



The Daymarker

OCCOQUAN YACHT CLUB

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COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

Jim Dooley

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SPRING SPRUNG?

I love SPRING, but WHERE IS IT? The green of the trees, the sound of birds, warm temperatures, the fresh smell of new bottom paint and airing out that musty winter cabin smell - you know what I mean! It has been way too long coming after last year's warmest spring on record. Even though we have had a day or two of weekend teasers, yet I think Spring is holding back, waiting on the **OYC 29th ANNUAL FLAG RAISING CEREMONY SATURDAY, MAY 4th.**



Our gathering will start around **NOON**. Festivities include hoisting the colors for 2013,

National Anthem, dignitaries, Fairfax Marine Police, Coast Guard Auxiliary 2013 courtesy Vessel Safety Checks, Quartermaster wears, and with the official firing of the OYC cannon by our new Blastmaster, Don Bennett, declaration that the 2013 OYC boating season will officially open!

OYC will provide hamburgers, hot dogs, condiments and non-alcoholic liquid refreshments. Members should bring side dishes - casseroles, veggies, salads or a dessert to share - and their adult beverages. Please join us for a day of fun that officially begins our 2013 Boating Season!

Even though it is the end of April, it is time to get the boat out of storage and get on the water for a safe season. Before we do, there are certain precautions we must take to make your boating season enjoyable. For instance, inspect your boat for any mechanical defects. Flares... are they current? Make sure you have enough life jackets (in good shape). Check fire extinguishers and make sure they're properly charged and not rusted, and restock your first aid kit.

Did you know – You Must Carry the Card! Vessel operators who are required to have a Boater Education Card must carry the card on board the vessel and have it available for inspection by an enforcement officer. As of July 1, 2013, all Virginia PWC operators age 14 and older and motorboat operators 40 and younger must complete a boating safety course. In Maryland any person born on or after July 1, 1972, must have in their possession a certificate of boating safety education while operating on Maryland waters. The District of Columbia requires all boaters on District of Columbia waters to carry a Boating Safety Certificate with them while they are on the water.

So, now that we have covered all the bases for our 2013 boating season, **it's time to get that boat out of dry dock, hook up the camper and LET'S GO BOATING!**



Jim Dooley, Jus Chill~N



Vice Commodore

Don Bennett

vicecommodore@occoquanyachtclub.org

Here we go!

Our Cherry Blossom / Early Bird Cruise was held earlier this month, so some of our boats have awakened from hibernation, though I am not convinced winter is over yet...! ☺

Jim said it; Joe said it; and now I'm going to say it ... Of greatest importance again this season is safety. Please ensure your vessel is ready for inspection. You may refer to the list on the website for full details:

http://www.occoquanyachtclub.org/2013/Vessel_Safety_Check.pdf.

If you were not at Planfest and/or you have not already done so, please send me your completed cruise sign-up sheet in order to be included and notified of the specific events

The month of May sets the tone for the season, as it is one of our busiest months.

- OYC Flag Raising (4 May)
 - ORMA Blessing of the Fleet (18 May)
 - Memorial Day Cruise to Colonial Beach (24-27 May)
 - Memorial Day Cruise to Solomons Island (24-27 May)
 - Memorial Day Raft-Up Nomini Bay (24-27 May)
- Please check with your cruise coordinators for details.

The PRYCA Summer Kick-Off is close at hand. Registration for the cruise to Cobb Island (14-16 June) opened on 15 April. If you are taking part in this cruise you should have already submitted your application and fee. As most of you know, dockage for the event is spread over three marinas. Since we currently have 13 boats attending, it will be a challenge to keep us together... but efforts to do so are underway.

The theme for this year is: "Cobbstock: The Summer of Love", and includes plenty of fun events. The main focus is the scavenger hunt to collect beads. Roaming the docks and town and attending various events accomplishes this. So be warned! Bring your bikes and/or comfortable walking shoes. Of course, you also have the option of sitting back on your boat or at marina restaurants and watching us silly people run around... !

The planned events are as follows:

- Captains Hour
- Friday Night Seafood Buffet
- Saturday Scavenger Hunt
- Nature Walk with the "Bird Man" of Charles County

- Water Rescue Demonstration
- Saturday Night Hippie Dippie Dinner
- Best Dressed Hippie Contest
- Best Dressed Boat Competition
- Crab Cook-off
- Dr. Shroom's Mycology Presentation
- Psychedelic Art
- Tye Dyed T-Shirts
- Beer Tasting Bash
- Dr. Robert Band (www.drRobertBand.com)
- 1960s Trivia Contest
- The Rivah's famous Sunday Hangover Omelette Bar

As you can see, the cruise is going to be really groovy!

Peace, Love & OYC! Be there or bead square!

Don Bennett, Heart of the Sun

* * *



Rear Commodore

Bud Bishop

rearcommodore@occoquanyachtclub.org

From the Captain's Chair of *Hi-Jinx*²

Now that we're all de-winterized, it is time to sit back and enjoy the season!

So far this year, we've had a very enjoyable Early Bird / Cherry Blossom Cruise hosted by the Predas on *Anamchara*; we have finished the PlanFest where new members Dave and Karen Hart joined us; we conducted a river clean-up at Hoffmasters on 6 Apr; and last but not least, we are preparing to cook burgers and dogs at the Flag Raising on 4 May at Occoquan Harbor Marina (where you get to watch your Rear and Vice Commodore cook, and Don Bennett will also get to show us his awesome artillery skills with his cannon). We've had two separate unplanned raft-up events (one at Tim's and one at Mattawoman) and before this is published will likely have a couple more. Not bad for the first month or so of the season! Remember, if it is the weekend, then there will likely be a group of boats at Belmont Bay, Mattawoman, or Tim's. Email or text Don Bennett or me and we'll try to connect you with those who are partaking of those events! Everyone always brings food, drink (sodas or otherwise) and relaxing camaraderie – come join us!

Plan to enjoy Fajita Fest, courtesy of your friendly Yacht Club staff. This event will occur on 8 JUNE at

Occoquan Harbor Marina; there will be plenty of Fajitas and fixin's and definitely some cool beverages to help make the hot and sunny June day bearable! Last year we were able to exercise our rusty nautical skills preparing for the PRYCA Cup competition, so I encourage you to review knot-tying on the internet and at home and to brush up on rules of the road prior to the Fajita-Fest. (More details next month.)

That's all for now... See you on the water!

Bud Bishop, *Hi-Jinx*²

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OYC Flag Raising

Saturday, May 4, noon

Occoquan Harbor Marina
13180 Marina Way, Woodbridge, VA

We always start the year with a bang!!!

Enjoy the ceremony, great food and camaraderie!
Local Dignitaries
Fairfax Marine Patrol
US Coast Guard Auxiliary (2013 Safety Inspections)
OYC's Quartermaster
OYC Membership Chair (sign up or renew)
and more...

Picnic:

soft beverages / premium burgers & dogs
charcoal grilled by your Vice & Rear Commodores

Please bring a dish to share & your adult beverage.
As this is usually a very well-attended event,
you might find folding chairs a good idea.



Secretary

Carol Belcher

secretary@occoquanyachtclub.org

Visiting the **HMS Victory**

Eric and I went to England between March 10 and 20. I regaled him with English history and then, to keep his interest up when it flagged, tempted him along the way

with another fine English tradition—English pubs. As a consequence, both of us had a wonderful vacation. Because Eric needs a regular fix of big water and salt-laden air, our English hosts took us to Portsmouth, county Hampshire, in south-west England to enjoy a small taste of British naval history and to marvel at the *HMS Victory*.

Portsmouth has a long-standing history of being a 'home-port' town to many of England's naval fleets, to a time stretching before the reign of King Henry VIII. Portsmouth still contains the world's oldest dry dock and is home port to some famous British fighting ships, *HMS Warrior*, the Tudor carrack *Mary Rose* (commissioned during Henry VIII's reign) and of course, Lord Nelson's flagship, the *HMS Victory*. Today, the naval base remains a major dockyard and base of the Royal Navy and the Royal Marine Commandos.

The work on *HMS Victory* began in 1759 when Mr. Edward Allen, Master Shipwright of the Chatham Dockyard, received a letter from the Admiralty directing him to "make preparation and to prepare costing for a First-Rate Ship of 100 guns to be built and fitted for sea at Chatham." *HMS Victory* has eight decks and, as a First-Rate Ship of the line, had to have at least 100 guns. In fact, at the time of the Battle of Trafalgar, she had 104 guns within her decks. Her crew varied between 500-800 sailors and marines, depending on her mission. *HMS Victory* is the only surviving warship that fought in the American War of Independence, the French Revolutionary War and the Napoleonic Wars.



HMS Victory

Today, the *HMS Victory* is fully dry-docked and is open for tours. To this day she remains the Flag Ship of the First Sea Lord. It hosts mess dinners and still has a Commanding Officer. It was amazing to walk alongside her and appreciate the depth of her keel and the height of her masts. The full length of masts have been reduced to 1/3 length because of ongoing repairs. A tour of the interior was truly awe-inspiring, as the ship has been restored to her 1805 fighting condition to highlight conditions during the Battle of Trafalgar. We were both amazed at the technological advances that the boat

contained, as well as the spacious quarters for Lord Horatio Nelson, the Fleet Vice-Admiral and Flag Officer, and the smaller but still beautiful quarters for the Victory's Commanding Officer, Captain Thomas Hardy.

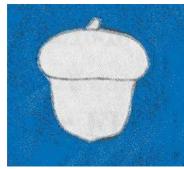
Some fun facts: the officers' quarters were small but well organized along each of the bulkheads with each quarter having a porthole, and each officer's quarter could be locked to secure that individual's property from theft. The height of the decks made Eric stoop but if you are around 5 feet tall, it's pretty spacious. During her years as a fighting vessel of the Royal Navy, the HMS Victory carried a company of Royal Marines who were quartered between the officers' quarters and the rest of the crew. Their location was not accidental—in the event of a mutiny or uprising by the crew, the Royal Marines' role was to defend the officers and kill any mutineers. Their presence made for a well-disciplined and respectful crew. (I can see you smiling, Don.) The magazine where the rounds were prepared, gunpowder stored and spent charge bags returned for reuse was a technological feat of engineering and safety that showed us how, even during those times, every effort was made to reduce or eliminate the risk of explosion and fire in the magazine. Any spark could lead to a catastrophic event that would destroy the *HMS Victory* so a series of specific and rigorous safety checks was followed to the letter.

We stood on the spot where Lord Nelson was fatally wounded while he paced the decks with Captain Hardy, during the Battle of Trafalgar. I mused on how challenging it must be for a Ship's Captain to fight his ship and host the Fleet Admiral who directs the overall battle, all at the same time. Sadly, few people remember the Captain's name but everyone associates *HMS Victory* with Lord Nelson. What an amazing experience this ship gave us! Finally, I think Eric and I are in the running for winning the 'couple who went the furthest distance to see an old fighting warship' award.



Posing by the bust of Lord Nelson in English 'sunshine'

Carol Belcher, *Time2Play*



Treasurer

Joe Livingston

treasurer@occoquanyachtclub.org

Your Delegate to the Chesapeake Bay Yacht Clubs Association (CBYCA) and first mate, Gail, attended the April Board and Delegates meeting on 20 April, which was held at Eastern Yacht Club outside of Baltimore, Maryland. Eastern YC is located on the southern shore of the Middle River about 1/4 mile from the river's mouth off the Chesapeake. Just might be a nice spot to visit for a transient stop in the area with good docks and a nice clubhouse.

Have you been thinking of taxes lately? I know of at least one OYC member that can't wait until April to file an extension so it's "not to worry" until October. Well, it seems that legislatures and other agencies are redefining "sequestration", and taxes and fees are in the winds of change. In Maryland, the legislature has passed, for implementation in July, a Rain Water Tax. Might sound like a *MayDarker* article from last months *Daymarker*, but it is actually directed at the effect of rain water on the Bay and pollution of the natural streams and the watershed. The essence of the action... Each homeowner will be assessed a flat tax amount on property; businesses, including marinas, will be assessed on a square footage basis. One Marina owner attending the meeting estimated his tax in the range of 6-8 thousand dollars. This tax is anticipated to generate some 23 Million in State revenues. Watch out Virginia!!

A second area of change: Boat U.S. has, on 19 April, highlighted a proposed charge by the U.S. Coast Guard concerning documented vessels... a proposed fee of \$26.00 for the renewal of certificates of documentation for recreational boats. Currently, the renewal certificates are issued on a no-fee basis after owner's certification that no changes in data have occurred. For information on federal vessel documentation, visit the United States Coast Guard Documentation Center web site. Boat U.S. Government affairs office is encouraging you to "share your thoughts with the Coast Guard" on this proposal before **May 3rd, 2013**, by going to <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail:D=USCG-2010-0990>". Take Action!!

The Association's Director of State Legislation/VA, Tim Abel, passed along that by July 1 recreational vessel operators under the age of 40 will need to have a card/certificate of completion of an approved Boaters Safety Course. All PWC operators must have the certification. The Delaware Director noted vandalism continues to be a problem in recreational boating waters. Report probable wrongdoing. Be aware!!

The CBYCA 2013 Chartroom Chatter Roster book has been distributed. This book has lots of boating information including yacht club names, officers and locations from PA to VA, also business ads for good places for food and services. A few copies are available on a first ask basis... email me for a copy.

Cheers, Joe Livingston! Gail Lynn II

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May DATEMARKERS

BIRTHDAYS

Liz Plewes 5/2
Teresa Sorrenti 5/4
Jona Payne 5/5
Jim Dooley 5/6
Sharon Gower 5/6
Linda Bozoky 5/7
Jim Hawley 5/11
Lee Moyer 5/13
Gail Livingston 5/14
Steve Worcester 5/15
Michele Adams 5/19
Beth Francis 5/23
Steve Stanley 5/24
Gina Croci Moore 5/26
Bill Johnson 5/29
Dave Moore 5/29
John DeDitius 5/30

ANNIVERSARIES

John & Kathy Corley 5/1
Steve & Ginny Preda 5/1
Greg & Elaine Lee 5/20
Michael & Janet Higgins 5/23

CRUISE NEWS

EARLY BIRD / CHERRY BLOSSOM CRUISE

This year was the 101st anniversary of Japan's gift of over 3,000 Cherry Trees to the US. Once again the Cherry Blossom Early Bird Cruise coordinators (Steve &

Ginny Preda – MV Anamchara) attempted to pick an optimum date for the group to enjoy the festivities – 5-7 April. However, even though the National Park Service had forecast peak bloom to occur on or about the 6th most of the Cherry Blossoms were still huddled up and wrapped in their protective outer garments. A late-March/early-April cold snap was the likely culprit. Not to be discouraged, many of the intrepid Early Bird Cruisers made the trek over to Hains Point and the Tidal Basin to enjoy the Cherry Blossoms making their initial bloom as well as other flowering trees and shrubs.

Joining Steve & Ginny were Don & Anne Bennett (Heart of the Sun), Randy & Susan Willetts (Takin it Easy), Dave & Karen Hart (Rock Me Gently), Paul & Monica Fineberg (The Weekender), Goodwyn & Jan Morgan (Golden Opportunity), Harry & Pat Croft (Bay Dreamer), Jim & Sharon Gower (Holy Smoke), and Jim & Judy Dooley (Jus Chill~N). The festivities once again (tradition) started with a dockside Cape Coder cocktail for each vessel arriving at the marina. Other fun events cooked up by the group included a Friday night happy hour pot luck hors d'oeuvre social, Saturday happy hour on the dock, a group dinner, and Sunday brunch with Mimosas and Bloody Marys.



Pat Croft, Susan Willetts & Ginny Preda enjoying the Festival

The Cherry Blossom Festival was in full swing during our time at Gangplank Marina and included zumba dancing; a market with vendors selling various crafts and food; a water display of floating lanterns, illuminated carp, and decorated boats; and an evening topped off by a fabulous fireworks display. Sunday turned out to be a bit on the windy side, but all vessels made it back safely to their home ports. Maybe next year we should play a wait-and-see game and pounce on the best weekend... or not. Don't necessarily need Cherry Blossoms in full bloom to enjoy a weekend with an OYC group.

Steve & Ginny Preda, Anamchara

OYC SOUTH'S CRUISE TO BALD HEAD ISLAND

We didn't leave Federal Point Yacht Club until Sat morning because of bad weather on Friday. It's a short cruise for most of the group, about 1-1/2 hours, so we arrived at BHI around noon and had the obligatory arrival cocktail, *Little Dinghies*, provided by *Copy Cat*. You really need a bicycle or golf cart to get around the island; but if you don't have either, you can walk to the restaurant and the lighthouse, Old Baldy, and the beach is also close-by. We rented two, six-person golf carts in order to carry all five of us plus Katie, the Rhodes' rambunctious golden retriever. The weather was rather cool and breezy, but it was a great day to go shopping, so we went to all the favorite places of the group, the silver shop and the turtle conservatory that has a shop whose proceeds support saving the turtles. We all showed our support and bought some treasures. On the way back to the boats we stopped at Old Baldy and everyone, except Katie, walked up the 108 steps to the top. Docktails that evening were cut short because of annoying no-seeums that were attacking us, so we went to dinner early at the restaurant closest to the marina and had a great meal. The next morning we decided to have our brunch aboard *Copy Cat* rather than on the dock to again avoid the irritating bugs. We went for another golf cart ride to do some last minute shopping before we headed back to Federal Point. We all decided to leave BHI on Sunday because Monday's prediction was for heavy rain. It seemed like a good idea to have a dock party instead. We had hoped to see the OYC North contingent who were in town; and when we called them, they were in downtown Wilmington and drove over to see us.



In the picture, from top left to right... Harold Beatty, Teresa Sorrenti, Jimmy Thomas, Mary Jo Worcester, Tim Gibbons and Bob Nalevanko. Bottom row... Maria Gibbons, Dick and Caroline Lynn, Tom Lensis, Steve Worcester, Donna Lensis, Betsy Nalevanko, Arleen Rhodes, Gay Thomas, and half of Ned Rhodes aboard *Sea Duck Too*. Not pictured, Pat Beatty and Rick Sorrenti, who was behind the camera, after returning from spending the weekend at Bald Head Island with five boats from the Cape Fear Power Squadron, three of which are OYCers, *Copy Cat*, *Sea Duck Too*, and *Impulse*.

Tom & Donna Lensis, *Copy Cat*

UPCOMING EVENTS

OYC FLAG RAISING at OHM, noon, May 4

ORMA BLESSING OF THE FLEET in the Occoquan River, May 18th (Please see Joe's April article for details.)

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND, May 24-27 3 OPTIONS!

COLONIAL BEACH Memorial Day Weekend

This is traditionally one of the major cruises of the season. Activities will include:

- Happy hours on the dock each evening
- Dinner at the Dockside restaurant on Friday night
- Dinner at the Lighthouse restaurant Saturday night
- Tour of the Westmoreland Berry Farm and Ingleside Winery on Sunday
- Brunch on the docks Monday morning.

Golf carts are available for rental so you can drive around town. Bring your bikes because that is another great way to get around town. There will be in-town activities for Memorial Day too! A nice beach is a short walk from the marina and there are churches in town for those interested in Sunday services. If you even think you might want to go, be sure and call Colonial Beach Yacht Center ASAP at 804-224-7230, ask for Robin and say you are with OYC to reserve your slip. After securing your reservation, please contact Bob Hill at bhill53@gmail.com to be sure you are on our cruise list.

Bob Hill & Min Lee, Rx to Relax

NOMINI BAY Memorial Day Weekend

Approximately 50 miles south of Belmont Bay and 5 miles north of Ragged Point lies Hollis Island, aka "Shark Tooth Island" (STI). Traveling down the Potomac, passing the southern extent of Nomini Cliffs you may not even notice the existence of SKI. This cruise offers an alternative to a "typical" holiday cruise in that you won't have all the amenities of a marina - but that's all good. Most of us head "down riva" Friday afternoon and, after circling around the southern extent of SKI, raft up in the tranquil waters between the island and the "mainland." We set the raft approximately 100 yards from shore in 4'-5' of water. The island, though not large, has beautiful beaches and "the locals" typically come out in numbers and set up their tents. The days are pretty lazy, though we'll likely take a run to the mainland to look for shark teeth and also take a run to either Coles or Tall Timbers for Sunday brunch.

You need to pack in what you'll use and a dingy is helpful but not necessary. So, again this is a cruise where you might be stepping out of your "comfort zone," but it's one you will definitely want to take again!

Mike & Karen Crouch, *Makia III*

SOLOMONS Memorial Day Weekend

Here is the answer to your Memorial Day weekend brought to you by your cruise hosts and hostesses, Scott and Linda Del Monte and Johnny and Michelle DeDitius. Our trip down the lazy Potomac River will start on Friday, May 24, to Solomons Island, MD, and will conclude on Monday, May 27. Departure times are at your discretion.

Our destination will be Spring Cove Marina. It is considered one of the finest marinas on the Bay, with a friendly and professional staff and a convenient location in Historic Solomons Island. <http://www.springcovemarina.com>
This is a first come, first served registration. You are responsible for making your reservation and financially securing it, so please do not wait. Please let them know you are with the Occoquan Yacht Club / Del Monte party.

For your host/hostesses planning, please e-mail Scott Del Monte @ sdm1@comcast.net and let him know you will be attending and how many will be in your party. Feel free to attend all or some of the weekend, whatever works for you. You DO NOT have to be an OYC member to make this cruise; we encourage you to invite other boating friends to join in the festivities.

"The Double "D's"
Del Monte & DeDitius, *ScottLin Yard & Liquid Leisure*

MARGARITA/ FAJITA FEST at OHM, June 8

PRYCA KICKOFF at COBB ISLAND, June 14-16

The 2013 theme is **Cobstock: The Summer of Love!** This year's necklace will be loaded with beads, but the best one will be our own OYC "Peace, Love & OYC... Be there or Bead Square!" bead. There will be lots of activities, great food and fun. Attendees will learn about local waterfowl, boating safety, and Cobb Island. More information is forthcoming. The list is filling up! So if you're interested and haven't signed up yet, please contact Don Bennett at bennettdon@comcast.net ASAP!

Don & Anne Bennett, *Heart of the Sun*

SOUTH BAY CRUISE, June 16 – July 6

Once again I am pleased to offer an adventurous cruise for 21 days, starting on June 16th, leaving from Cobb Island. We will start with the Cobb Island Summer Kick-Off, leaving Fairfax Yacht Club on June 14th, and then proceed on down the river from there on the 16th. Our itinerary is designed so that cruisers can join us on the weekend, leave on the next weekend and make it back to Occoquan before the start of the workweek. We also plan on staying at most places at least two nights, keeping the travel times to less than three hours between destinations. Golf is high on the list of things to do, so make sure you bring your sticks! The itinerary is as follows: Cobb Island, Coles Pt., Deltaville and Urbanna on the Rappahannock, Onancock on the Eastern Shore, York River, Bay Creek near Cape Charles, Cavalier Golf and Yacht Club near Virginia Beach, Kings Mill on the James River, past the "Ghost Fleet", then up the Pagan River to Smithfield, and finishing at Norfolk for the 4th of July. We plan on returning to the Occoquan on the Saturday July 6th, perhaps stopping at White Point to shorten the journey, ending the trip on Sunday.

If you are interested, send me an email to hpcroft@verizon.net; and I will send you a detailed trip plan. The only commitment I need from you at this time is for the 4th of July. **IF** you plan to be there for the 4th, let me know **NOW** so that I can make reservations. Spaces will be limited, so the earlier the better. It may already be too late.

Anchors aweigh!
Capt. Harry Croft, *Bay Dreamer*

TIM'S I FIREWORKS RAFT-UP, June 29

Bud & Heidi Bishop, *Hi-Jinx*

FIREWORKS in DC - 4th of July

We have three cruises scheduled for this holiday. Watch for details and contacts as we learn more about the construction in Washington Channel.

PRYCA FLOAT-IN at COLES POINT, July 19-21

Although this event is in July, we must register NOW!
You have recently received emails regarding this event. If you need more info, please contact Don Bennett ASAP at bennettdon@comcast.net.

The Cup!!!

Don & Anne Bennett, *Heart of the Sun*

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DO CRAB POTS MAKE YOU CRABBY?!

The following is a report submitted to the PRYCA Board April 1, 2013, by PRYCA Member at Large, West, Pat Croft:

Report of findings regarding inquiry as to placement and number of crab/fish pots on Occoquan Bay:

"I spoke with Capt. Jim Rose of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, Heathville Operations Office, which is charged with enforcement of VMRC regulations in this area.

"As to **placement of pots**, the only restriction is that they may not be placed in a navigable channel designated with Coast Guard markers.

"As to **number of pots**, recreational permits are limited to 5 pots each, while commercial permits are limited to 250 pots each. While the number of overall permits throughout the state is regulated for conservation purposes, there is no limit on how many permits are allowed in any given area.

"Therefore, if several commercial watermen each place 250 pots in Occoquan Bay, the resulting proliferation of pots that we see there at certain times of the year is not illegal. The VMRC indicates there is no avenue for recreational boaters to influence the number of permits issued.

"Marine Police from the Northern Area operation office, (Heathville,) patrol the Occoquan area once every couple of weeks, and if they find one or two pots that are located in the marked channel, they will move the pots out of the restricted area, (assuming they may have drifted there,) and will call the permit holder to notify them of the problem. (Each pot must be marked with the ID# of the permit holder.) If there are more than two pots with the same ID# in the restricted area, or if the permit holder is a repeat offender, the officer will issue a summons for the permit holder to appear in court to

answer for the violation. More information can be found at www.mrc.virginia.gov and at www.prfc.state.va.us.

"Bill Mata, a member of Fairfax Yacht Club, raised the question of whether commercial watermen can legally impede recreational sailing to the extent that he noted in Occoquan Bay, etc. The answer I received from my conversation with Capt. Rose is that yes, they can legally place pots anywhere other than officially marked channels.

"Mr. Mata's question also pertained to "adjoining waters all the way to Mattawoman Creek." This would include the Potomac and the mouth of Mattawoman Creek. I contacted the Potomac River Fisheries office, and was told that the same regulations apply: pots can be placed anywhere other than officially marked channels.

However, the agent did note that on occasion, when a boater has contacted law enforcement to complain about pots, the law enforcement agency has contacted the permit holder, who has agreed to move pots to allow for greater boating ease, even though he is under no legal obligation to do so.

"Within the Potomac River, VMRC officers and Maryland DNR officers both have jurisdiction. Either office could be contacted. For Mattawoman Creek, only Maryland DNR has jurisdiction, and for Occoquan Bay, only VMRC has jurisdiction. The phone numbers are:
VMRC, Northern Area office: 1-800-541-4646
Maryland DNR Marine Police: 301-6454-0062"

Thank you, Pat!

* * *

The Good Ship Mermentau

Change comes slowly, especially on the river, so it's unusual to note its passage. Who among us remembers weather cold enough to ice skate across the Potomac at D.C.? My father in law, born in 1901, did just that in the very early 1900s, a tale I thought apocryphal until seeing displays of river icing at the St. Michaels Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. We even had a Coast Guard icebreaker for the Potomac, the cutter Capstan, moored at the Fort Belvoir docks on Pohick Bay. With changing weather conditions, she was eventually transferred to Philadelphia in the 1980s.

Looking at some old pictures the other day I was reminded of one old relic not far from Mallows bay that has now disappeared: the good ship Mermentau. Not really a part of the Ghost Fleet of Mallows Bay, the Mermentau stood aloof and aside next to a point of land between Mallows Bay and Wades Bay. There stood an old house and a rickety dock on this point, and the vessel looked a little confused. While upright, with cargo and fish-spotting mast still standing, she was aground, stern to the river, and away from the old dock.



She was supposedly built in North Carolina as a wooden menhaden fishing boat in 1949 and powered by a three cylinder diesel. At some time in her history she was converted for river passenger and cargo use, and though I could find no further information about her, that fact was evident in her transformation. Her mast could be used to move cargo, but the after hold wherein the mast emptied the menhaden-filled nets was now covered by a ten cabin structure, five to a side. The whole aft had a sturdy wooden railing with beautifully turned-wood stanchions. Through her open or missing doors and windows the painted interior cabin walls flaunted their still bright colors, a chair rail enhancing each cabin one third of the way up. Her high bridge still stood intact, beckoning her master to the next dance. The effect was that of an aged debutante, dressed for a ball in the tatty, faded finery of a time long gone, awaiting a beau who would never come. Lucy and I often passed by, and she always nodded a prim welcome, pleased by the company and attention. Then one day after a hurricane, she was gone, and we found ourselves missing her every time we passed her last berth.

Perhaps there is a moral in this somewhere.

Nabil Dubraque, *High Cotton*

* * *

MEMBERSHIP

membership@occoquanyachtclub.org

Thank you to all who have renewed your OYC membership for 2013. What a fun-filled season we have planned! It's not too late to recruit your friends! If you know someone who hasn't renewed yet this year, remind them of the good times they're missing. And we're always looking to welcome new members. Remember, you don't even have to own a boat to join. See you at the Flag Raising and/or contact,

Membership Chair, John DeDitius.

EARLY BIRD / CHERRY BLOSSOM CRUISE

GANGPLANK MARINA / 5-7 APRIL 2013



Our Historian,
Don Bennett, at the
Early Bird Cruise,
going above and
beyond... literally!



Sunday Brunch
It was a bit chilly, but tradition is tradition!

Don's view down on the dock...



Almost blossoms...



Thanks for a great cruise, Steve & Ginny!

The Daymarker

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*1992, 1993, 1997, 2009, 2011 & 2012 PRYCA Cup Champions