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Upper Bay Boating

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Dave Bielecki, Publisher

A Round Tuit

"I'll get around to it". Sure we all like to procrastinate at times; I'm no stranger to that. Unfortunately for me, I have two deadlines to meet to get both this publication and our other one, the Car Show & Cruise Guide out. With two months between our winter edition and this one, sometimes I just forget when the next deadline is coming up. Five times a year, both publications deadline at the same time- what fun! So we just wrapped up the car publication and it is now time to get Around Tuit with producing the April Upper Bay Boating edition.

I heard Frank Sinatra's "I Did it My Way" recently. I can relate to the lyrics for sure. While I didn't plan on starting over after life got in the way, I did; twice. I thank God that I did it my way, or maybe His way!

I ran a decent sized landscaping company, years ago, and didn't want to lower my quality and pricing to compete with the larger national firms. After selling the business 20 years ago, I worked for a few boating magazines and for the Baltimore Sun in advertising. Most days I was doing what I liked, but certain days I dreamed of returning to my roots and become my own boss again. Well, be careful what you hope for folks. Around 8 years ago, when the economy tanked, so did my job. I found myself out of work in a poor economy that was full of age discrimination. No one was going to hire an out of work 50 something male. All I knew was landscaping and advertising. Neither career was going to work for me at the time. Ideally, finding a job with a boating magazine would have been great, but I knew if I was going to work, I was going to have to do it my way.

After investing in my own start-up Home magazine that was never profitable, I had to re-think what might work in a slow economy. My other passion is old cars, so unlike boats at the time, the owners never just parked the classic cars, they still found ways to enjoy them. My only problem these past seven years was producing enough copies to satisfy the demand of the car community. Print is far from being a big money producer these days, so I had to take a job at a credit union for a few years to help make ends meet. That job just wasn't for me, so I left to invest more time in my own business, and finally decided the timing was right to start this magazine, which has been successful since the first issue.

In my down-time between deadlines, I finally got a Round Tuit and wrote my book, Restored Heart & Soul, after almost 10 years of just thinking about it. How many of us get to do what we love to do for a living? I get to hang around old cars and boats all day, while actually getting paid to do that! So folks, I can honestly say, regrets I have a few, but I did it my way… thanks to all of you, and our loyal advertisers.

Happy Boating, Dave

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Floating on the Sea of Recreational Spending Reform

By Wendy Gilbert *Features Editor*

I've been obsessing a bit this winter about my recreational spending habits. Not the good kind of recreational spending like fuel for the boat, a snazzy new PFD or deck shoes. No, the bad kind of recreational spending like the incessant crap that pops up on my computer every 10 seconds and I have questions about it.

Question 1.

Do I need (or even want) a stainless-steel pendant proclaiming to the world that my first name starts with a W?

Question 2.

Has the cleanliness of my home been improved by the tower of microfiber products that piled into it during January and February?

Question 3.

Are my artistic and creative endeavors truly bolstered by the "free" online classes with expensive supply requirements?

The answer to all three is a resounding No.

That much was obvious and what and how to do something about it equally so. The difficulty was committing to the solution regardless of the psychology of why.

In journalism class, we are encouraged to search for the Who, What, Where, When and How of things. In my experience, the Why of things is far more interesting.

It would be easy to blame some sort of genetic anomaly (just ask my siblings), but I wasn't looking for reasons, I was searching for solutions.

Thanks to the public library, friends and the internet, finding solutions to problems is remarkably easy these days.

There are countless people getting pretty darned wealthy, telling other people to stop spending money on stupid stuff and buy their newly minted books, planners and microfiber products. After reading a few of these books and blogs, I was ready.

I enlisted the aid of my eldest sibling, whose recreational spending habits dwarf my own. She's not going to read the book I sent her (see recommended reading list at the end), but my fellow overbuyer did agree to join me on a 31-day spending freeze.

After our first week, we were feeling rather proud of ourselves. We took our paltry list of essentials to the store and passed by the red stickers, mark-downs and door busters with ease. We didn't even need shopping carts. That carton of milk, tube of toothpaste and bag of green beans barely warranted a basket!

We had a short spurt of second-guessing and "just this one exception" during the second week. I went off the wagon via Amazon and my sister succumbed to the call of restaurants. We quickly got ourselves realigned and prepared for the duration.

During our spending freeze, we inventoried our foodstuffs, cleaned our homes and cars and cheered each other forward with calls and texts. Meanwhile we channeled out wistful longings to online wish lists. My personal "when this is over" wants/needs list was short, but I feared losing out on the current bargain pricing. What if it cost more later?

At the onset, I was afraid I would go on some sort of frenzied shopping spree after 31 days of Lenten-like denial.

Instead, we found ourselves, deleting almost everything we put on those lists. Sadly, that means that I won't be getting that pair of new Sperry's or the ukulele I was eyeing just yet, but I will be visiting with my sister.

A chunk of the money we are saving on musical instruments, exotic teas, accessories and the like will fund her visit here from Arkansas.

If you find yourself in an overspending boat sailing on the Sea of Insolvency, fear not. Take a breath, find your bearings and let loose your inner saver. I promise you will not regret it. This year's true recreational season is almost upon us.

Recommended Reading

Ruth Sokup "Living Well, Spending Less"

Ruth Sokup "Unstuffed"

Lauren Greutman "The recovering spender : how to live a happy, fulfilled, debt-free life"

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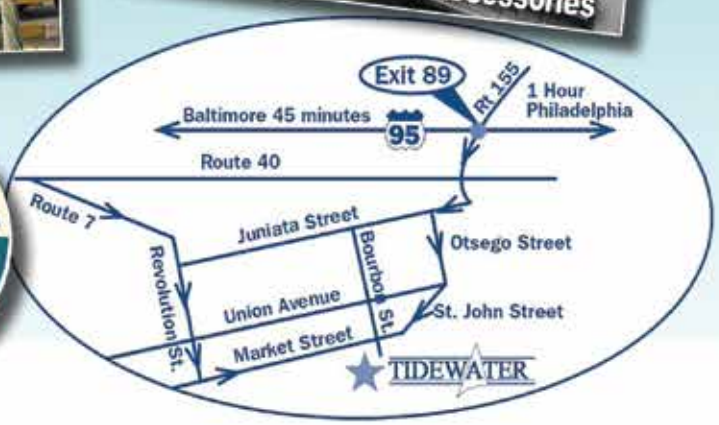

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24 Tundra Swans Aswimming

*By **Wendy Gilbert-** Features Editor*

Theoretically, I know that tundra swans have the potential to visit my little nook of a neighborhood on the Elk River. They are not exactly rare and are frequent visitors to the Eastern Shore. Just because I never saw them with my own eyes until recently does not mean much of anything.

I've only walked past what I refer to as "the lagoon" a couple of times a week (at least) for the last 15 years without ever seeing a swan until last week.

And see them I did!

There were an even 24 in the flock and my husband and I were enraptured by their grace and beauty. The last time I saw a flock of tundra swans that large I was in Alaska about 20 years ago. We stood stock still for a couple of very tranquil minutes and then decided to approach stealthily.

Apparently, we have lost some of our stealth over the years.

The pair that was swimming closest, glided quickly away.

Tranquility, alas, is a short-lived bliss.

About that time, the evening swarm of who knows what kind of birds arrived. The nightly cacophony of thousands of small migratory birds is such that the word cacophony must surely had been coined. Either that or the person coining the word was in an elementary school classroom on the first day of recorder practice. Yes, I remember that day.

Wendy Gilbert

During a recent meeting with some church lady friends of mine, I learned that the flock of swans are seen quite regularly a little further up the river. Who knew? Perhaps they will find our neck of the woods appealing and come back again.

I was quick to do a little online research and was saddened to know that they will soon be returning to Alaska. My plan was to go down to the lagoon every evening to see how my flock is doing. After all, the winter weather this year has been relatively mild if somewhat erratic. Surely, a short evening walk to the lagoon was doable?

Enter winter 2017 – also known as March.

Ah well. Perhaps they will return next year; perhaps not. No matter. It's almost time to burn the socks and leave these white thoughts alone.

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Upper Bay Boating Events and Waterfront Activities

Project Clean Stream Day
April 1, at Georgetown, Md. Sassafras River Association 410-275-1400 riverkeeper@sassafrasriver.org And cleanups take place all Spring through June 9th twolfe@allianceforthebay.org or call 443-949-0575 The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

Spring Stream Clean Up
April 2 from 9-1 meet at Essex Park & Ride Eastern Blvd at Virginia Ave. in Essex, Md. 443-9832945 savebackriver@gmail.com

Celebrate Spring Sock Burning Party April 8 from 2-4 pm at Middle River Landing Marina 1901 Old eastern Ave. Middle River 410-686-0771

Back River Restoration Committee General Meeting
April 11 @7pm at the Hawks Club 430 Riverside Dr. Essex, Md. 21221 Come find out how you can help clean up the bay. Guest speaker will be sharing information on the Oyster Reef Ball Program. Please note- this organization is endorsed and sponsored by this magazine- we believe grass-root organizations like this make a big difference in our water quality- please join them in helping our part of the bay

Bay Bridge Boat Show
April 21-23 at the Bay Bridge Marina in Stevensville, 410-268-8828 info@annapolisboatshows.com

BRYC Car Show & Open House
April 22 from 11 - 3 @ Bush River Yacht Club Abingdon, MD 410-608-7211

Baltimore Waterfront Festival
April 22 from 12-6pm Rash field Key Hwy Baltimore , Md. www.baltimorewaterfront.com

Betterton Beach Clean-up
April 22 from 9-12 410-778-1948 www.kentparksandrec.org

Upper Bay Boat Show
April 28-30 Held at Anchor Marina in North East, Md. 410-287-8280

Paddle Into Spring
April 29, at 10am Turners Creek Landing Sassafras Environmental Education Center 410-348-5214 jbelanger@eslc.org

Havre de Grace Decoy and Wildlife Art Festival May 5-7
Three locations, 410-939-3739 www.decoymuseum.com

Space is provided free of charge to Advertisers, Clubs, Boat Courses, Fishing Tournaments, Waterfront Museums, and any Non-Profit Organizations. If you hold an event on the upper bay waterfront, or have any boat related activity, please send us the information. Events will be updated on our website each month. Visit www.upperbayboating.com or email davebielecki@aol.com

Tomes Landing Marina Spring Open House May 6&7 410-378-3343 www.tomeslandingmarina.com

SGT. Marvin T Haw IV Boating Safety Day June 3 from 11-5 Wilson Pt. Park 950 Beech Dr, Middle River, Maryland 21220 See special section in our next issue

CCBC Boating Courses at Hunt Valley held on **April 27 & May 4** 443-840-1237 ccbcmd.edu

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See our website **www.upperbayboating.com** for list of boating activities at the **Anita Leight Center**

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34' Luhrs Tournament '88.....$27,500	28' Hatteras Sport '66 Diesel.....$14,900	18' Wellcraft 185 Elite '86 w/trl.....$4,995
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Center Console Boats and their Fishability on the Chesapeake Bay

By Captain Mark Galasso
Tuna the Tide Charter Service

It has been said that in boat building, form follows function. If one looks at regional boat designs and different fisheries throughout the world it becomes readily apparent. Boat designers of offshore boats that have to navigate through treacherous inlets tend to design and build vessels with high sharp bows for cutting through steep waves. Vessels designed to work in shallow nearshore waters tend to be much flatter and compact. In fact until the advent of fiberglass boats were not only made for specific functions they were made from the materials that could be found locally.

There is perhaps no greater example of this than in the Chesapeake Bay Region. Shallow drafted boats made of white oak, cedar and pine still work in the Bay harvesting oysters, clams, crabs and fish. Famous designs like the Skipjacks and the Chesapeake deadrises were made to do the heavy lifting in the shallow, rough waters of Chesapeake Bay. A great read on the history of Chesapeake Bay workboats is Larry S. Chowning's book "Deadrise and Cross Planked".

However, with the advent of fiberglass and more shared knowledge between boat manufactures boat building has taken a more international face. A visit to one of the many Marine Manufacturer's trade shows or local boat shows can raise any old salt's eyebrows. Vessels that range from flat bottom skiffs to half million dollar center consoles are getting more and more common. The myriad of boats for a potential buyer to choose from can be overwhelming. So, if you're looking for that perfect family boat to fish and crab off of this summer lets narrow it down a bit.

In my humble opinion it's hard to beat a center console for use on Chesapeake Bay. And frankly I've operated a handful of different brands and models. Let's look at the advantages they all share. First, they draw very little water. Most center consoles between 17 and 23 feet with a modified V draw less than 16 inches of water. And with the new four stroke motors in the 75 to 300 hp range they run fast enough to pull water skiers or get you in from a storm quickly. They are also great on fuel and with 50 to 100 gallon capacities you can get a lot of running for just a few trips to the pump. Also, vessels 23 feet and under usually have an 8 foot six inch beam which means they can be trailered with no special permits, making their range pretty remarkable. In my case I would fish the head of the Bay in the spring, Middle of the Bay in summer and the mouth of the Bay in the winter.

That being said the conditions I subjected my boats to vary widely. For instance when we fish down around Smith Island you have to cross wide open sounds where it can get rough quickly. Sometimes we would traverse 10 miles of open water to fish a large flat that only averaged 2 feet deep. At the head of the Bay it wasn't quite as rough but we were constantly running through 16 inches of water to find little canals that might be three feet deep. And at times we might have to jump in and push a boat off a sandbar. The other extreme was the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel where sometimes the wind and current would work against each other to form 5 and 6 foot standing waves in sixty feet of water. In these cases it's nice to have a vessel that is not only solid but has a good scupper system to shed water quickly.

So this show season do a little research beforehand. Look at the conditions you tend to boat in. Also look at your budget. There are a number of guides throughout the Bay that make a living on a boat you might be interested in buying. Spend a day with them. Most dealers are all too happy to give you a demo ride. Take advantage of it. Boat dealers want you to be happy. Happy boaters tend to buy more boats!

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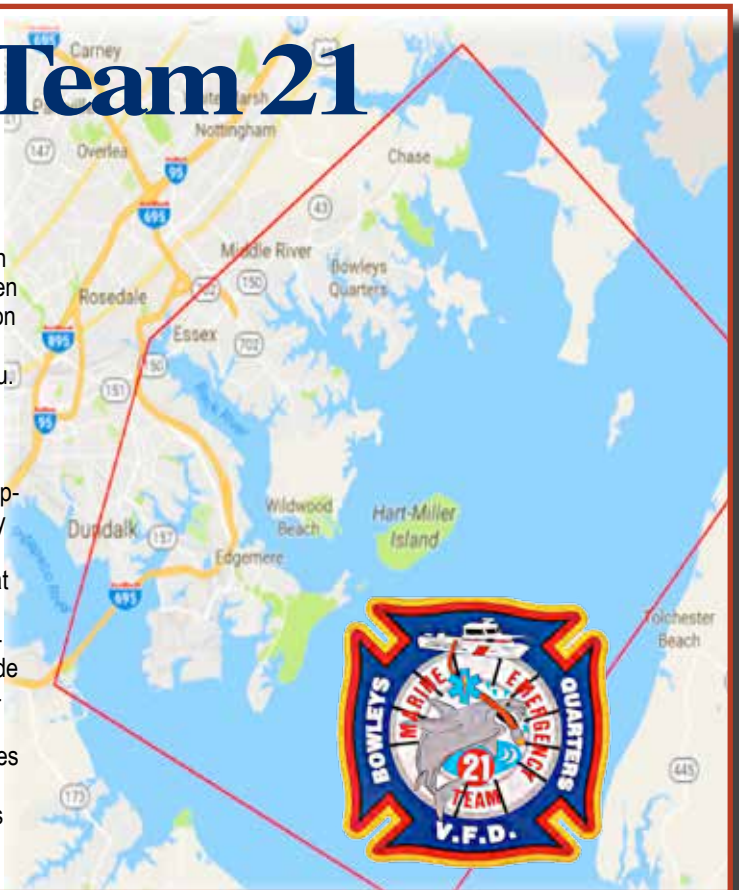
Marine Emergency Team 21

Each year there are thousands of motor, sailing and personal watercraft vessels that for recreational purposes, enjoy the waterways of the Maryland Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. Be it for pleasure or for work, vessels are subject to many obstacles that are associated with boating. Have you ever wondered though - what happens when an emergency happens on the open water? If you're located on the waters of the Chesapeake Bay or its tributaries, chances are Marine Emergency Team 21 will be involved in helping you.

Comprised of 35 specially-trained response personnel, two Marine Fire/Rescue vessels, three shallow draft boats, one inflatable craft and several land-based response/towing vehicles, the Bowleys Quarters Volunteer Fire Department operates the largest Marine Emergency Team in the Upper Bay area, named Marine Emergency Team 21 (MET21). MET21 is one of few teams north of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge that can make year-round emergency responses in any weather condition. Team personnel are trained for all worst-case scenarios that they may be faced with. Common responses include vessel fires, collisions, hazardous material incidents and medical emergencies. Two of our vessels can provide Basic Life Support and when staffed by EMT's are essentially ambulances on the water. MET21 receives most its distress calls through Baltimore County's 911 dispatch, direct from the United States Coast Guard (USCG), or through Marine VHF channel 16.



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Upper Bay Tow Boat US Operator Receives Tower of the Year Award

A local small business that that helps boaters get safely home was recognized for its professionalism at the BoatUS Towing Services Annual Conference recently held in San Diego, California. “Tower of the Year” honors went to TowBoatUS Baltimore, which is owned and operated by Capt. Dale Plummer and Christine Plummer.

The Maryland Company’s eleven bright red towing response vessels are a familiar sight to Upper Bay boaters, has homeports in Baltimore, Middle River and Annapolis. The Plummers’ company was acknowledged for its near-perfect 24-hour towing dispatch operation, superior customer service and satisfaction, towing case management, and its work in the local boating community.

Much like an auto club for recreational boaters, TowBoatUS Baltimore is part of a nationwide network of more than 300 locations and 600 towing-response vessels that annually responds to more than 70,000 requests for routine on-water assistance, such as engine breakdowns, running out of fuel or running aground.

TowBoatUS Baltimore can be hailed on VHF channel 16, by calling the company directly at 410-255-8700, by phoning the BoatUS toll-free 24/7 Dispatch Center at 800-391-4869, or via smartphone using the free BoatUS Mobile App.

(L to R) BoatUS Vice President Jerry Cardarelli, TowBoatUS Baltimore’s Christine Plummer and Capt. Dale Plummer, BoatUS CEO Kirk La and TowBoatUS Vice President Adam Wheeler.

Quote from Captain Dale Plummer: “We are so proud of our Captains and crew for being an integral part of our success. We hold them to extremely high customer service and operational standards which they never fail to exceed. We could not have attained this honor without their dedication and hard work.

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Scenes from the BOAT SHOW

Annapolis

Brenda Wilmouth enjoying the nice weather at at the Fall Annapolis Show.

photos by Dave

Atlantic City

Sand Sculptor John Gowdy

Baltimore

Our friend Jim High at his booth.

Service Dog enjoying the show.

Philadelphia

Woody Jackson working hard at the Philly Show.

The Galahad Ladies.

Sue Howard at the Sassafras Harbor booth.

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Atlantic City

You never know what you'll find at a show… This cool sand sculpture was being created by John Gowdy on site at the Atlantic City Boat Show.

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Music in the Wind

by Dick Greenwood

Call me silly, but I love walking through a marina in the winter. Moving through the boat yard of Haven Harbour in Rock Hall, the slap-slap-slap of lines being blown against masts produces a melodic chorus of musical sounds. The hollow, aluminum masts of the sailboats sitting on jacks soothes you, and you lose track of the cold and the wind blowing off of Swan Creek. The sound is too rhythmic, too sweet to be disturbing or ominous.

I drove down to Rock Hall with the intention of visiting my friend, Woody Loller, Haven Harbour's General Manager so I could get a feel of the pulse of the boating community. As always, he doesn't disappoint. Woody's a local boy—born and raised in Galena—who went away to war then came home and made the Bay and its environs his life. He's been a dockhand, a surveyor, a mechanic, an overseer of a maintenance operation, and finally a boss. I met him when he was in the overseer part of his career; the boss part came later, but he's ideally suited for it. His calm demeanor and deep knowledge make people immediately like and trust him. He's the kind of guy you willingly allow to keep your boat afloat and your family safe.

"So, how's the boating industry?" I begin.

"Good," he answers, "When the economy is strong, the boating industry is strong. Right now I think people are optimistic, so they're willing to spend some money. And we've had a good winter; the warmth of February let us do a lot that we thought wouldn't get done until later in the Spring."

The docks of Sassafras Harbor Marina.

We talk for a while, and then I leave his office and go out into the yard to nose around. That's when the wind's strumming on the lines of the sailboats mesmerizes me as I roam around, looking at the changes that have taken place since my last visit. New, floating docks, a new fuel dock, newly acquired buildings that have been renovated and gussied up for summer visitors, all add up to present a new, clean-scrubbed view of a marina that always looked good but now looks better.

I bid goodbye to Woody and head north, toward home. Forty-five minutes later I cross the Sassafras and decide to duck into the Sassafras Harbor Marina. I have to smile to myself when I note that this marina has opted to skip the British spelling of "harbor" and risk having its "swank index" lowered. It's still a very nice place. No one seems to be home at Sassafras Harbor, but that doesn't detract from its appeal. New—they certainly look new to me—floating docks sit empty, while row upon row of shrink-wrapped boats sit looking impatient and a bit sulky. The cold isn't to their liking.

I hang around for 20 minutes or so, taking pictures and listening to the wind playing with the loose bits of shrink-wrap. These sounds are sharper, more crinkly than the sounds of the wind playing with sailboat rigging; but they're still unique and interesting. I can't help musing about the absence of the laughter of kids, the conversations of the adults, and the rumbling and humming of the engines that will be coming in just a few weeks. This is a different place than it will be in a very short time. But it's a good place.

I resume my drive north, but when I get to the Bohemia River I decide that I need to stop at Bohemia Bay Yacht Harbour—swank index high, the "u" is back in "harbor—and have a look around. It's been about eight years since the winter snowstorm that tried but failed to bring this premier marina to its knees. The last time I was there it was to take photographs of the destruction that had been wreaked by a sudden snowstorm that overcame the strength of the slip roofs and brought the roofs, the ice, and the heavy wooden structure down on the boats that were sheltering below. I ask Ken Long, the General Manager of the operation what they've done to ensure that there won't be a recurrence of that calamity.

He doesn't miss a beat. "Better engineering," he replies. Then he goes on to list the improvements that were made. "No one ever believed those roofs would collapse," he tells me, "but they did, and we committed to ensuring that it would never happen again. These structures are stronger and better engineered." As I look them over, I believe him.

Unlike the first two marinas I've visited this day, Bohemia Bay offers "condominium slips" that are owned by the boaters who occupy them; so many of the slips here double as home for the owners. That distinction means that the marina has bubblers to keep the water from freezing. With the guarantee against freezing comes assurance of access, so many more boats are left in the water all year round.

Since I'm in the neighborhood, I can't resist the opportunity to stop in to the first marina I ever called home port, Bohemia Vista. But now it's a few minutes after five o'clock, and with the wind blowing and the outside temperature in the 20's, the place is bare of human habitation. I can't blame them. As it always did, Bohemia Vista looks clean and ready for spring. They don't need me to tell them it will soon be the start of a good year.

I take a quick stroll around before I leave Bohemia Vista. The sound of wind is stronger now. I regret that I didn't have the time to visit more of the outstanding marinas that dot the eastern shore of the Chesapeake, but I find comfort in the knowledge that I'll be back soon. I love the sound of a marina in the winter, but I also love the spring, summer, and fall sounds that comprise the aural panoply of the Bay. What a wonderful world this Chesapeake Bay holds out to us. Aren't we lucky?

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Ask a Marine Technician

By Kevin Ladenheim *Mallard Marine Services*

Tip of the Month: When you reterminate an untinned conductor you will often find that the copper is black with corrosion. A gentle application of fine sandpaper will brighten the copper. Apply an anti-oxidant like Sanchem NO-OX-ID® or Ideal Noalox® and work it into the strands before making a new connection. Tinned copper wiring is always the best choice, I have reterminated cabling that was thirty plus years old and it was still good as new.

Q. What tools do you recommend for making good electrical connections?

A. Connections larger than 10 awg are less common and require expensive tools so I will cover 18 to 10 awg crimp connections. Write to the email address at the end of the column for tool suggestions for the larger connections.

There are two main types of crimp connections you should be using: heat shrink and insulation crimp.

For both types of connections the terminal barrel will usually have a seam. Orient the connector in the tool to prevent the seam from opening when crimping.

Heat Shrink Crimp Connections

A heat shrink connection is two parts: a single mechanical crimp from a tool, and application of a heat gun to shrink the glue lined heat shrink to the wire insulation, providing sealing and strain relief. If you sometimes want to make waterproof connections and only want to invest in a few tools you can just make all connections this way. I recommend the Porter Cable PC1500HG heat gun (~$30), the variable heat is very useful for plumbing tasks. The Sea-Dog Line 429920-1 crimper (~$30) is very nice and is widely available. It's a ratcheting cycle crimper that releases automatically when done. Be sure to heat the connector until it goes from opaque to clear and the glue flows. If you watch carefully you will see the transition.

Plain Crimp Connections

A good source of quality nylon crimp terminals is Ancor brand, carried at your local marine store. The 3M Scotchlok insulation grip terminals are also good. Avoid cheap vinyl terminals from auto parts stores, they are junk. An insulation grip connector is designed for a tool that makes a double crimp. One crimp is from the bare metal of the terminal to the bare conductor, the second crimp grips the insulation. Both crimps happen simultaneously because of the shape of the tool die. Always give your connector a good pull to test connection strength.

For double crimps, I recommend the Ancor 703030 double crimper ($61). With a short handled tool like this, leverage can sometimes be a problem for yellow connectors. Use two hands and carefully support the tool on your boot or a surface if needed.

Quick and Dirty Plain Crimping (Not recommended)

Folks have told me that they have made connections with pliers, vises and vise grips. You can never do a good job with those tools. People also commonly have a thin, flat tool that is combo stripper and crimper, unfortunately you can't do a good job with those either. The bare minimum if the above tools are unavailable is a simple plier type crimper like the Channellock 909 (~$17). Be sure to aggressively tug on your work to test when using this tool and be very careful if you attempt to crimp the insulation grip portion of the connector.

Please send questions and comments to ubbasktech@gmail.com. All emails will be answered.

Ancor 701030 Ratchet Double Crimper

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Spring Start-up Checklist for a Fun & Safe Boating Season

Fuel System

Inspect the fuel system for leaks or damage and be sure to pay special attention to fuel hoses, connections and tank surfaces.

Evidence of a damaged fuel hose includes softness, brittleness or cracking.

Replace components when necessary and verify all fittings and clamps are properly secured.

Ensure the engine, exhaust and ventilation systems are all functioning properly.

Look before you pump. Don't fill your tank with fuel that contains more than 10% ethanol (E10) as it will damage your engine

Belts, Cables & Hoses

Check belts, cables and hoses because they can become brittle and may crack during winter storage.

Belts should fit tightly around pulleys to prevent slipping.

A worn belt may leave a black residue near the pulley and will fit loosely.

Cracks or swells on the outer jacket of throttle, shift and steering control cables may be of internal corrosion and immanent failure

Electric System

Inspect all electrical connections for clean, tight, corrosion free connections. Corroded connections can be dangerous

Remove corroded terminals and use a wire brush to clean them, along with all cable ends.

Charge your battery and have it tested to ensure it can hold a charge.

Electrical systems should be regularly inspected by a qualified technician.

Fluid Levels

Check all fluid levels including engine oil, power steering, power trim reservoirs and coolant.

Be sure to change the engine oil, oil filter and drive lubricants if these tasks were not done prior to winterizing your boat.

Propellers & Hulls

Inspect propellers for dings, pitting, cracks and distortion.

Damaged propellers can cause unwanted vibration and damage to your drive train.

Make sure the propeller is secured properly, and replace bearings when needed.

When inspecting the hull, look for blisters, distortions and cracks. Be sure to clean the hull, deck, and topsides using an environmentally safe cleaning solution.

Also, make sure the drain plug is securely in place before every launch.

Safety Gear

Check your life jackets to ensure they are in good condition and that there are enough on board for all potential passengers.

Ensure that each individual has the correct size life jacket for their body weight.

Be sure all onboard fire extinguishers are the correct class for your vessel, and are fully charged and stowed in the proper place.

For any enclosed or semi-enclosed area, ensure you have at least one properly installed and working carbon monoxide detector

Consider an EPIRB for situations of distress to ensure you can be found

Take advantage of any safety inspections offered by the US Coast Guard (USCG), USCG Auxiliary or US Power Squadrons.

Get the new boating year off to a great start. Ensure you'll enjoy another season of carefree boating and make your annual boat preparation more manageable. *Courtesy of Discover Boating*

Boat Dog

My name is Penny and I am Dave Posner's service dog, just hangin' out at the at Philly Boat Show.

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Financing That Dream Boat

How do you get the right boat loan for your new or previously owned dream boat? Here are 10 tips from Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS) just in time for the spring buying season.

photo by Colleen Smart

1. Check your credit: Before applying for a loan, ensure your credit report is accurate, and get your current credit score. The closer to 700 and higher, the better the rate you'll get. A free copy of your credit report is available annually from each of the three national credit bureaus at www.annualcreditreport.com. To get your credit score, first try checking with your credit card issuer or bank you do business with. If it's not provided, you will need to speak to a credit counselor, use a fee-based service or purchase it from the credit bureau.

2. Find the right loan type: A fixed-rate, fixed-term, simple-interest loan is the most common. This offers the same monthly payment for the life of the loan. Variable rate or hybrid options may offer a combination of a fixed rate for a few years then a variable rate. With interest rates forecasted to rise in 2017, the appeal of variable rate loans may increase. Don't forget to ask if there are prepayment penalties for paying off the loan early.

3. Compare loan rates: Generally, rates are lower and available loan terms are longer for newer boats and larger loan amounts. However, each is dependent on a variety of factors including model year, loan amount and down payment. Be prepared for lenders to require larger down payments, have higher rates and offer shorter terms on older boats, especially those over 20 model years. There could also be a .25 percent rate difference between some consecutive model years, so be sure to talk with your lender and understand their rate and term structure.

4. Don't be fooled by ads: You may see rates advertised as low as 3.99 percent, but there usually will be some small print that could make that loan less attractive. For instance, the rate might only be fixed for a few years or the loan period might be only seven years.

5. Get pre-approved: Ask if you can get preapproval, or if your lender allows you to start the underwriting process before you have a signed sales agreement. This may save some time.

6. Consider a HELOC: Thinking of using a home-equity line of credit (HELOC) to buy your boat? This might work if you have equity in your home and you plan to pay the boat off while interest rates remain relatively low. Unsecured loans (loans not secured by your boat) are also an option for well-qualified individuals.

7. Explore tax benefits: A boat can qualify as a second-home loan interest deduction if it has a berth, head and galley, so buying a boat just large enough to have these features could offer a tax advantage. There's an overall limitation on the second-home deduction. You can only deduct two homes, and it can't total more than $1 million in loans. If you count the HELOC, the threshold is $1.1 million.

8. Get it surveyed: So you've secured the loan and found the boat you've wanted. Hang on! While you might think the boat is perfect, hire a qualified marine surveyor to inspect the boat to ensure it is in good condition and you won't have any unexpected repair bills. A list can be found at BoatUS.com/surveyors. Also, many lenders will require a marine survey.

9. Ask about closing costs: As with any loan, there are some fees involved – sales tax, processing fee, and title and registration fees are common. Check with your lender to find out what to expect.

10. Calculate your monthly payment: Wondering how much of a loan you can afford? Check the BoatUS online calculator to compute monthly payments. Your lender will also review your debt ratio and other criteria.

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On the Waterfront

with George Waters

photo by Donna Bedell

The Three States of Matter That Matter

As every schoolchild knows, there are five known states of matter, but only three good ones—liquid, solid and gas. The other two are only found in labs or in your older versions of Trivial Pursuit. Of these top three, there are subcategories, and it is to one of these that I turn my lack of scientific knowledge today: liquids. Each of these makes the argument: "People will totally buy stuff if 'liquid' is in the title".

Liquid smoke. I got a hankering for a hickory burger recently, and remembered that in the past century some dude had invented a way to make smoke drip into a bottle. Liquefying ash particulates for the betterment of lunch is one of several things which makes me proud to be human. Also Old Spice.

Liquid paper. This is basically paint for your reports, but call it "paper paint" and you don't even sell 10 units. Liquid paper makes it sound like you somehow made paper drip into a bottle, and people love to be awed. The fact that it is simply chemicals, roughly the same shade of paper does not awe. Whoever came up with the name does.

Liquid courage. This one is found most often in wartime trenches and at high school dances. There are some challenges which cannot be dared unless slightly lubed. These include advancing during a mortar barrage and trying to de-wallflower Julie Robinson.

Liquid glass. (Not to be confused with "water glass.") This stuff you swab on the front of your phone and it forms an invisible, protective shield against your gullibility in falling for stuff advertised on YouTube ever again.

Liquid bandage. Ever cut your finger only to discover you are out of bandages? Well, technically you have bandages, but they are those little dots, the ones you haven't used since high school when you tried to pretend you cut yourself shaving but everybody knew you were just covering up zits. Liquid bandage coats and protects your cut just like a normal bandage, except here you wave your hand in the air to dry it and a droplet flies off and lands in your dog's eye, and the vet bill is $240.

Liquid electrical tape. The ads say just dab some on that fraying cord for a waterproof, protective, "dielectric" seal. Personally, when dealing with high voltage, "dielectric" is the last word I want to see.

Maybe I should have written about gases.
Then again, maybe not.

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photo by Donna Bedell

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Six Simple Exercises To Keep You Boating

By L. Alan Keene

It's been said that "old sailor's never die....they just get a little dinghy". As an old sailor, I'd like you to know that I got a little dinghy a long time ago, and I'm darn proud of it!. But enough about dinghys. These days I'm more concerned about the body than the mind.

As we approach a new boating season out on the upper bay, it's time for all of us (especially seniors) to start getting our bodies ready for the rigors that boating demands of us. Hauling on dock lines, yanking on starter ropes, pushing off of fuel docks, cranking on winches, climbing up swim ladders, hoisting up sails etc. etc. etc. all require a relatively well toned body to do the job safely.

Since reaching my seventies a couple of years back, I've wondered if I'll be able to maintain the physical strength necessary to handle the rigors of sailing on into my late 70s and 80s. Will I continue to have the upper body strength necessary to haul on the lines or the leg strength to move quickly when an angry sail needs attention? And what about agility? Will I be able to move around the foredeck without the constant worry of falling overboard?

Well, rather than spending alot of time wondering, I decided to take matters into my own hands and find some simple exercises that boaters can do at home or on the boat that target the areas most crucial to safe boating. As with any exercise program, check with your doctor first and, if he gives you the nod, give them a try. Start slowly and gradually increase your limits. And if it hurts, stop!

1. THE FLAMINGO: Balance is everything on any boat and seniors often lose theirs. One way to improve yours is to make like a flamingo and stand on one leg. Aim for 15 seconds on each leg at first and then increase your goal. If you reach the two minute mark, try standing on an unstable surface like an old pillow or a sandy beach. It won't be long before you're ready for the high wire!

2. THE DINGHY (not again!): Yes again, and you'll be amazed at how rowing one can increase your upper back, shoulder, and arm strength. Put away the outboard and pull out the oars, even if you've got an inflatable. You don't need to work hard at it. Just do it (oops, I bet that's copyrighted). Few exercises are better for upper body fitness. Before long you'll be selling that 3 hp.

3. THE PUSH: No, I don't mean away from the dinner table, though that might help. I'm talking about moving your body weight with your arms. The "drop down and give me 20" push-up is the ultimate goal, but even a standing push-up against a wall or a kneeling push-up will reap benefits. Well toned chest and shoulder muscles will keep you grinding in those big genoas.

4. THE MUSICAL CHAIR: While music isn't a requirement, it helps pass the time. First of all find a kitchen chair without arms. Next, sit with your bottom on the front half of the seat and your heels even with the front chair legs. Then, holding your arms forward as ballast, stand up. Do as many as you comfortably can. Caution...don't miss the chair on the way back down.!

5. THE ANCHOR: Believe it not, that 15 or 20 lb. Danforth style anchor that holds your boat secure can also help strengthen your biceps. With the anchor upside down and your palms supporting the stock outside of the flukes, start pulling the anchor up to your chin. Do three sets of these on a regular basis and you'll soon feel the difference. A chain rode will add a few pounds, so don't over do it. Caution... be very careful not to pinch a finger!

6. THE AMPHIBIAN: Once the season is underway and the water has warmed up, dive in (know the depth first) and take a swim. Swimming for seniors may be the best exercise of them all since there's no impact to hurt arthritic joints and virtually every muscle group in the body is involved. If you're not a strong swimmer, put on a pfd, jump in, and splash around. It's fun!

There you have it.....six simple exercises that, along with good genes, should keep us old folks boating for the next decade or two. And if they don't, don't blame me. I got a little dinghy a LONG time ago.

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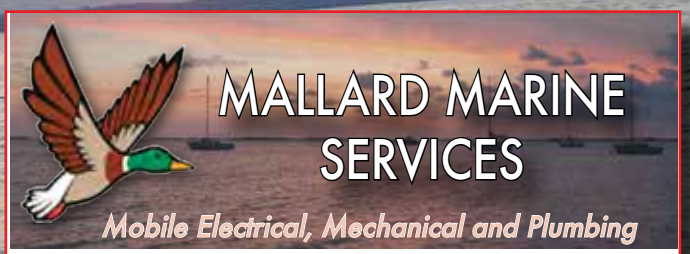

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Bay Bridge Boat Show: April 21-23, 2017

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"If you are already dreaming of summer, escaping with your family and fishing on the Chesapeake, then the Bay Bridge Boat Show is designed just for you," said Paul Jacobs, president and general manager of the Annapolis Boat Shows.

Every style and size of boat imaginable will be displayed, from 7 to 70 feet, including an impressive collection of fishing boats, center consoles, trawlers, express cruisers, pontoon boats, luxury cruisers, bowriders, bass boats, inflatables, kayaks, SUPs, and canoes. Dealers will offer demo rides and sea trials from the docks inside the show.

Boat show goers will explore over 100 on-land exhibits and browse the latest in navigational equipment, high-tech electronics, inflatables, boating accessories, clothing, gear, and related services such as boating clubs, charter companies, insurance firms, and lending institutions. Industry experts offer six free seminars daily including a hands-on docking class. Fishing, casting and rod building lessons are available all weekend.

On opening day, Friday, April 21st, exhibitors and attendees are invited to gather at the beautiful marina pool bar at 6:00PM for complimentary Hemingway's barbeque with all the fixings, chocolates from Parfections, live music from Sean Hetrick & the Leftovers, and a cash bar. An interactive children's area with a moon bounce, photo booth, face painting, food and drink stations, an expanded food court, and a pool bar make this a fun family event.

Hours

Friday & Saturday 10 am – 6pm; Sunday 10am-5pm-

Ticket Prices

Adult One Day - $12 ; Adult Two Day Combo - $19 ;
Children - 12 & under FREE

SETTIN' the HOOK

with Dave Kilby

Sponsorships Available for Cecil County Bass Tournaments

After a somewhat mild winter the 2017 bass tournament season is about to unfold in the Mid-Atlantic region, much to the delight of the anglers trying to recover from cabin fever.

One of the major changes to occur in the off-season was with my popular Paycheck Tournament Series. I have now partnered with Boys and Girls Club of Cecil County and renamed the circuit Fishing For Great Futures Team Bass Series.

Great Futures Bass, for short, will not only continue to offer one of the best opportunities out there for the tournament angler, but will involve the youth of Cecil County in the preparation, organization, and operation of the many tournaments taking place on the Upper Chesapeake Bay and Conowingo Reservoir.

In addition, these young citizens of Cecil County will be able to participate in 2 tournaments of their own with the assistance of local bass anglers. They will receive their own fishing rod, reel, and tackle box to keep at these events.

Along with the other fine programs offered by Boys and Girls Club of Cecil County, these youth will be mentored and supported by their participation with Great Futures Bass and learn sportsmanship, stewardship, and conservation. By assisting with the bass tournaments, they will learn organizational skills, how to work with others, and follow direction under supervision.

We are encouraging every business and individual, especially in Cecil County, to become a financial supporter. You will not only be helping to mold our future generations but the exposure your business would receive as a sponsor of Fishing For Great Futures at over 30 local tournaments would prove to be a worthwhile, beneficial opportunity. There are different levels of sponsorship opportunities available, each with many perks to enhance your business.

The majority of your contribution is tax-deductible as Boys and Girls Club is a 501C3 charitable organization.

Join other local businesses as a Great Futures Bass sponsor like Integrity Real Estate, Bohemia Glass and Window, and Rhino Linings of Delaware in support of this worthwhile initiative.

If you would like a sponsorship package, please email me at **greatfuturesbass@gmail.com.**

The Man O' War Shoal Issue

by Tim Campbell

There is again an attempt to dredge ancient oyster shell from **Man O' War Shoal** and ship it down the bay to benefit the oyster industry. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources has reapplied to the Maryland Department of the Environment and the Army Corps of Engineers for permits to dredge MOW Shoal for its three oyster management programs: restoration, oyster aquaculture and the commercial oyster industry. It's a sore subject.

That was the main topic of conversation I had with Dr. Ken Lewis over lunch at a local restaurant recently. Rather, I asked questions and took notes between bites of my sandwich while Ken shared his expertise on MOW shoal. Ken, a retired heart doctor has been involved with the Coastal Conservation Association of Maryland for many years. He was CCA MD Government Relations Committee Chairman for some time and currently represents CCA MD at Oyster Recovery Partnership meetings. In 2016, CCA MD honored Ken with an award for his years of service. During his tenure we often took turns driving to Annapolis to attend CCA and other meetings. On the hour-long drive from Towson, he would talk about various bay and fisheries issues. I'd listen, ask questions, and learn.

From 1960 until 2006 the MDNR dredged more than 185 million bushels of oyster shell and moved it down the bay for oyster replenishment projects. The repletion program subsidized the oyster industry, but it is not a long-term solution. Today, oysters are at about one percent of their historic population. Disease, over-harvesting and pollution are just a few of the many problems. Ken told me that without a complete moratorium on oysters, it will take decades to turn the oyster industry around.

The push to dredge MOW came after all of the available shell had already been dredged. Other than some commercial oystermen, nobody wants MOW shoal to be dredged. In fact, at a public hearing on the issue held in Baltimore County in February 2016, only one person testified in favor of dredging. Even the President of the Maryland Watermen's Association, Robert T. Brown testified against it.

Ken explained that oyster shells are not necessary for oyster restoration. Even though oysters seem to grow better on oyster shell, they will grow on almost anything such as reef balls and other man-made materials. Oysters are a reef building species. One reason commercial oystermen don't like using other materials is because oysters would be more difficult to harvest.

MOW shoal has been a popular fishing spot for generations. It is located just south of Hart-Miller Island. Oysters and other bay species live on or near the 450+ acre shoal. The upper bay has prime striped bass spawning grounds. Dredging cannot occur in striped bass spawning areas, although getting a permit to do so has been tried. Thankfully it was denied by the National Marine Fisheries Service whose primary purpose is to protect the nation's marine resources.

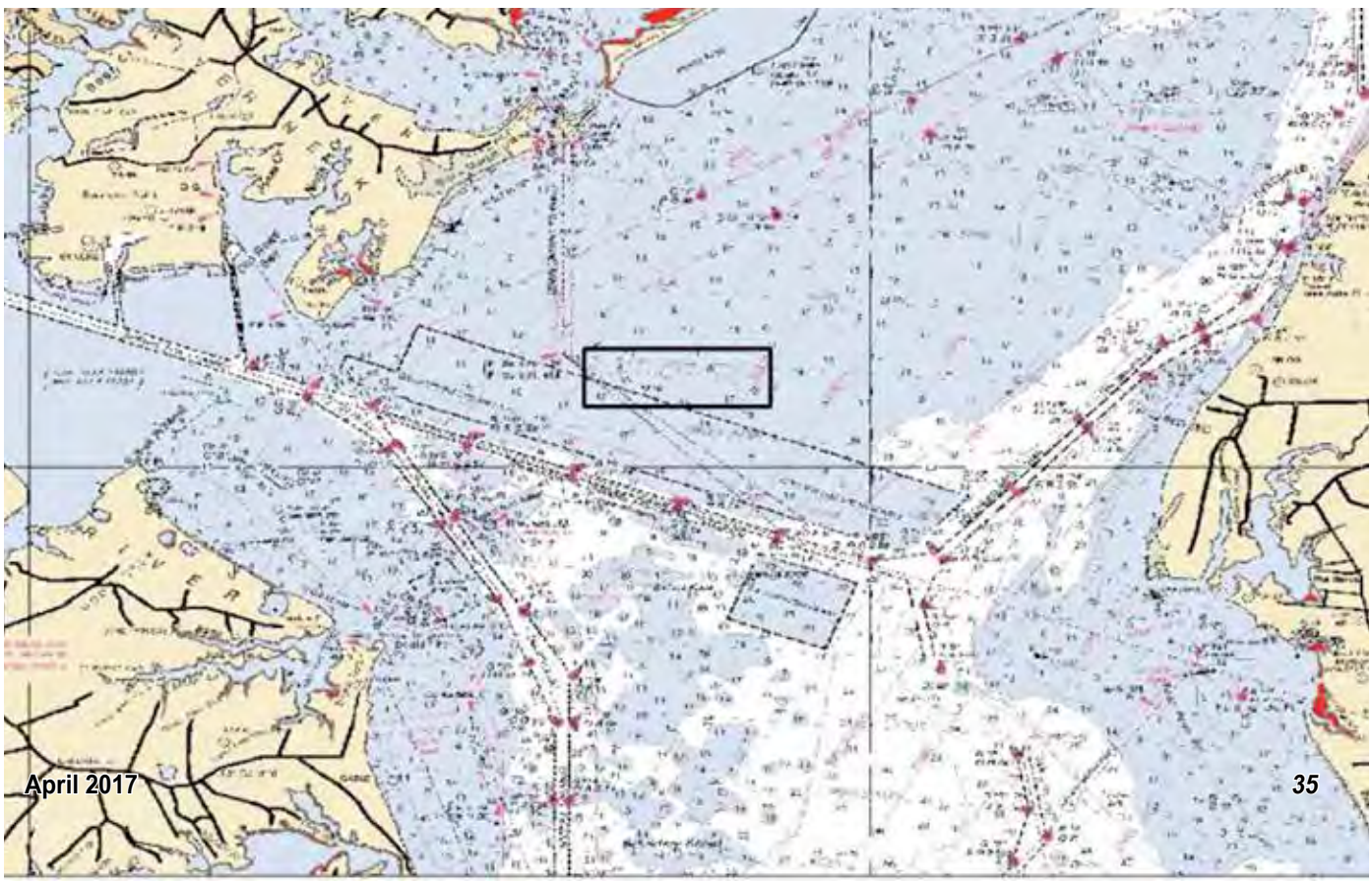
MOW is a productive fishing area due to the bay's currents which cause turbulence along the length of the shoal. The shoal sits east west. The bay currents flow north and south. Turbulence benefits anglers because it mixes the water and confuses baitfish making it easier to catch striped bass, white perch and other gamefish. Turbulence benefits the upper bay too. It helps blend the warmer water with the cold, and the brackish water with the fresh.

MOW shoal contains about 100 million bushels of ancient oyster shell. Instead of dredging the entire shoal, an idea to dredge about a third of it was proposed. When that idea was rejected, MDNR proposed a permit to dredge only about five percent of it, and then conduct a study. Ken asserts that strip mining the shoal in any way for shell to subsidize the commercial oyster industry makes no sense.

In April 2016, Senate Bill 937 known as the Sustainable Oyster Population and Harvest Act of 2016 passed. The bill requires MDNR to conduct a study of the public oyster fishery. It calls for MDNR to identify oyster management strategies to promote a sustainable oyster population and to submit reports on the study to the Governor, the Oyster Advisory Commission, and the General Assembly. It would require MDNR to manage options with a Fishery Management Plan. That means doing a stock assessment to help determine how many wild oysters should be harvested while maintaining a viable population. This bill is a huge step in the right direction.

It takes three years for an oyster to grow three inches which is market size. Many believe oyster farming is the way to go. Ken explained that farmers could sell any size oyster because they are private property. Thanks to concerned citizens, the oyster aquaculture business in Maryland is gaining momentum.

Upper bay anglers enjoy fishing around MOW shoal and don't want it ruined. Dredging would only be a temporary benefit to the commercial oyster industry. Oyster shell is a finite resource; once it's gone, it's gone. The permit to dredge MOW should be denied. It's time to put this issue to rest and move on.



Top Ten Tools

by Doug Dawson

Nothing will go wrong", is the hope of all boaters when they shove off the dock. None of us want to have to repair anything while underway. But, we all know that as sure as it is going to rain on your holidays, things do break or come loose and need to be fixed. So, all boaters need to carry a tool kit. Far too often the one tool we need, isn't in the box for that unforeseen repair(s) that you may be faced with either underway or at the harbor.

Having the right tools on board in your toolbox is half the battle to executing the repair easily and not having it turn into a catastrophe.

In an attempt to have an all-inclusive list; so that boaters, like Boy Scouts, can "be prepared" to handle any challenge and not be caught short with a missing tool, we asked our subscribers to submit the 10 most important items in their toolboxes based on their boating experiences. Response was fantastic with dozens of boaters sending in their lists. Now, late winter/early spring, is the time to assemble/collect tools for your boat's toolbox. Why now? Collecting tools will help get you in the boating mood to prepare your boat for spring. It might even cure the "late-winter boat blues".

Here are the Top Ten Tools our subscribers chose with some of the uses—there are many more:

1.Screwdriver set – straight heads, Robertson, Square, Philips, Star - depending on what screw heads you have on your boat

2.Adjustable Wrench/Crescent Wrench – to loosen or tighten when you are too rushed to find the correct sized wrench.

3.Duct Tape or Gorilla Tape or Electrical tape – to secure almost anything to anything.

4.Knife – Like a Hunting Knife, Fileting Knife, Box Cutter, Swiss Army Knife or a Multi-tool to cut rope, line, hoses, zip ties, etc.

5.Hammer – Preferably one large and one smaller to persuade something to move, or to use together to flatten propeller nicks like an anvil and a sledge.

6.Socket Set – imperial or metric, preferably with adjustable angle head to tighten or loosen hard to reach nuts

7.Crimping Tool – with wire cutter blade to cut wire and wire insulation as well as to squeeze connectors onto bare wire.

8.Flashlight – waterproof, LED to see in the dark bilge and lockers.

9.Pliers – Needle Nose Pliers to hold and tighten or loosen small fittings and Water Pump Pliers to tighten and loosen large fittings or hoses.

10.Vice Grips – to clamp tight and hold items, in place of a third strong hand.

There were many other tools recommended, but these are the Top Ten. The complete list with uses is on our website www.BoatingWithDawsons.com under Articles.

Depending on your boat type and size, you may be wise to add a few more tools and supplies or reduce some items that could be considered duplicate like wrenches and sockets and also tools too big or too small. Once all the tools are laid out on your home work bench, size up and shop for the plastic or heavy canvas tool box you will need to hold everything. Plastic or canvas is lighter than metal and won't rust. Keep in mind the space you have aboard to house this tool box. You may need to have two smaller boxes rather than one large—one for more commonly used tools and the other for less frequently used.

"Be Prepared" is the Boy Scout motto and that is exactly what my Scouter taught me. To this day, being prepared has saved me from many situations that could have been complete disasters.

Being prepared with the right tools, can help you deal with problems faster and more confidently to get you and your precious boat up and going again.

Queen Scout Doug Dawson • Marine Industry Professional
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www.OldBoatBrochures.com

Outrig Your Canoe!!!

Canoes are one of the most stable crafts afloat. Their advantage, along narrow rivers and waterways, is well known. On open water, things can get a bit tippy!

Fishing, crabbing, or duck hunting from a canoe on a lake, slough, or open water can be made safer with a simple outrigger. This has been an idea that is a work in progress. You will flip over this latest plan.

My goal was to improve stability, add minimal weight, be removable, and inexpensive. This design utilizes an 8 ft. piece of 1- inch diameter conduit pipe, a couple of 90 degree angles, couplings, and t-fittings. The floats are from a 5 foot Styrofoam Water Weenie that has a hole in the center. Insert a length of PVC pipe through the hole in the foam and T-fitting. Screw the t-fitting to the PVC pipe. I capped the ends with empty water bottles secured with duct tape. The entire rig is attached to the thwart with 2 U-bolts and wing nuts.

Once attached to the canoe, the added stability is instantly noticeable. Some flexibility in the 8- foot long conduit pipe helps accept any strain smoothly. I thought about getting two diameters of pipe so I could slide one length into another and make the rig adjustable. The water bottles slide perfectly over the Water Weenie and create a water tight seal on the floats. They are easily replaced as needed.

Increase the size or width of the outrigger floats as needed. Doubling the size or quantity of the floats will certainly improve the stability. The wider you make the outriggers, the stiffer they will need to be.

The simplicity of this lightweight rig is what makes it special. The flexibility of the cross pole smooths out the ride. The smaller outrigger floats catch less wind, while still giving the added support. The actual surface area is significant to improve stability. Once the outrigger is in place, you can consider adding an electric motor, a fishing deck, stool, duck blind frames, or whatever comes to mind.

This is a great platform in bays and lakes. Using an anchor will allow you to set up in a spot where the fishing is hot. A portable fish finder, like The Fishing Buddy, lets you side scan, show depth, and locate fish.

Outriggers in narrow streams and rivers could become a hazard. Canoes are slim and maneuverable allowing you to navigate tight channels. Attaching the outriggers close to the side of the canoe can be helpful. You can adapt the outrigger width to suit your specific needs.

Organization on this smaller craft is also important. The less you need to move around to access your gear and stuff, the less rocky your ride. Fishing rod holders are also important. If you need to change a rig, or move the boat, your rod can be safely and quickly stored. A long-handled net is also a handy tool. Use a fish friendly net fabric, such as rubber, to scoop up your catch. Now you can quickly and safely handle your catch without having it flop around the boat.

Attach a beverage holder and a small shelf to store drinks or deposit tackle. A stiff foam strip can be glued to the gunwale, or shelf edge, to attach hooks. Make sure that the ice chest is also within reach. Freeze water in plastic square milk jugs to keep fish and drinks cool. Throw in an old towel to dampen any noise. Secure any loose gear with cord, just in case you swamp. Suspend a shelf from the thwarts to keep any clothing or gear from laying on the boat bottom. An old plastic bread tray works perfectly. I found mine during a stream cleanup.

A thin padded seat with a back rest can be wonderful. The extra comfort allows you to prop up your feet and lean back for a quick break. Simple stadium seats attach easily and are supported with web straps. Catching fish is often about timing. The longer you can comfortably stay on the water, the more fish you will catch.

Anchors are also helpful. Try using a cloth bag filled with sand or rocks. You can refill the anchor bag on site and then empty it when done. Canoes are light and require very little weight to hold them in place. The sand anchor is also quiet.

Perch fishing can be awesome when you locate a school. Use a Fishing Buddy fish finder to scan and locate the school. This type of fish finder slides into a clamp, attached to the gunwale. The side scan feature allows you to search under docks and along shore structure. Once you locate the fish, check the wind, currents, or tide to see how to position your canoe. Anchor slightly up current or wind, so you can target the fish. If the water is deep enough, you can release anchor line until you are directly over the school. Now you can vertical jig for them.

Once you construct your outrigger, take it for a quick spin. Test the limits and stability requirements you desire. There will always be times when a wave runner or power boat will get too close and make a huge wave. Wind is also a concern. The outrigger will allow you to have more stability in most scenarios.

Guaranteed, this simple outrigger system will provide additional stability and safety for your small craft. You can also quickly remove it when you get back to shore. Of course, it's always possible to capsize your outrigger outfitted craft but, why would you? If you want to stand up and dance, buy a bigger boat!

Stay safe, stable, and able! ***-Montana Grant***

For more Montana Grant, visit his website at www.montanagrantfishing.com

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Back River Restoration Committee, Inc. (BRRC) Cleanup Day

Back River Restoration Committee, Inc.(BRRC), a grassroots watershed organization in Southeastern Baltimore county took advantage of the mild winter and since January, volunteers have already cleaned up over 18 tons of trash. Just over 4 tons of trash was collected at their 3-hour cleanup, January 28th along Northeast Creek on Orems Road. This is trash that otherwise would flow through the tributaries of the Back River Watershed, which begins in the Towson area, and would eventually end up in the Chesapeake Bay.

Along with volunteer cleanups, BRRC manages over 900 feet of boom in the waterway where Herring Run enters Back River below the 695 Bridge in Dundalk. Trash flows from urban and suburban areas of Baltimore County and City into Back River and the boom traps most and is scooped up by BRRC workers and placed in dumpsters collected by Baltimore County. The Northeast side of the watershed is cleaned by BRRC and its many volunteers, as it is unboomed and would otherwise be left to flow into the Chesapeake Bay.

In 2016, the Trash Boom site collected 556,320 pounds of trash and debris while BRRC interns and volunteers picked up an additional 245,248 pounds, bringing the total amount of trash kept out of the Chesapeake Bay for 2016 to 801,568 pounds. Along with cleanups, BRRC orchestrated the planting of over 125 trees, marked over 200 storm drains and worked diligently to educate and raise awareness.

BRRC will be holding a general meeting on April 11th at the Hawks Club in Essex where they will be sharing information about the watershed. Guest speakers will include Dave Sikorski, Director of Coastal Conservation Association of Maryland and Katrina Jones from the Maryland Port Authority, outreach for dredging. For more information see the **BRRC website, www.savebackriver.org** or **email savebackriver@gmail.com.**

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Maryland State Police Captain

Bernie Haywood

recently died just two months shy of his 92nd Birthday. Bernie was a WWII war hero that landed in Iwo Jima. Although Bernie was using two canes to walk at the end of his journey, Kathy and I took him on our 22ft. Bennington Pontoon boat with us when he was able. Bernie really enjoyed a day on the water with a cold beer.

Jerry and Kathy Scarborough

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Live Aboard

by Don and Gail Elwell

Spring, a New Boat, and New Waters

Resealing the New Hull.

This is going to be a great spring for changes for the three of us living here aboard the Floating Empire. First I do have something sad to tell you: The Floating Empire is doomed. Yep, doomed. We designed and built the boat nearly four years ago as an experiment in livaboard living, with the idea that the boat would last about two years before having to be totally rebuilt or scrapped. We're now going into our fourth year on the water and . . . .well. . . . it's time. We've really loved this place, and have absolutely no interest on going back onto the hard right now, but we needed options.

We labored for a bit on a new design. The idea we had in mind was for a somewhat smaller (yes, downsizing again) and more mobile vessel (we love our boat, but it really doesn't go anywhere), one completely powered by the sun and able to navigate places like the Chesapeake and the Erie Canal system. In the midst of doing that, the somewhat stripped out hull of a Cal 29 fell in our laps, with the gas motor already gone, and it was too good to pass up.

At least the Teak is intact.

So we've spent the last month resealing and repainting the hull, replacing the packing box and cutlass bearing and refitting the teak interior and, in general making the thing cozy. In a few weeks we'll splash the boat, have her mast pulled, and refit the deck with a new deckhouse and over 1000 watts of solar panels to drive our 5KW motor.

Then we get to play. But first Floating Empire will have to be stripped down to the water line, our stuff moved over or into storage, and our noble shantyboat will become a floating dock. Bittersweet, to be sure, but we're looking forward to it.

Now, anybody out there need a mast?

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www.thefloatingempire.com **lifeartwater.blogspot.com**

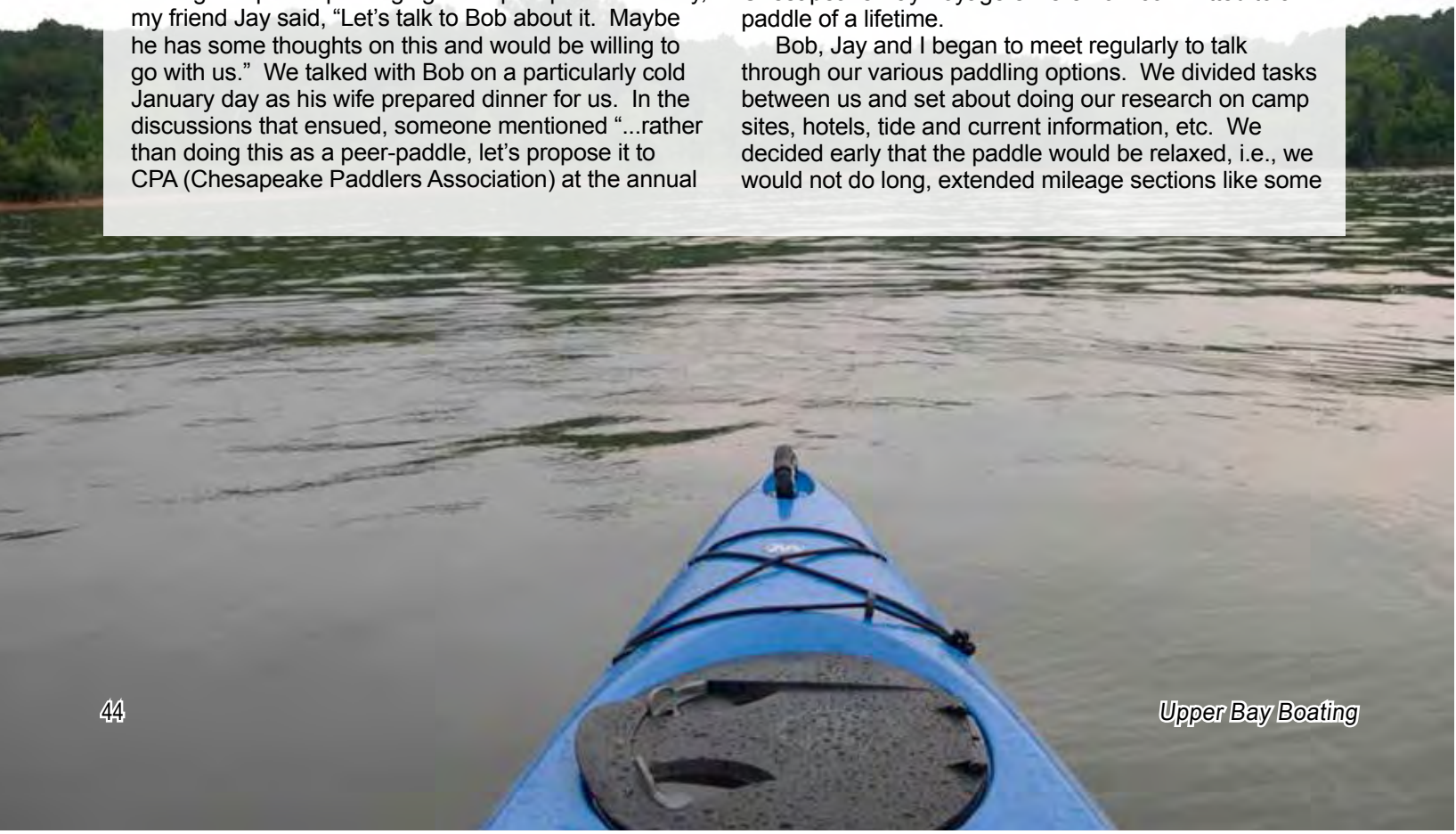
Chronicles of the Chesapeake Bay Voyagers – Part 1

During the winter snows of 2013 I had a lot of time to sit and contemplate where I wanted to paddle in the upcoming year. I talked with a few of my friends about doing some paddles on the upper Eastern shore and they were somewhat receptive, but I could sense their lack of enthusiasm. Some of these shorelines there do not see many kayakers because launch sites are far and few between. But the more I thought about it, the more I became convinced that rather than do short out-and-back day paddles, we could chain a sequence of shuttled paddles together and use them as a jumping off point for a far more ambitious goal of paddling the entire Eastern Shore. Paddling the length of the Chesapeake Bay was one of several items in my bucket list. "Perhaps, in the next paddling season I can cross this item off," I thought. All I had to do was convince a few of my friends that we could do this. So, I began approaching my paddling partners.

Most of the initial responses I received went something like this. "Sounds interesting Dave. ... pause ... So, what did you think of last week's paddle?" But I didn't give up. I kept bringing the topic up until one day, my friend Jay said, "Let's talk to Bob about it. Maybe he has some thoughts on this and would be willing to go with us." We talked with Bob on a particularly cold January day as his wife prepared dinner for us. In the discussions that ensued, someone mentioned "...rather than doing this as a peer-paddle, let's propose it to CPA (Chesapeake Paddlers Association) at the annual scheduling session and see what kind of response we get." Reluctantly, I agreed. I say "reluctantly", because I didn't know if I was ready to take on responsibility for such an ambitious paddle with a group of people that I had never paddled with before.

On Feb. 18, 2014, Jay, Bob, and I presented our idea at the Annual CPA Planning session. It was a very rough sketch of a series of shuttled paddles that would begin in the most northern region of the Chesapeake and end at Kiptopeke State Park on the lower Eastern shore. Such a paddle had not been done before and many of the paddlers attending the meeting expressed reservations. Some thought there would not be much interest. Others proposed we could gather more paddlers into group by allowing them to join us on select segments they wished to paddle. That is, they would not have to commit to doing the entire Bay paddle. Lots of thoughts were bantered about, but most interestingly, no one struck the proposal down. In fact, towards the end of the session some people stated they would like to join us. We left the meeting that day knowing we had some serious planning to do. By the end of February, we posted a tentative schedule on the CPA calendar. Jay proposed that we call ourselves the Chesapeake Bay Voyagers. I thought the name and would provide cohesiveness to our little group, and it stuck. The Chesapeake Bay Voyagers were now committed to a paddle of a lifetime.

Bob, Jay and I began to meet regularly to talk through our various paddling options. We divided tasks between us and set about doing our research on camp sites, hotels, tide and current information, etc. We decided early that the paddle would be relaxed, i.e., we would not do long, extended mileage sections like some



others before us have done. We preferred not to rush down the bay, but rather, we would break the overall distance up into 12-18 mile days; the end of which would be spent in camp, or at an area motel. Whenever possible, we would put up in motels where we could be joined by other family members. Our main goal would be to learn about, and to get to know, the people and communities of the Chesapeake Bay. Our secondary goal would be to have fun doing so. We each looked forward to learning as much as we could about the geography, geology, ecology, and biology of the Bay. In the end, those of us that completed the voyage learned more than we could have possibly anticipated. Every moment of the paddle was enjoyable; even the frightening ones. And certainly, the paddle was a learning experience. I found myself spending more time after a paddle looking up the history and biology of the places where we had just visited, than I had planning the routes required to get us there.

In retrospect, we began as a large group, but as we progressed down the bay enthusiasm began to wane. Paddlers began dropping out. It was a bit too much of a time commitment during a single season for most people. We soon learned that among us there was a small, dedicated core of paddlers who were committed to achieving the overall goal; to have earned the right to say honorably, "Yes, I've paddled the Great Chesapeake Bay." It was this core group that kept us all on track and drove us in the final days of the paddle to achieve our goal.

In August 2016 we completed the series. It had taken us two years. "Why so long?" you may ask. Weather becomes an important consideration in the lower Chesapeake Bay during the fall season. September and October are hurricane months and frankly, we had not taken this fact into consideration. Although we did not encounter any hurricanes, fortunately, we did run into a string of storm related delays that dampened enthusiasm. Having paddled 170 nautical miles, we finally decided to postpone the remaining paddles until 2015. Then, shortly before Christmas of 2014 my hip broke. Then, in June 2015, I managed to break it again. Damn, that was a bummer. I would be out for the 2015 paddle season.

My friends, the core members of which I spoke earlier, all decided that since we had begun the paddle together, we should also finish it together. They delayed completing the finishing paddles until I was well enough to paddle with them. They are true friends and I thank them for this. I my absence, some paddlers used the opportunity to make-up paddles they had missed the 2014 season due to competing commitments. In the late summer of 2016 we completed the series together.

Over the next few issues of UBB I will be following-up this introduction with excerpts from our Journals. I'll be talking about some of the route planning problems we encountered and how these were resolved. I will also be including information about some of the lesser-known sites and places of interest along the route. Our journey began at Elk river landing, the northernmost launch site on the Elk river, and ended at Wise Point, the southernmost launch site on the Eastern shore. We paddled the 212-mile route in 9 outings that included 18 days of committed paddling. Five paddlers finished the route in its entirety. This year we may begin to paddle back to the starting point. If so, we will begin at Wise Point and work our way through the inland water ways along Delmarva's eastern edge. Our final destination will be the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. If everything comes together, I promise to take copious notes and pass them along later. Until then, remember, the water is still dangerously cold. Dress per the water temperature, not the air temperature. Stay upright, keep dry, and paddle on.

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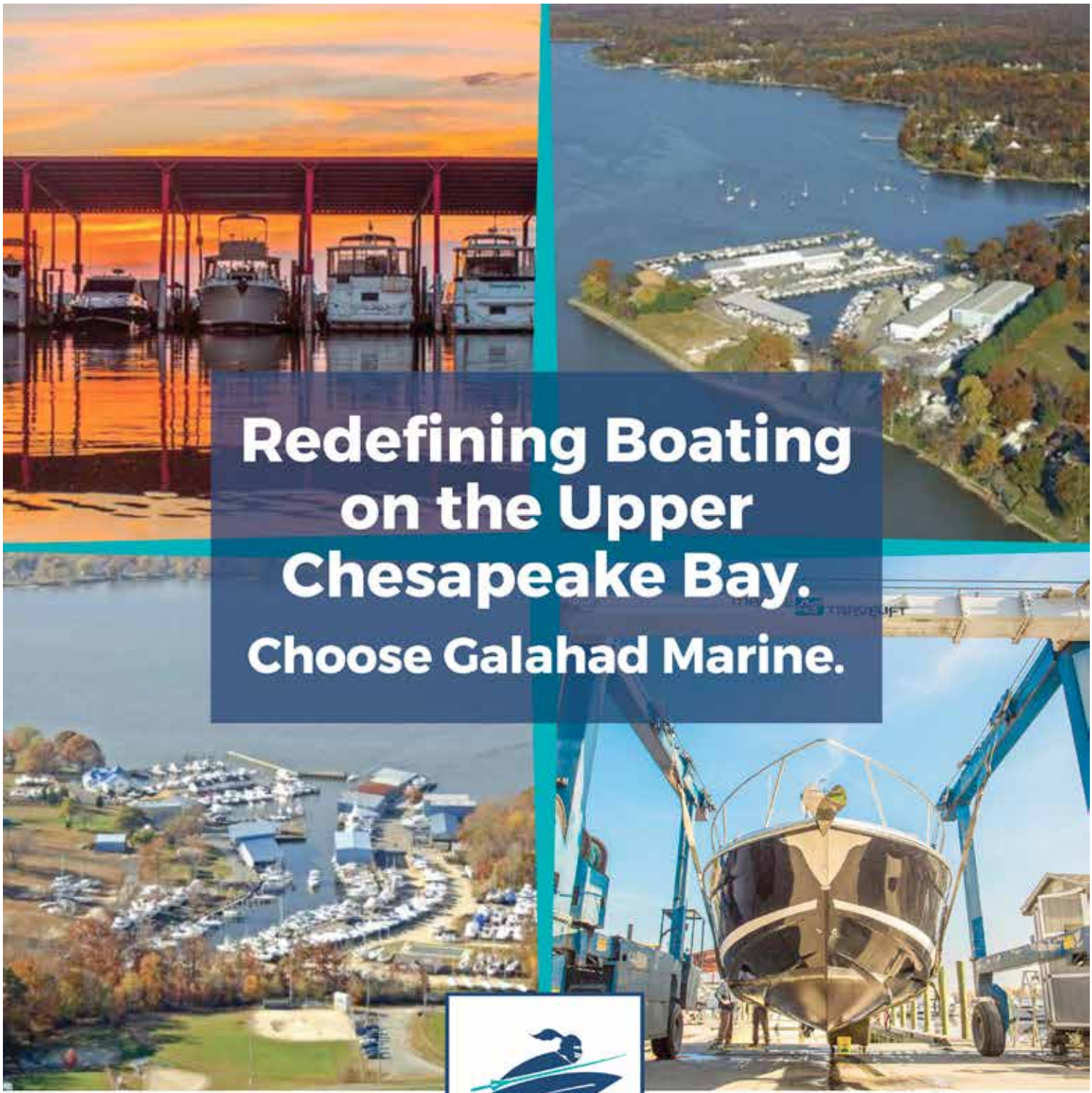

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