



The Daymarker

OCCOQUAN YACHT CLUB

P.O. Box 469, Occoquan, VA 22125

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COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

Tom Lensis

Making the Most of Your OYC Membership

If you attended the Planfest on February 19 at FYC, you are aware that your OYC board, under the leadership of Vice Commodore Tom Plewes and with help from your past Commodores and prior cruise coordinators, have been working and planning to come up with the 2011 cruising destinations.

This year's schedule has something in it for everyone, from multi-week-long cruises to far off places like the Dismal Swamp and Atlantic City, to quick local weekend cruises to National Harbor. Or if you want to stay close to home, there are a number of land events such as the annual OYC Flag Raising and picnic at OHM on May 7th at noon. Another upcoming land event is the Margarita/Fajita Fest also at OHM on June the 4th.

If you have never attended the PRYCA Float-in, this is one cruise you don't want to miss. This year it will be held at Coles Point Marina July 15 through the 17. There are about 13 yacht clubs that attend with 60 to 70 boats all competing for the coveted PRYCA Cup. The competition is tough.

After the competition on Saturday, the Cup is awarded to the yacht club that works together as a team in various events and earns the most points. The winning team gets to take possession of the Cup for bragging rights for the next year. Our last

OYC Cup victory was under the leadership of our past Commodore Harry Croft in 2009.

Although it's May already, it's not too late to participate. What we need our members to do is to sign up for anything you may have an interest in and send it in to our Vice Commodore Tom Plewes. Completing the OYC sign up sheet does not commit you to participate in the cruise or land event, but it lets the cruise coordinator know that you have an interest in a specific event(s), and we can keep you informed when putting the plans for the events together.

So the question becomes, do you live your boating life vicariously through your fellow OYC members' *Daymarker* articles or will you participate in the adventures the club has planned for 2011? A sign-up sheet was included in the March *Daymarker* for you to fill out. If you don't still have your March *Daymarker* you can e-mail our Vice Commodore Tom Plewes at Tplewes@aol.com and he will be happy to send you one.

It is important to send in your sign-up sheet as soon as possible because some cruising destinations have limited transient slips available. We will treat the limited spaces on a first-come first-served basis. We will do our best to make sure we do not have to turn anyone away. See you on the water!

Tom Lensis, *Copy Cat*

February in Florida

Check out more of Tom and Donna's adventures on Copy Cat on p. 6. From Stuart, Florida, it is about 150 miles through the St. Lucie Canal, Lake Okeechobee, and the Caloosahatchee Canal to Ft. Myers, Sanibel Island, and the Gulf of Mexico.



Vice Commodore

Tom Plewes

The Annual Vessel Safety Inspection – A Rite of Spring

In a sure sign of spring, our marina has been abuzz these last couple of weeks with the activity of boaters shaking off the cobwebs and de-winterizing their boats to ready them for the upcoming season. It is a ritual as satisfying as seeing the buds on the trees and flowers on the azaleas.

After de-winterization, what then? Well, there is the Flag Raising and the Blessing of the Fleet. And then there is the annual vessel inspection, an almost-mandatory activity for all those scheduled to participate in the PRYCA Float-in at Coles Point this summer (and highly suggested for everyone else),

For many of us, the annual vessel inspection has become a rite of spring. It gives us a rush of confidence in the seaworthiness of our boat and serves to remind us of the important things in life; like where we last put the first aid kit and whether our running lights still work. The triangular sticker we paste on the window is a sign that all is well with the world, and it is, indeed, time to put to sea.

The vessel inspection has a lot to commend it. First, it is a very professional operation. The vessel examiners are trained by either the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary or the U.S. Power Squadrons – the two organizations that cooperate in this annual program. The inspectors all evidently love boating and they are very courteous. It may be one of the few times of the year in which the courtesy of requesting permission to board is always extended. Makes you feel like you are captain and mate of a much more formidable vessel.

The inspection will be thorough. A Vessel Safety Check (VSC) form is used to record compliance with the requirements and discussion of other safety items. There are no secrets. The requirements come from laws and Coast Guard rules and are documented on a very helpful website: <http://www.safetyseal.net>. The website is maintained as a cooperative venture by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and the U.S. Power Squadrons.

The website is a treasure trove of information. You can download a copy of the Vessel Safety Check form and see a detailed explanation, with illustrations, of each of the required items in the inspection. There is even a link to an online safety quiz that consists of 25 questions testing a boater's knowledge of standard safety procedures. (Note: the quiz is deceptively easy.)

One of the more interesting contents is the list of reasons that boats fail the inspection, based on records of over 100,000 Vessel Safety Checks. Surprisingly, over 25 percent of boats fail the inspection. The percent that fail by reason has been compiled on the website:

- missing or expired pyrotechnic visual distress signals (12.2%)
- lack of compliance with state and local regulations (10.4%)
- inoperable navigation lights (8.5%)
- unavailable registration and documentation (5.5%)
- improper display of numbers (5.4%)
- no sound producing devices (5.2%)
- overall condition of vessel (4.7%)
- lack of or unserviceable fire extinguishers (4.5%)
- failure to have an approved sanitation device that is sealed against overboard discharge (2.9%)
- lack of approved personal flotation devices (2.8%)
- no trash placard (2.8%)
- no navigation rules aboard (2.7%)
- no pollution placard (2.3%)
- no backfire flame control (1.6%)
- improper ventilation (1.4%)

Most of these items are easily fixable. All of them have important legal and safety consequences.

The website even has instructions for requesting the annual Vessel Safety Inspection, though in our experience, most of the marinas line up the inspectors for a day or weekend every year and make it very easy on the boat owners and inspectors in that way. If you haven't made the annual vessel inspection a part of your rites of spring, you may not know what you are missing.

Tom Plewes, *Double Eagle*



Rear Commodore

John Heinze

The Latest on Boating Safety – Highlights of USCGA “About Boating Safety” Course

First Mate Rebecca and I took the Boater Safety course 11 ago when we first got into power boating, and we thought this would be a good time to take the course again as a refresher and share what we learned. The course offered by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and

(cont. from p. 2)

sponsored by OYC and FYC was excellent and, in fact, a terrific refresher on a number of points:

1) Boat navigational lights – green on the starboard; red is on the port side; same as the navigational buoys exiting the river, where the right hand (starboard side) going downriver has green markers and the left (port) side has red markers. This is a useful memory aide in boats where the navigational lights are side lights that are not easily visible from the helm.

2) Boating safety “accessories” – Interestingly, boating safety laws only require a certain minimal amount of safety equipment and supplies. In addition, the course recommended the following items that are not required: bilge pump, anchor and line, extra fuel/oil/lubricants, water, spare parts including spare bulbs, flashlight, toolkit, compass and chart, radio, VHF marine radio, cell phone, docking lines, sunblock lotion, extra clothing. Most of these would seem to be minimal safety equipment for typical OYC members’ vessels.

3) Navigating the waterways #1 – Who is at fault in an accident? The key lesson in marine navigation is that there is no such thing as a no-fault accident. If there is a collision between two boats, both parties are responsible. This means that, no matter who has the “right of way,” no matter if you are the “stand-on” vessel, no matter if the other vessel was approaching you from the port side (remember the red light on your port side?) you will be (partly) at fault if a collision occurs. The lesson is that you must avoid a collision, no matter what. When it comes down to it, you are always the “give-way” vessel.

4) Navigating the waterways #2 – Barges. The tug Captain John provided a terrific demonstration of proper lighting for barges as the tug brought its daily delivery of barge cargo up the Occoquan past FYC during class. The instructor pointed out the two white masthead lights, one on top of the other, indicating a towed vessel of up to 200 meters. Larger towed vessels have three white lights. Regardless of their size, barges have much more limited maneuverability and require much longer distances to stop than powerboats. Consequently, barges have the “right of way” (are the stand-on vessel) and should be given as much room as the circumstances reasonably permit.

5) Navigating the waterways #3 – Aids to navigation. It is always good to review the basics – not only “red, right, returning,” meaning that the red markers are on the right side of the river when returning (going upriver), but also that they have even numbers and the buoys have the distinct cone-shaped (“nuns”) or are triangle-shaped if fixed (daymarkers). Green markers are on the left side of the river when returning and have odd numbers, and the buoys are can-shaped or square if daymarkers. The difference in shape between the two

markers helps differentiate them at a distance where it may be difficult to distinguish between red and green.

Green and red horizontal striped buoys are used to mark the junction of two channels with the color of the primary channel on top. To follow the primary channel, simply follow the color (red or green) for the top strip.

Other common aids are the white with orange stripe cans that are regulatory markers. Those with the diamond shape indicate a danger area, those with a diamond and cross indicate an off-limits area, a circle indicates a controlled area such as a no-wake zone, while a square provides information such as directions. The shapes thus provide an easily recognizable signal to the type of information provided.

Finally, the aides to navigation review was a very helpful refresher for navigating with the charts, as abbreviations for the aids are used on the charts, e.g. RN”4” for Red Nun Buoy No 4.

6) Docking, anchoring – The course provides basic information on docking (use your bow, rather than stern, line for first tying up to the pier) and for anchoring (you typically want a seven-to-one ratio of line to water depth to hold the anchor). For more in depth review of docking situations, the instructor suggested the free BoatUS website “Dock It”, which has a game for navigational rules called “Navigate It”:
<http://www.boatUS.com/games/dockit/>. Both games use the arrow keys on your computer key board to control the vessel, and I found these difficult to use. If you are good at video games, you’ll probably find the sites more useful.

7) Safety requirements for boating – The course provided a good reminder on keeping your required safety equipment updated, including flares. Out-of-date flares need to be clearly marked so that in an emergency, or an inspection, it is obvious which ones are the preferred flares. Fire extinguishers need to be checked not only to verify that the pressure indicator shows “full” but also periodically inverted and shake to prevent the chemical in the extinguisher from compacting and not coming out when needed.

These are just a few of the highlights of the Boating Safety class. If you would like to learn more, I highly recommend the class. I think certainly that even “old salts” will pick up a thing or two of benefit from the course and, really, a couple of mornings talking about boating safety is a pretty good investment of a boater’s time.

See you all at the Flag Raising, Saturday, May 7, at Occoquan Harbour Marina.

John Heinze, *Great Escape*



Secretary

Jill Stanley

A Taste for Cruising

Being new at the boating experience – Steve and I are what one might call wary travelers. By that I mean we are not experienced at taking our boat out on long excursions. We joined OYC not only for the social benefits, but also to help us experience cruising far from home, which Steve and I would probably not do on our own.

The OYC cruises we have taken have been wonderful and I look forward to taking full advantage of what OYC has to offer this year. In previous years we have missed out on several wonderful cruises that OYC had scheduled. As procrastinators, Steve and I were just too late in signing up. Being tired of losing out on some of these great trips we made sure to be at the OYC Planfest to sign up early for the cruises that we were interested in.

This year we signed up for the OYC Long Cruise, which we have never taken. Harry Croft has planned a fantastic cruise on the lower Bay down to the Outer Banks of North Carolina. It starts off at the Cobb Island-PRYCA kickoff for summer weekend. This should make a good start for the long cruise. We went last year to this event.

This weekend has to be one of my favorite destination cruises. The island puts on a treasure hunt in search of beads, some of which are handmade by one of the islanders. The idea behind the hunt is to learn a little history about the island. Susan Willet and I joined forces and traveled the island in search of these treasures. Getting around the island was an event in itself. We walked and talked our way around collecting the beads. At the end of the hunt there is a prize for the most beads collected.

The great part about the weekend is you meet many of the islanders who are very friendly and helpful, even to the point of inviting you to their homes for a cocktail or two between the bead collecting. This is a great weekend not to miss.

So here's the deal -- don't be a procrastinator! If there is an OYC cruise on your list, be sure to sign up early. If you have not been on an OYC cruise, you are really missing out on a good time.

Jill Stanley, *'bout Time*



Early Bird Cruise to National Harbor

OYC's first cruise of the year was filled with excitement, fun, and good food as always. We started out with 11 boats on the sign-up sheet. but unfortunately only 6 boats were able to make it to National Harbor. The cancellations were due to mechanical, health, and other reasons.

Friday turned out to be a beautiful day with temperatures in the upper 60s and very calm waters. *Sea Duck Too* was the first to arrive, followed by *Hot Schatz*. Everyone else arrived before Happy Hour. On arrival everyone was greeted with a tasty peach daiquiri prepared by first mate, Linda. Happy Hour started at 5 pm on the dock and we shared great appetizers. We enjoyed the beautiful evening on the dock, and got to share the company of members we hadn't met before. Some members arrived by car to join us for Happy Hour. As the temperature was dropping pretty rapidly, we decided to continue the good time on board *Hot Schatz*. The party finally broke up around 1:30 am.

Saturday morning was not very pretty, especially for the dog owners who had to get up early on a cold and rainy day to walk their dogs. As it rained most of the day, some people went shopping, while others went for lunch and margarita tasting. Happy Hour was at 5 pm on board *Hot Schatz*. We were joined by Bud's two sons who came to help celebrate their dad's birthday.

Two more of Bud's friends met us at the restaurant to celebrate his birthday. We had reservations for 16 at the Public House Restaurant where everyone had a good time. Most of our members were a little exhausted from the long evening the night before and the long dog walks, so we decided not to go bar hopping, but returned back to *Hot Schatz* with a smaller group than the night before. As it rained most of Saturday, the river rose about five feet, and with the heavy wind, the night was uncomfortable on our rocking boats.

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As morning arrived we looked at a clear sky, which promised us a beautiful Sunday, even though it was chilly and the heavy wind made us have brunch on board *Hot Schatz*. As usual everyone contributed to a great brunch, which included a lot of bacon dishes. We had Bloody Marys and champagne for those that needed a little more than coffee.

Thanks to the dockmaster, we were able to stay a little bit longer, but not all day. We heard that Old Town and Georgetown were flooded, so we weren't expecting a very nice cruise downriver to our home marinas. It ended up not so bad, and as far as we know, everyone made it home safely without damages or bent props.



"The Awakening" Emerging from Flood Waters

The party didn't stop after we returned to the marina as the Sorrentis invited everyone to *Sea Duck Too* to enjoy the beautiful warm afternoon and continue the fun. It's difficult to put into words, and some things don't need to be told.

We want to thank everyone for showing up and making it possible to have such a great weekend. Hope to see everyone again soon. We're looking forward to a great boating season.

Ahoy, Laslo & Linda Bozoky, *Hot Schatz*

Upcoming Cruises



Cobb Island Yacht Club Summer Kick-Off, June 17-19
Pat and Harry Croft, *Bay Dreamer*

This event has gained popularity due to the many well-organized activities planned for the weekend, not the least of which is the scavenger hunt, which sends participants scrambling all over the island in a quest for the beads that make up the Cobb Island necklace. New limited-edition beads are issued each year.

This year's theme, "The Tail of the Osprey," promises to be "an adventure in Island heritage, navigational skills, and the life of the Osprey." The weekend will feature a Pig Roast, a Best Dressed Boat contest, a White Lightning tasting, a dinghy event called the Rum Runners Course, and more

Boaters from all the clubs of PRYCA are invited to participate in the CIYC Summer Kickoff – the first PRYCA event of the summer, and many OYC boaters have already signed on to attend for the weekend. In addition, this will be the second year OYC has used the event as the first stop on our long Bay cruise (see article below), so some of the boats will be at Cobb Island for the weekend and then will kick off for their first major cruise of the season. This is a great opportunity for a memorable weekend cruise! The registration form can be downloaded from www.cobbislandyachtclub.com, but if you register, be sure to call Pat Croft at 703-451-9147 to let her know you'll be joining your OYC mates!



South Bay-Dismal Swamp Cruise, June 19-July 5
Pat and Harry Croft, *Bay Dreamer*

Yes, yes, I know it's early and you haven't even been to your boat much less started it up, but this long cruise requires lots of planning and advance reservations. This cruise promises to be one of great adventure and lots of new scenery. The preliminary itinerary is as follows: Cobb Island, Yeocomico River, Bay Creek on the Eastern Shore (Cape Charles), Pagan River (Smithfield), Portsmouth, Dismal Swamp portion of the ICW (Intracoastal Waterway), Elizabeth City, Manteo, back through Coinjock, downtown Norfolk, and somehow back home. I haven't settled on where we will be on the 4th of July, but Yeocomico River, Solomons Island, and Point Lookout are possibilities. If I have counted correctly, this is an 18-day cruise that will start from Cobb Island on June 19th and will return home on July 5th.

There are loads of details yet to be worked out, but I need an approximate listing of vessels to start the reservation process so send me an e-mail at hpcroft@verizon.net if you're thinking about joining us.



Search for "Occoquan Yacht Club" on Facebook and click "Request to Join" (OYC members only). Web space for occoquanyachtclub.org, potomacriveryachtclubs.org, and ormaweb.org is donated by Software Systems Group, Ned Rhodes, President and CEO.

Scenes from the St. Lucie with the Lensis

Day 1: Once in the St. Lucie Lock on the eastern side of Lake Okeechobee, we had to hold on to long ropes to hold *Copy Cat* in place while they flooded the lock to raise us over eight feet to the water level on the other side.



Day 8: We left Marco Island around 9 am and headed into the Gulf of Mexico for a 15-mile ride up the coast to Gordon Pass and into the channel for the three-mile trip north to Naples City Docks.



The Datemarkers

New Members

- Scott & Kim Anchell
- Robert Hill & Min Lee
- Bill White

May Birthdays

Elizabeth Plewes	5/2
Beth Hahne	5/4
Teresa Sorrenti	5/4
Helen Curtis	5/6
Linda Bozoky	5/7
Dave Tuttle	5/9
Jim Hawley	5/11
Lidia Rays	5/12
Gail Livingston	5/14
Steve Worcester	5/15
Steve Stanley	5/24
Dave Moore	5/26
Gina Croci	5/29
Bill Johnson	5/29

May Anniversaries

John & Kathy Corley	5/1
Greg & Elaine Lee	5/20

Day 4: We left Ft. Myers and arrived at Sanibel at 11:30 am. We ate lunch and then took bikes out for a ride around the island. We rode over to the public beach and the Sanibel Island Lighthouse to check it out.



Day 5: We met a couple with a beautiful 48' Grand Banks who offered to take us with them for a ride over to a private island called Useppa. You have to be a



member of the island to even dock there. Useppa is located within the tropical isles of the southwest coast of Florida, only fifteen minutes from Sanibel Island by boat.

Notice to Mariners

Occoquan River Blessing of the Fleet

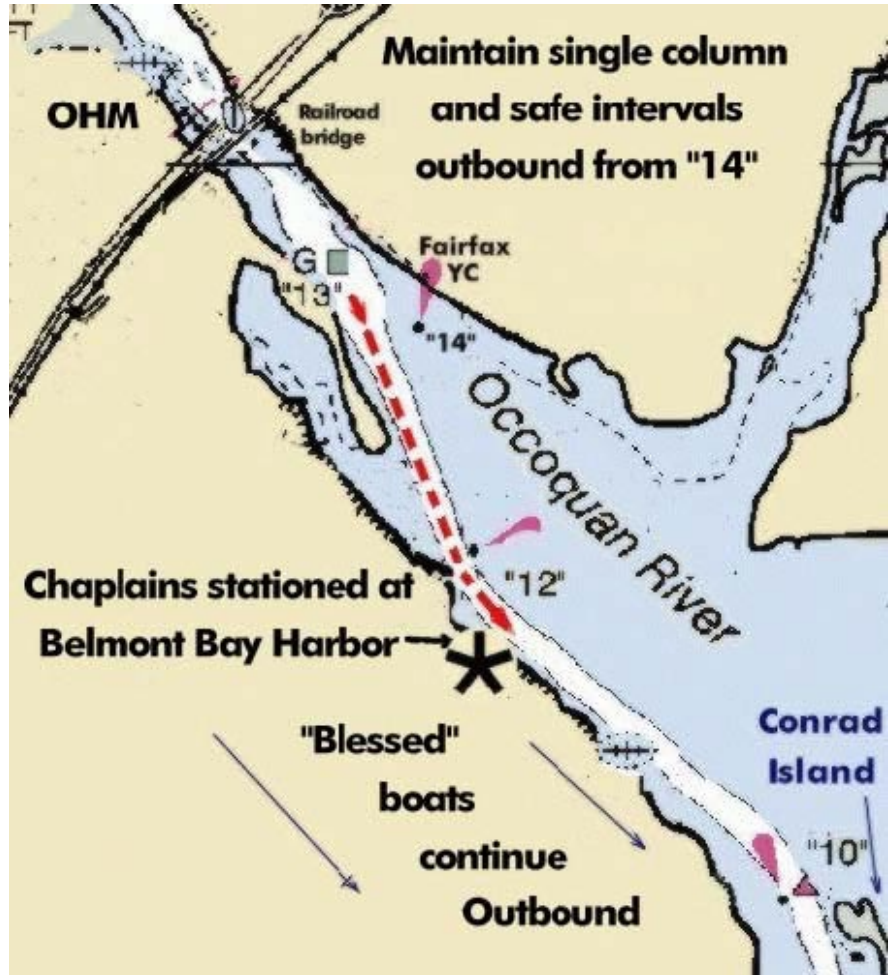
May 14, 2011, 11:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.

Dedicated to Boating Safety and Celebrating
the Opening of the 2011 Boating Season

Enter the parade route at Marker No. 14, just past Fairfax Yacht Club, and proceed outbound toward Belmont Bay Harbor and pass alongside the gas dock where a chaplain will invoke a blessing on each passing boat. *Please maintain safe intervals between boats*

Guard VHF Ch. 9 to hail and Ch. 71 as a working channel. Marine bulletins regarding the event will be broadcast starting at 0930 on VHF Ch. 22A.

The Occoquan River Maritime Association (ORMA) is coordinating the efforts of the Prince William, Fairfax and Occoquan Yacht Clubs, with support from the Coast Guard Auxiliary and Fairfax and Prince William County public safety agencies.



Boaters *NOT* wishing to take part may pass the procession to port, staying clear of the blessing area during the designated hours. This is a U.S. Coast Guard-designated marine regatta and law enforcement vessels will be patrolling to ensure that safety is maintained in the area. Thank you for your consideration.

ORMA is a civic organization dedicated to coordinating activities involving commercial and recreational use of the Occoquan River. ORMA's major initiatives are maintaining the Occoquan channel depth, working with the Town of Occoquan to reestablish its historic seaport for recreational boaters, and preserving the environmental quality and safety of the river.

OYC Flag Raising at OHM
May 7
Tom Lensis
703-794-9589

ORMA Blessing of the Fleet
May 14
Joe Livingston
540-373-9203

Memorial Day Cruise
to Colonial Beach
May 27-30
Rick & Teresa Sorrenti
703-494-3302

Fajita Fest at OHM
June 4, 2-5 pm
John Heinze
703-888-3837

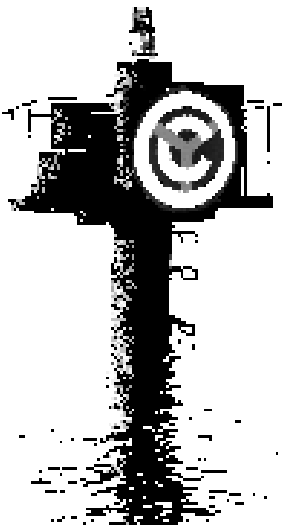
PRYCA Summer Kickoff
at Cobb Island
June 17-19
Pat Croft
703-451-9147

Inside this edition...

**April showers bring May boating!
Join in the Flag Raising and
Blessing of the Fleet.**

**Don't forget the Vessel Safety Check
when you're summer-izing your boat.
A refresher course on boating safety is
good protocol from time to time too.**

**Laslo and Linda's gang of early-birders
kept the floodwaters at bay long
enough to enjoy the first cruise of the
season to National Harbor.**



The Daymarker

Occoquan Yacht Club
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Change Service
Requested