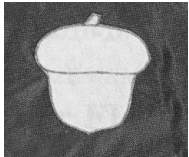
Patricia Ann becomes *Oasis II*

Yes, that's right the Clevengers have sold *Oasis* and purchased another Chris Craft. The old *Oasis* is being stored at Hoffmaster's for the winter, however, we understand she will be moved to Annapolis, Md. in the spring. While we are sorry to see her go we are excited about our new boat.

Oasis II is a burgundy and white 1993 Chris Craft 38' Continental express cruiser that has been housed at Hoffmaster's Marina since it was originally sold back in 1993. The *Oasis II* has only 132 hours on her engines so she is almost new. With Randy Snowman's assistance we got one trip to Tim's Rivershore in before having the *Oasis II* winterized.

Like most boats, the *Oasis II* has a few bugs to be worked out. Allen has to do some tinkering this winter with the integrated radar with chart plotter and GPS that doesn't work. Our thanks to Mike Hollingsworth and Jim Ball who have stepped in already to give Allen a hand in figuring out how to operate his new electronic toys.

We will be keeping the *Oasis II* at Hoffmaster's on B-Dock, so if you have a chance, come by and see us, especially if you have any knowledge of how a radar with chart plotter should work.



Treasurer's Comments

Nabil Dubraque

It seems only appropriate, at the risk of sounding pedantic, to expound a little in this first monthly missive on the State of the Treasury. We have money. As far as I can tell, lots of it. Little round coins, some bigger round coins, and lots and lots of paper, but I prefer the round ones, especially the copper ones, they shine up so well (very funny, Scotty, now beam down my clothes). People send money in, and I send money out, and it all evens out in the end.

But enough of business. It's been a great year, full of adventure, camaraderie and fun thanks to Janine Fordham and a great many members who put forth a stupendous effort to make it so, and now under Peggy Ball's able direction a new cycle is beginning. Plan to be at Planfest, it's a great time and a great way to kick off the new year. There will be a wealth (oh, I love that word, it's so pecuniary) of information on planned cruises and events both wet and dry, as well as other stuff of interest. And remember this crust of wisdom from your Treasurer: there are three kinds of people, those who can count, and those who can't.

OYC Planfest, January 22 at Gecko's

The OYC Planfest is Saturday, January 22nd, 2:00 pm, at Gecko's. OYC buys the heavy hor d'oeuvres for your enjoyment. Cash bar and the regular menu are available. You'll meet your fellow OYCers, review the pictures of 1999 events, participate in the Photo Contest and sign up for cruises and events that interest you—not a firm commitment. Deposits will be collected as the events get closer.

The tentative schedule of events

Here it is, the proposed OYC 2000 Calendar. There is still plenty of room for some new ideas and events. Just step forward and let your board know what you would like to see added. Better yet, coordinate the event of your dreams. If you let us know before January 20th, new events will be listed on the calendar handed out at the Planfest. You know the e-mail addresses, right? Try jball@erols.com. Here's the plan

Jan 9	Brunch-Ft. Belvoir Officer's Club?
Jan29	PRYCA Change of Watch-Crystal City
Feb 12	Sweethearts' Night at P.J. Skiddoo's
Feb 19-21	Ocean City Land Cruise
Feb 29	West Marine Fleet Night
Mar 5	Bowling
Mar 18	Membership Meeting & St. Patrick's Day Party - FYC
April 1	April Fool's at Tim's Rivershore
Apr 15	Tax Day Party
Apr 29-30	Early Bird Cruise -Hope Springs or Gangplank & Theater
May 6	OYC Flag Raising
May 7	Occoquan Blessing of the Fleet
May 20	OYC Happy Hour at OHM
May 21	PRYCA Blessing of The Fleet
May 29-31	Memorial Day Cruise- Port Kinsale & Spring Cove
June 9-11	PRYCA Cobb Island Days
June 23-25	Cole's Point School's Out Getaway
June 25	Easter Seals Cruise for Kids-Capital Yacht Club
July 1-5	Fourth of July Cruise - Coles Point
July 1-?	Fourth of July Cruise- Gangplank
July 14-16	OYC One or Two Week Long Cruise
July 14-16	PRYCA Float In - Ft. Washington
July 29-Aug 13	OYC Two Week Southern Cruise & Col Beach
Aug 12-13	PRYCA Dog Days of Summer- Colonial Beach
Aug 19-20	Dinghy Regatta
Aug 30	OYC Official Holiday - Tim's River Shore
Sep2-4	Labor Day Cruise - Olverson's
Sep 9-10	Lobster/Shrimp Feast - Mattawoman Dunes
Sep 22-24	PRYCA End Of Summer Party
Oct 7-9	Columbus Day Cruise - Gangplank & Theater
Oct 12-15	Annapolis Power Boat Show-Bus 10/13?
Oct 28	Membership Meeting, Chili & Dessert Contest,
	Halloween Party-Fairfax Yacht Club
Nov 10-12	Hardy Souls Cruise - Alexandria
Nov 25	Santa Cruise to Occoquan
Dec 2	Holiday Party & Change of Watch -Ft. Belvoir

Planfest Bonus:

Annual Photo Contest— Snap Judgments Earn Prizes!

The January 22nd Planfest will include the OYC Photo Contest. We have several categories for you to participate in, so break out your 1999 photos and share them with us. We especially appreciate photos of OYC events and members. The categories are:

- Landscapes
- Boat Profiles
- People
- Wildlife

The rules are simple: Photos must have been taken in 1999. You must limit your entries to ONE per category; sorry Gary. Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in each category. Have more photos you just want to share? Let our Historian Susan von Schaack know and she will be sure to have plenty of display area ready.

So remember, photos can bring their just rewards.

Please note:

Entries are limited to one photo per contestant in each category. No purchase necessary, reasonable facsimiles not accepted. Photos taken by commercial artists will be given preference only if given to Commodore as a bribe. Photos of puppies are awarded cute points only if they do not include their male owner. Size doesn't count in boat profile category. Rules are subject to whim of Board and its appointed lackey judges. Offer may be void in some states. These rules may be too easy to read, so we will use a smaller print. Digital photos may not contain viruses but pictures of worms may be entered. Unauthorized photos will be towed away at owner's expense. Do not fold, spindle or mutilate. We can't believe you are still reading this, as old as you are.



Shipshape shopping at the Planfest!

by Duane & Jan Jeirles, OYC Quartermasters

We will be introducing an OYC Denim Shirt at the January Planfest. It will be available in ladies' sleeveless sizes S, M, L, XL, white or blue and long sleeve uni-sex sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL Natural or Blue. We will have some sample sizes/colors to see and will be taking orders for the shirts at the Planfest.

We are also working on new ladies' T-shirts. Lastly, there are only nine OYC coffee cups remaining! Another reason to attend the January Planfest!

Look forward to seeing everyone there.

On "Winning" the Bent Prop Award

by Walt Cheatham

If you were not at the OYC holiday party, you might find this interesting. If you were, I have an ending that is new.

As I was sitting there after dinner thinking about how well chosen Dave and Carol Moore were to receive the Commodore's Cup, when Janine began explaining the process of selecting the Bent Prop Award recipients. Wasn't exactly paying much attention because it usually goes to the most traumatic catastrophe, the most expensive repair job, the most harrowing story. Plus, I'm not really into awards anyway—so I was sorta in a typical Cheatham stupor thinking about sailing as the word MAYDAY kept resounding in her story. After a bit of this, I realized the prize wasn't going to my tablemate who suffered both: 1) having his anchor rode cut by a renegade boat at Tim's Rivershore while he was on shore and the boat peacefully at anchor ending up on the bank after banging several other boats, and 2) later having an engine blow near Pt Lookout on the second day of the two-week-long with the 38-footer loaded to the gunnels with wife, kids, kids friends, and provisions for two weeks. No, she was talking about the *Walt's on Water* that day in July when the shaft broke and Susan called MAYDAY MAYDAY on Channel 16 as I rushed below in the bilge covered with a foot of water to stuff a towel in the 1.25 inch below water line hole in the hull.

But she wasn't talking about Susan or me or the magnitude of the impending catastrophe, she was talking about the club—how many heard Susan's call, how many gunned their engines to come to our aid. She was talking friendship and camaraderie and family—the very attributes that make our club special. She was listing every boat that left Mattowoman or Tim's or Sandy Point and headed for us. She was talking about responding to the needs of club members in trouble. As we walked forward to accept, I realized this was a special moment—not that I had a bent prop on a pedestal to display for a year, or that I would have my name engraved on the same plaque as my former next door neighbor in Lake Ridge (George/Ginny Frank, '93), but that a message had been sent—and sent twice in two back-to-back awards. The board had really spoken about why this group really bands together as family.

—continued next page

Top 15 Answers About Our Puppy

by Ned W. Rhodes

In the interest of not boring everyone with the details, I have taken the liberty of answering your questions about our new puppy. In order to make room for more interesting articles for the Daymarker, I have omitted the questions since everyone is asking the same ones. We thank you for all your cards and we most especially liked the one that had the quote, "Acquiring a dog may be the only opportunity a human ever has to choose a relative."

1. Abby
2. A-B-B-Y, not A-B-B-E-Y or A-B-B-I-E
3. No
4. Eight weeks
5. Golden Retriever, just like Jess
6. 75 pounds and will probably be lighter in color
7. Eat, Pee, Poop, Sleep. Repeat.
8. No, she sleeps the whole night through. We tie her to the bed. They don't "go" where they sleep.
9. Crate training
10. Arleen's dog, although she almost gave her to the gypsies last week
11. New Market
12. Yes, Frank Holland and I are related.
13. Yes
14. She barks at them and they run.
15. So, far, just her paws.

All this was swirling around in my head as we accepted the award and were supposed to sit down so the evening could continue. But I stayed a moment by the mike and tried to express the thoughts just typed. And later when I had two helpings of that sticky cheesecake and my mind was really slowed down, it dawned on me I had left out another important point. It was Susan who did the MAYDAY on the radio and was in charge as everything was happening topside. She was in control. It was her situation; I was just an extension of the all important rag way down below. This award was from family to team. It was also subtly

commenting on the first mate's need to be prepared and the captain's job to aid in that pursuit (not that I ever taught Susan anything in my life, but that's another story that detracts from the point.)

Glad I figured this out on my own that night at the table, because it became obvious three days later at home. The plaque on the front of the award is full of names—all singular, all captains. We were the first names on a new plaque on the back, and it says: "Walt AND Susan Cheatham, '99" [emphasis added].

Occoquan River Maritime Association Gaining Widespread Support

by Jim Ball, ORMA Coordinator

Since I introduced the Occoquan River Maritime Association in last month's Daymarker, the new organization has received a lot of support from other organizations as well as individuals. As you recall, ORMA was formed to address the shoaling of the Occoquan Channel as well as coordinate the Occoquan Blessing of the Fleet, environmental and safety concerns as needed, and to investigate how we might restore the Port of Occoquan so that boaters could visit the town.

First, I should let you know that besides the written support of OYC's Board, we have also received letters of support from Salisbury Towing (on behalf of Virginia Concrete, Maryland Rock, the Arundal Corporation, and operators of the Captain Tom Tug), Belmont Town Center Associates (developers of the new housing and marina), Hoffmasters, Potomac Marine, Vulcan Materials Company (Operators of the quarry in Lorton), Fairfax Yacht Club, and West Marine Woodbridge. In addition, Prince William Yacht Club has assigned a member as a liaison to ORMA and OHM has promised to send a letter of support. We also hope to hear soon from the Occoquan Flotilla of the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Northern Virginia Power Squadron.

All this support is needed to approach the Corps of Engineers to survey the problem, as well as ask our elected officials to take whatever appropriate action is necessary to get the channel dredged (it will likely need to be part of the Corps' Appropriation Bill for FY 2001). We will approach our elected officials and the Corps after the New Year.

I am also pleased to report that all three Yacht Clubs of the Occoquan have now identified their representatives to plan the Blessing of the Fleet, and we will have the first meeting to plan for it in January. We have new ideas, new initiatives, and are looking forward to a weekend of events this year if we can carry it off. Bonnie Breneman has volunteered as the primary representative from OYC.

On December 4th, five intrepid OYC'ers, under the ORMA flag, descended on honorary member Dick Lynn at OHM to discuss restoration of the Port of Occoquan. We went seeking advice and counsel and Dick was very helpful in explaining the issues, identifying appropriate contacts, and helping us in thinking about how to go about investigating this initiative. Walt Cheatham came up with a very innovative idea to build a floating dock along the waterfront as a transient dock that would not significantly affect any waterfront landowners who did not want to participate in the

venture or provide access to the floating boardwalk. There are a lot of issues with this, and a lot of meetings with the right people, but the meeting with Dick encouraged us. The ORMA charge is being led by Walt, Tom Coldwell, Steve Worcester and Ned Rhodes. More action on this after the beginning of the year also.

Little did we know that an environmental issue would come up and overshadow everything else! The Washington Post article of November 28th on the dredging of the Potomac and the dumping of Spoil in the river off of Ft. Belvoir surprised and upset a lot of people. Thanks to Tom Coldwell and Walt Cheatham, who dove in for ORMA, OYC, and PRYCA to investigate the issue. Tom covers the results on the next page.

Many other OYC members have offered their support to ORMA, and we will need still more in the coming months to work the initiatives we have started. If you can help, please let me know.



Well-dressed celebrant—Dr. Tony Mirando sprouts antlers while karaokaing at the change of watch and holiday party.

Potomac Dredging Now Underway

by the Tom Coldwell

As OYC motoryacht *Courchevel* arrived at the north dock of Alexandria's City Marina on December 17th, her nighttime arrival was well lighted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' contract dredging company barges working nearby—and round the clock—on a long-planned but little publicized project to increase the river's depth to 24 feet along the Alexandria waterfront.

The dredge's huge clamshell bucket hauled up muck and mire and dumped each bite onto barges which would then be towed to the controversial dump site downstream in 35 to 50 feet of water in the main ship channel off Fort Belvoir, near Red Buoy 66. The dredgers will dump 321,000 cubic yards of yuck (not an engineering or environmentalist term) at this spot; and that prospect has been a cause for concern for those few people who have known about the plan since it was first aired in 1998. The rest of us were clueless until we saw a Washington Post article about the project on November 28.

The newly formed Occoquan River Maritime Association promptly started some dredging of its own, aided in large measure by Richard Krause and Dick Lynn. ORMA representatives and supporters (Jim Ball, Walt Cheatham, Steve Worcester, Ned Rhodes and m'self) contacted local government agencies, viewed the massive description of the project on the Engineers' website, lodged press queries with the Corps of Engineers on behalf of the Daymarker, contacted Congressman Tom Davis' office—all of which activity generated a storm e-mail and some useful information.

The concern about dumping in this location is that the spoil would destroy bottom dwelling sea life, spawning grounds, etc., and would generate a downstream run-off laden with pollutants. A further concern was the potential that backflow from tide could cause a worsening of an already very shallow access to Dogue Creek—where Mount Vernon Yacht Club, Mt. Vernon on the Potomac Marina, and the Ft. Belvoir Marina are located—and the already shallow Gunston Cove, where Pohick Bay Regional Park and boat ramp are located, and finally the back channel on the Virginia side of Craney Island, which would almost certainly catch loose spoil as it flowed downriver and could easily be shoaled.

Enough fuss was raised by ORMA, Potomac River area residents and Lorton community groups to lead to a public hearing on December 7th in Lorton. There the Corps of Engineers laid out the plans—elaborate, rational and generally but not totally convincing. Walt Cheatham and I attended the meeting, and we came away feeling that the Corps had done what appears to be an adequate job of investigation and documentation but a poor job of informing people in Virginia.

The Corps' documentation appears to insist that pollution levels are "within acceptable limits." Doubts remain, however, as they do on whether the Corps obtained all required approvals for the project. But suspicions alone don't stand up well against information stated as facts, and in the absence of proof to the contrary, we are pretty much stuck with the facts provided by the Corps.

As Walt Cheatham writes:

"After [the December 7th] meeting in Lorton, I'd say the worst thing we have here is less than perfect job alerting

residents on the Virginia side of the river what was coming down. But in reviewing the material they had in a three-inch loose leaf binder, there was all sort of correspondence from groups who raised concern: environmental groups who no doubt follow such things closely and citizens groups that must have found out through other ways. I was surprised to find so much correspondence. I think it was more a case of the Post article reaching a larger audience than any cover up or attempt to steamroll."

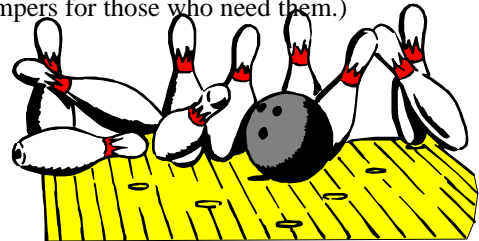
The dredging in Alexandria and two other sites, Mattawoman Bar and Hunting Creek Bar, must be done by Feb 15 due to fish spawning. The Corps has declared that this dump site will be used only once, although there are other phases to this dredging down river and other projects on the books including the Wilson Bridge project.

Looking ahead and in the interest of avoiding further surprises, PRYCA Member at Large Walt Cheatham is now on the Corps of Engineers' mailing list for notification of future dredging projects. ORMA will also be keeping watch on dredging issues.

If you would like to know more about the project, visit the Corps of Engineers' website
http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/whatwedo/navigation/potomac_alex.htm

Bowling Party Planned, March 5th

Please mark your calendar for Sunday, March 5th, 2000, for an afternoon of bowling fun with the Occoquan Yacht Club. The place, time, and approximate cost will be announced at the Planfest on January 22nd. (We will request lane bumpers for those who need them.)



A Winter Project

by Jim Ball

Now that the boat is pickled, and Christmas is over and there are two months or more before you can go boating again, what to do? The answer: Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI). No kidding! The SETI program, which revolves around a huge antenna in Arecibo, Puerto Rico (yeah, it was the one in the James Bond movie), has amassed a huge amount of data that needs analysis and cannot be possibly handled by the SETI program computer. But the SETI people at Berkeley have ingeniously figured out how to use the hundreds of thousands of PC's and the Internet to analyze the data to see if ET is really out there trying to phone home, or here, or wherever.

This is not a joke, and you to can join the search. Go to the SETI@home website at http://setiathome.ssl.berkeley.edu/about_seti/about_seti_at_home_1.html and see what it's all about. Who knows, you may be the one who discovers the truth—it IS out there.



An invitation from PRYCA:

***OYC Members are cordially invited to attend the
Potomac River Yacht Clubs Association
Change of Watch Dinner-Dance, Saturday, January 29, 2000***

Location: Sheraton Crystal City, 1800 Jefferson Davis Highway,
(Front of hotel faces Eads St.) Arlington, VA Phone: 703 486-1111

Parking: Complimentary

Dress: Winter Uniform or Business Suit; Black Tie Optional

Program: Cocktails, 5:30 PM - 6:45 PM
Dinner, 6:45 PM - 8:00 PM
Change of Watch, 8:00 - 8:30 PM
Music & Dancing, 8:30 PM to Midnight

Entrees: Prime Rib or Chicken Roulades or Filet of Salmon

Cost: \$40.00 per person - Cash Bar

Register: Use coupon below. Send coupon and check payable to PRYCA to OYC's PRYCA delegate Jay Wilmeth, 13560 Northbourne Drive, Centreville, VA 20120-1787. This registration must be in Jay's hands no later than FRI DAY, JANUARY 7. Jay must turn in checks the next day, or we will get preferred seating out in the hall. Cancellations after January 15 are subject to full fare.

Staying overnight? Please call the Sheraton Crystal City, 703 486-1111 and ask for the PRYCA rate (\$89/night); reservations must be made by January 18 to secure the PRYCA rate.

Please make your reservations now and join the fun!

Dinner Registration Form—Occoquan Yacht Club

Name(s): _____

Dinner Selection(s): _____ Total Attendees: _____

#_____ Roast Beef #_____ Chicken #_____ Filet of Salmon

#_____ Total Attendees x \$40.00 per person: \$_____