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UPPER BAY Boating

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Upper Bay Boating

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For advertising opportunities call Dave at:
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Event listings from non-profits and advertisers are free.
Listings may be sent to the above address or emailed to:
davebielecki@aol.com - all are welcome, there is no charge
for charitable events.

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*ON THE COVER: This beautiful '57 Chris Craft Cobra
photo by George Hazzard of Wooden Boat Restoration.*

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photo by Donna Bedell

Welcome to the April Edition of Upper Bay Boating

Well, winter is behind us, now that it is spring; it's time to get it ready for the water. You'll find some information in this issue to help the process along. If you thought you missed your opportunity to buy a boat at one of the winter shows, don't worry. Two great spring shows are coming up, the Bay Bridge and Upper Bay Boat shows. You'll find out more about them in this issue- don't forget to visit them. Who knows, you might just find your dream boat at one of them.

UBB celebrated our first year anniversary with the last issue. The staff is looking forward to serving the boating community again this boating season, and we are all hoping for a safe, fun filled one. With gas prices staying low, we expect more and more of you to get back on the water than ever. We think all types of boaters will find this magazine full of tips and articles to help make your experience on the beautiful waters of the Upper Bay enjoyable.

While I have almost 50 years of wonderful memories on these waterways, and more than 20 years working around boats and marinas, my business is a young one compared to

the Boat US organization. They are celebrating 50 years of making boating safer for the whole country. We will honor that success in this issue. If your Upper Bay business has the same type of history, please share it with our magazine.

We would love to include an article about your experiences on the bay, and want to share your photos with the readers. Have a topic that you want us to cover? Have an event that should be promoted in this magazine? Well, it's up to you to do your part- just contact me, and I'll do my best to include in the next issue- email me at dave@upperbayboating.com or call me @ 410-937-6866



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Duane Kuck, *president of REGAL BOATS*

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Teens can reel in a great deal on fishing licenses

By **Wendy Gilbert**- Features Editor

Oh, to be 16 again.

Now that I've wintered successfully (truly sets the tone for the rest of the year) once again and am embracing my "authentic self"—grey hair and all, why am I thinking about teenagers?

Perhaps, because my youngest (I have been blessed with five of the most amazing women) niece is driving?

Or is it DNR's 16 in 16 discount program?

These are the things that keep me awake at night. I worry about young people driving and I wish they would go fishing instead.

For the 16 and over set, the seemingly endless days of angling for free is over, but starting off adulthood with a 50 percent discount isn't too shabby.

"Young anglers are the environmental stewards of tomorrow," says Dave Blazer, DNR's Fisheries Service Director. "We are launching (we see what you did there Dave) the 16 in 16 program to encourage them to become committed to the future of fishing in Maryland."

The discount applies to the following licenses:

- * 365-day, resident
- * Non-resident
- * Non-tidal or Chesapeake Bay and coastal fishing.

Licenses can be purchased online, at DNR department service centers or at most bait and tackle shops and outdoor outfitters.

My husband talks about going fishing from time to time and it always sounds like such a great idea, but somehow we seldom actually get to it. And frankly, for us, that's a little odd. Gilberts tend to plan carefully and remain laser-focused on the project. We love projects! We like talking about them, planning them, shopping for them (this includes many unhappy returns) and for the most part, actually doing them.

This year, the additional stumbling block is a damaged fishing pier. This winter's storms may not have bothered me very much (for which, I am grateful), but it tore the neighborhood pier up pretty good. Perhaps its refurbishment this spring/summer might be just the incentive we need to venture down to the Elk River and see what we can coax up and out of it.

Thank goodness the license we will purchase will be "good" for 365 days from date of purchase. It could take almost that long to clear the project calendar.

Wendy Gilbert



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Looking ahead

By *Wendy Gilbert*- Features Editor

What might this season bring to sailboat sales?

Sales Manager at Tidewater Marina in Havre de Grace, Paul Mantragola, sees a bright season ahead for those considering entering the magical world of sailing on the upper Chesapeake Bay.

The fresh waters in the area are enticing not only for well-established sailing families, but environmentally conscious newcomers as well.

"One of the nicest things about the boats we have is that they are essentially fresh water boats. The Susquehanna River is outside our door. They are not in a saltwater atmosphere. The boats are clean and fresh."

"It is one of the tremendous advantages of the upper Bay."

Mantragola has been in the business since 1978 and been around boats most of his life. After a brief stint as a banker, he has never looked back.

"I started hanging out with all of these sailing people. I got to know them and the marina through financing boats at the bank," he recalls.

After he was offered a position in sales, the young banker promised his wife he'd return to the suit and tie world in a few years, and he jumped in and never felt the need to keep his hasty promise.

Over those years he has come to know many wonderful families, and developed lifelong friends. Not a bad life. "I've met some really wonderful people."

He's very optimistic about the upcoming season. "I think it's going to be a great year. We have a great selection of boats, a great customer base." Tracking interest and activity through their website, Tidewateryachts.com and Yachtworld.com provides some factual evidence to back up his optimism.

When he began his career at the marina, most of the advertising for boat sales was done via print publications out of Philadelphia. Over the years the business has shifted and more and more online research is being done prior to setting foot at a boat dealership of any kind. Many businesses now advertise with local publications and on their own.

Tidewater's website – Tidewateryachts.com – is very active and a good source for information in addition to Yachtworld.com, the web's largest site. Tidewateryachts.com is updated daily.

"People have done their research, they know their price range and they know what they want to do," Mantragola said, noting that there has been a resurgence in purchases of boats in the 30-ft range as opposed to the 50-ft range, both of which are Tidewater's specialty.

"People want to go sailing, they don't want a big boat payment."

He says that some customers save up for the purchase and come in with cash or finance a very low amount and they enjoy it. "We are selling boats, volume is good."

"We also get a lot of inquiries. We have been in this for such a long time, our older customers are selling and others are finally at that point in their life, where they have the disposable income to purchase."

"Every once in a while we get young families who have the means to do it. They have sailed with their parents and want to do the same – to show their kids the art and enjoyment of sailing."

"I've been on boats since I was 7 years old," Mantragola recalls. His lifelong love of sailing began in Wildwood, NJ. In the long term we expect the market to stay about the same and improve some. We are very optimistic. People are coming in the door all the time."

Customers flock to Tidewater Marina from the Philadelphia Metro area, Washington suburbs and of course the Dutch Navy – Lancaster, York and Harrisburg. Others hail from the Delaware Beaches or Cape May, NJ.

Some customers treat their boats as a second home, travelling to Havre de Grace on the weekends and during vacation. Mantragola says that many of them spend 10 weekends or more each season on their boats and at least one, if not two vacation weeks.

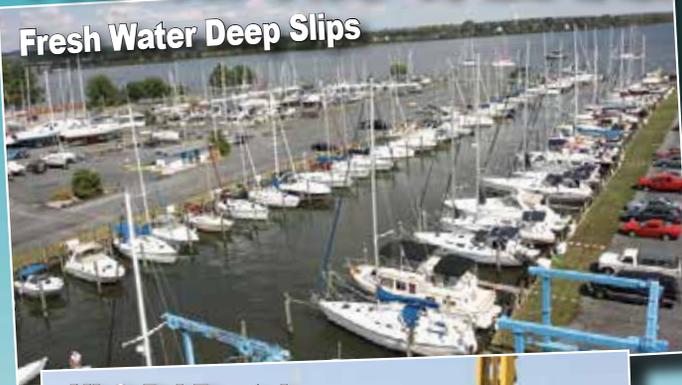
Others purchase a boat specifically to participate in the town's famous Thursday Night Boat Races, and most, but not all, of them are locals.



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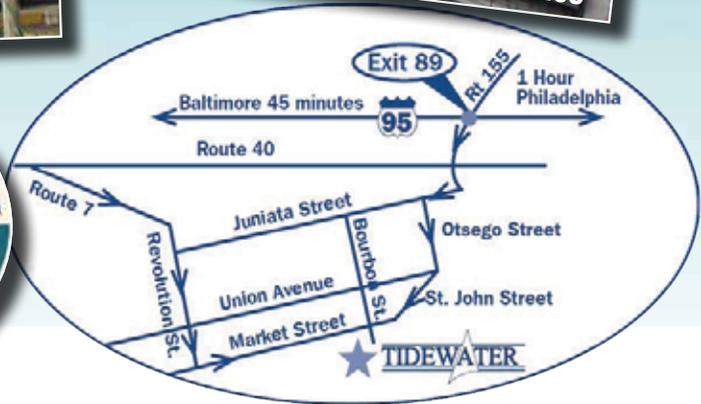
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Sailboat Sales in Maryland Off to a Great Start

March madness is here again. College basketball fans know the drill. There are 60 some teams that are ranked and divided into four Geographic regions. It all starts around the middle of March and runs through until April 4, when the final showdown occurs. During this time there are statistics on just about everything from individual player performance to team rankings. It's exciting and fun to watch.

March madness for Upper Bay boaters usually involves things like bottom paint, waxing, rig tuning, and engine commissioning. We don't see a lot of statistics in all of this labor of love so let me digress for a few paragraphs. "Just the facts ma'am" as Sgt. Joe Friday used to say years ago. You may be surprised at the number of sailboats for sale and sold, just in Maryland.

We took a look at sailboat sales in Maryland from Jan. 1 until March 20, 2016. According to one of our sources so far in 2016 Maryland brokers have reported exactly 50 sailboats sold (from 28' to 50', model year 1985 to 2016). So, we're off to a good start. These 50 sailboat sales were spread across 20 different brands and ranged in value from \$425,000 down to \$5,000. Just above exactly half (26) of the sailboats

sold were either Beneteau, Catalina, Hunter, or Jeanneau models. There is no surprise here as these names have long been the most widely produced and popular sailboats. The other sixteen brands are just as sought after but are sold in smaller volumes. The boat market, unlike the automobile market, involves many different brands. Some companies make just few boats each year.

Then, we looked at sailboats in Maryland that are actively listed by brokers. There are about 426 sailboats in the same category as described above. [28' to 50', 1985 to 2016] These boats are offered at prices from \$629,000 down to about \$4,800. Again, the same top four brands in terms of number of boats offered for sale show just about half of the fleet, about 215 boats. Additionally, there are many recognized brands among the offerings in Maryland. Some of the long standing established names out there are Island Packet, J-Boat, O'Day, Pearson, Sabre, Tartan, Tayana, and many other names too numerous to mention.

My conclusion is that 2016 is shaping up to be a good year. Contact your broker and/or take a look at our source, Yachtworld.com, to see what's out there. There is a nice fleet of boats to see, but, remember, the best boats sell first. So, don't wait too long. Spring is already here.

Paul Matrangola, Tidewater Marina

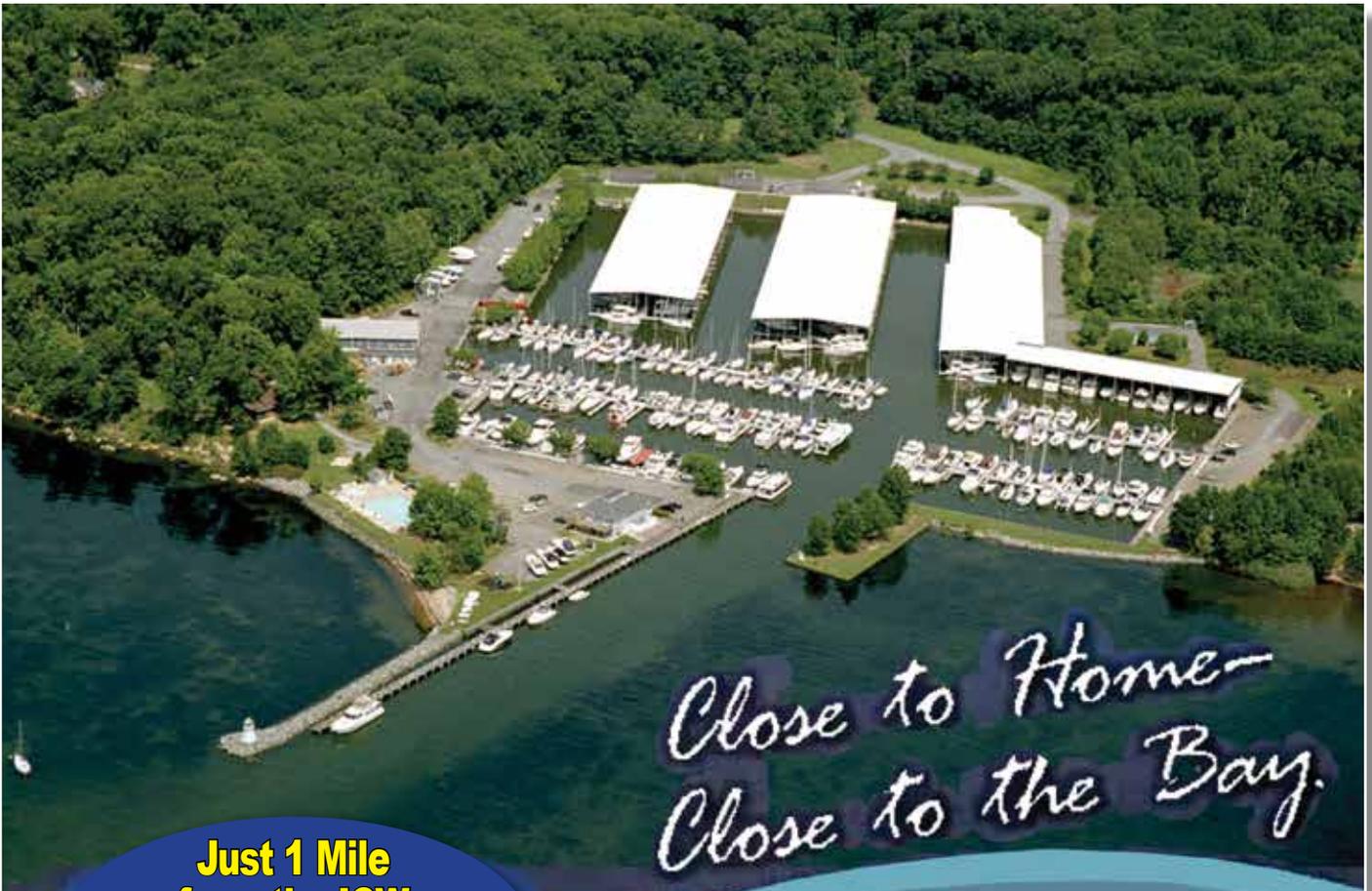


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Bay Bridge Boat Show April 15-17 at the Bay Bridge Marina in Stevensville, 410-268-8828
info@annapolisboatshows.com

Safe Boating Course at Havre de Grace Maritime Museum April 16 & 17 starts @ 9 am
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BRYC Car Show & Open House April 23 from 11 - 3 @ Bush River Yacht Club Abingdon, MD
443-371-3293.

Betterton Beach Clean-up April 23 from 9-12 410-778-1948
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Upper Bay Boat Show April 29-May 1 Held at Anchor Marina in North East, Md. 410-287-8280

Championship on the Chesapeake Tournament MSSA April 29- May 1 www.mssa.net
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Bowleys Quarters VFC Safe Boating Course April 30 & May 1 from 6-10 pm \$ 35. 410-800-8420

Havre de Grace Decoy and Wildlife Art Festival May 6-8 Three locations, 410-939-3739
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SGT. Marvin T Haw IV Boating Safety Day May 14 Wilson Pt. Park 950 Beech Dr, Middle River, Maryland 21220 (410) 574-2960

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Visit
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Upper Bay Boat Show April 29 - May 1st

Anchor Boats and Anchor Marina host the largest private boat show on the Upper Chesapeake Bay each year on the first weekend in May. This year's event will be on April 29 to May 1st. This is a great opportunity to view over 200 new and used boats in one location. It is a free event with free parking. The boat show is held at Anchor Marina, which is located on Iroquois Drive in the North East Harbor across from the town park. For more information, please call 410-287-8280

2016 Fishing Opening Day

Looks like the dates are now set for the 2016 fishing season! Can't wait! We will be starting opening day trophy fishing on the Markley Out of the Big Owls tiki bar in Kent Narrows April 16. We will also be following the fish around light tackle fishing out of our 2015 243cc Everglades. If last year is any indication we should have great fishing around Kent Island most of the early season. We also have access to a 46 ft vessel for larger groups out of Kent Narrows. We are just winding down the show season and have plenty of open dates. Give us a call or shoot us an email to reserve your days. Hope to see you soon.

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Anita C. Leight Estuary Center Boating Programs

The center will again offer all types of boating programs. Please visit the page on the Upper Bay Boating website for a complete listing of events, www.upperbayboating.com

ESTUARY CENTER INFORMATION

- 410-612-1688 or 410-879-2000 x1688. Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, 700 Otter Point Road, Abingdon, MD 21009.
- Web page: www.otterpointcreek.org
- Hours of Operation: The Center is open Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., and Sunday, 12:00 - 5:00 p.m.
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8. A dog will not wake you up at night to ask, "If I died, would you get another dog?"
9. If a dog has babies, you can put an ad in the paper and give them away.
10. If a dog smells another dog on you, they don't get mad. They just think it's interesting.

And last... but not least:
If a dog leaves, it won't take half of your stuff!

To test this theory..... Lock your wife and your dog in the cabin of your boat for an hour.... Then open it and see who's happy to see you...

Scott Karg is a boat broker at Sunset Harbor Marina



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Maryland's Eastern Shore Boat Show - *Biggest Since 2008:* Over 200 Powerboats on Display

More Than Two Dozen Boats on Demo Dock

Bay Bridge Boat Show April 15 -17, 2016

This year's boat show opening April 15, 2016 on Maryland's Eastern Shore has grown in size compared to previous years and is expected to be the biggest Bay Bridge Boat Show since 2008, according to Paul Jacobs, president and general manager of the Annapolis Boat Shows.

"With a month yet to go we are seeing tremendous interest, an increase in ticket sales, a larger footprint, and a surge in new exhibitors as well as additional space requests from our returning ones," said Jacobs.

An expanded demo dock will feature at least two-dozen new model boats as well as outboard engines. Dealers will be conducting demonstrations and sea trials from inside the boat show at easy to access docks.

The leading powerboat manufacturers will be exhibiting boats from 7 to 70 feet in every style imaginable at this year's Bay Bridge Boat Show, April 15-17, 2016. Also on-board will be dozens of affordable brokerage boats for immediate sale.

Attendees will climb aboard more than 200 boats including fishing boats, center consoles, trawlers, express cruisers, pontoons, luxury cruisers, jet skis, jet boats, ski boats, bowriders, bass boats, inflatables, kayaks, SUPs, and canoes.

The show has the latest in navigational equipment, high-tech electronics, inflatables, boating accessories, clothing, gear, and related services such as boating clubs, insurance firms, and lending institutions.

Six free boating seminars and fishing, casting and rod building lessons are offered daily.

A new venue featuring motor homes and campers has been added this year.

The opening night BBQ Bash is free to all attendees and exhibitors on Friday, April 15th at 5pm. The annual opening day celebration includes free Hemingway's barbeque with all the fixings, a live music by Sean Hetrick and the Leftovers, dancing, and cash bar. Guests unwind after the show in a beautiful marina on the banks of the Chesapeake Bay.

Interactive children's area with a moon bounce and face painting, food and drink stations, an expanded food court and a pool bar make this a fun family event.

Show Details

Bay Bridge Boat Show
Bay Bridge Marina, Stevensville, Maryland

Friday, April 15, 2016 10:00am - 6:00pm
Saturday, April 16, 2016 10:00am - 6:00pm
Sunday, April 17, 2016 10:00am - 5:00pm

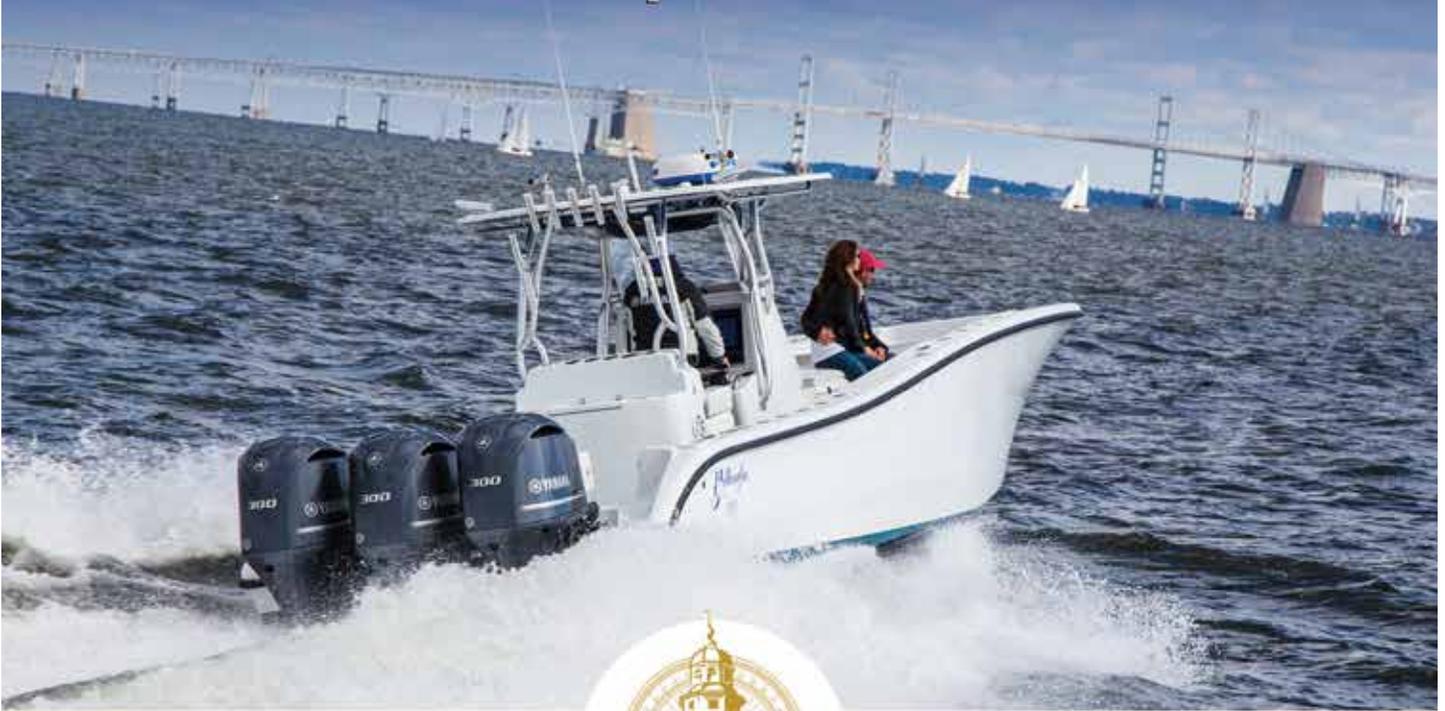
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Adult Two Day Combo - \$19
Children - 12 & under FREE

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April 15-17, 2016

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Spring Commissioning

Just reading the words raises the heart rate of most boaters.

We all know how important it is to properly winterize the boat. There is a direct correlation between improper winterization, and expensive repairs. The thought of a freeze cracked engine, or ethanol issues put a pit in everyone's stomach, and a twinge in their wallet.

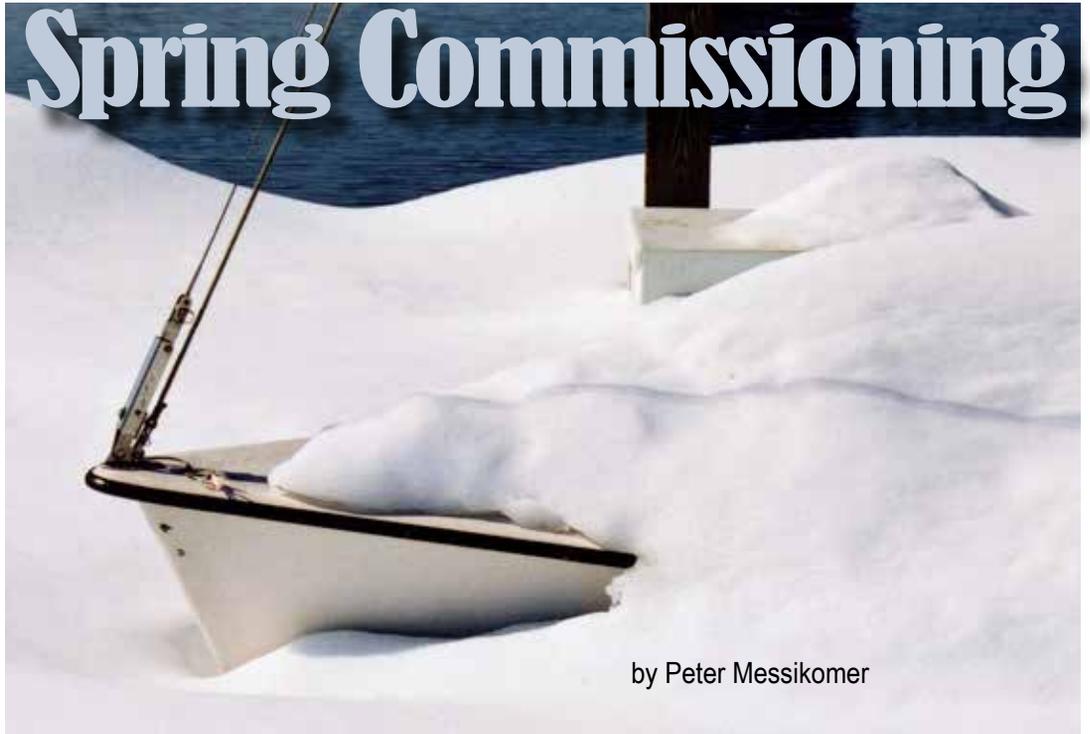
I would like to make the case that a proper spring commissioning or start up is every bit as critical to your boat as the proper winterization. I know money doesn't grow on trees. These days, time does not either. The urge is to start her up, hear the engine run and assume it is fine for the season. She ran well when we winterized her and she started right up. I'm ready to BOAT! No need to spend any more time, and we certainly don't want to look too hard, and find something expensive to fix.

As much as we want to believe this, there is a really good chance it's not true. We commission about 70% of the boats we winterize. The remaining 30% are either owner commissioned, or often splash and go boats at the beginning of the season.

Every year I watch the splash and go boaters. Often 50 feet from the dock, sometimes most of the way to their destination, there is a breakdown. Over heat due to impeller failure is common. Sometimes it is battery failure when trying to head back from the first destination of the year. The list of possible problems is quite long. I see a lot the first few weeks of the season. The panic on the phone when I answer, or the sight of Tow Boat or Sea Tow bringing them back to the dock says it all before I get to hear the details.

No matter how confident you are in your commissioning, I always recommend a small test run. No amount of running on a trailer, or work rack can duplicate the conditions experienced. Run smoothly through the throttle settings. Does she respond the same as last year? After a brief run, check the engine compartment. Any new smells leaks or noises?

The truth is most of the failures during the maiden voyage of the season can be prevented, and most can be caught during proper commissioning. Free time seems to get more and more scarce each year. Isn't the chance to prevent an on the water failure worth taking the time to properly commission or review your boat



by Peter Messikomer

While I'd love to urge you to take your boat to your local, trusted marine mechanic, it's more important that it just get done. Have a knowledgeable friend help, research and tackle it your self, or take it to a local shop. We are always happy to answer questions, work with you, or handle the job completely.

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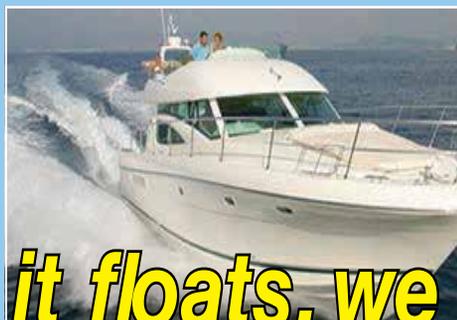
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Another Gem in Rock Hall's Watery Crown



By Wendy Gilbert, Features Editor

If you want to make your town attractive to boaters, tourists and locals, you might need to take a page out of Rock Hall's playbook. Established in 1707, Rock Hall, MD is home to award-winning marinas, marine service businesses, restaurants, fishing and sailing charters and is a favorite destination among Chesapeake Bay boaters.

In addition to the spectacular views and dining and shopping opportunities, there are many ramps



and landings for boats of every size. There are also a few parks (this town is a great place for a picnic lunch) and even a wildlife refuge. Just a few miles away is the Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge, where birders and nature lovers can while away an hour or more.

Rock Hall embraces its past as firmly as its future. One of the more recent additions to that charming aspect of this little paradise is the Rock Hall Marine Restoration & Heritage Center. It's located in the old "clam house" near Waterman's Crab House Restaurant and Dock Bar. If you don't know where that is, you owe it to yourself to find out.

Captain William Merritt Ashley (don't call him anything but Scratch, though) and Robin Kurowski are among a small band of dedicated volunteers who man the center. The volunteers are happy to walk visitors around and explain the history of the restoration projects underway. If the door's open, walk on in.

If you have a group, call ahead to arrange a tour. Captain Scratch said the most recent school group to tour the facility was from Millington Elementary School. They got the story on projects like "Glide". The old log canoe dates back to 1864. "She was sticking out of a shed and I

got to asking about it and he gave it to me to restore," recalls the good captain.

More than one old barn find is getting a lot of care and attention at the restoration center. Not all of them are pedigreed like "Glide", but "Tenacious" is living up to her name. "She don't hold much historical sway. She was built in the 1960's and is strictly a racing log canoe, a working canoe. At 28-feet with a 64-ft mast, she carries a lot of top sail."

In addition to seeing precious, historical treasures being refurbished, the center has also been entrusted to care for collections of tools, models and signs. "We have a lot of old tools and some really nice models. We have crabbing bateaus, schooners and log canoes.

The center is also a classroom. They hosted a captains course this winter and are currently preparing for a Masters Course.

Robin Kurowski has been focusing on Stories of the Chesapeake and gained a bit of recognition for their projects by submitting an oyster pie recipe.



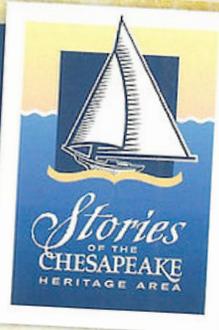
Another Gem in Rock Hall's Watery Crown

Every little bit helps!

Not surprisingly funds are a bit tight for the newly-established restoration center. Donations and volunteers are most welcome. Captain Scratch says that one of the ways they fund the projects is by selling transom boards. Mostly in the 30-inch to 4-ft. range, they cost between \$200 and \$500.

The volunteers meet every two weeks or so and are planning a grand opening soon, but the exact date was not available at press time. We will keep you posted.

In the meantime, take a cruise down to Rock Hall this spring and enjoy something old, something new and hopefully, something blue.



Rock Hall Oyster Pie

Recipes from Maryland's Eastern Shore

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Parboil vegetables in a small amount of broth or water. Drain and set aside liquid. In a second saucepan, poach oysters in their own liquor. Drain and set aside liquor. In a third saucepan, make a white sauce from butter, flour, and milk or cream. Add vegetables and liquor from oysters to white sauce; cook until mixture is desired thickness. Add some of the liquid from the vegetables if the mixture seems too thick. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Arrange drained oysters in a greased baking dish; pour vegetable mixture over oysters. Top with pie crust and prick with fork. Bake at 425 degrees for 15 to 25 minutes or until the pie is bubbling and brown.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pt. oysters
- 1 c. diced onions
- 1 c. diced celery
- ½ c. green peppers, diced
- 2 medium potatoes, diced
- 4 Tbsp. butter
- 2 Tbsp. flour
- 1 c. whole milk or cream
- Commercial or homemade pie crust

Recipe courtesy of C.H. Ashley & Son Crab and Oyster House, Rock Hall Marine Restoration



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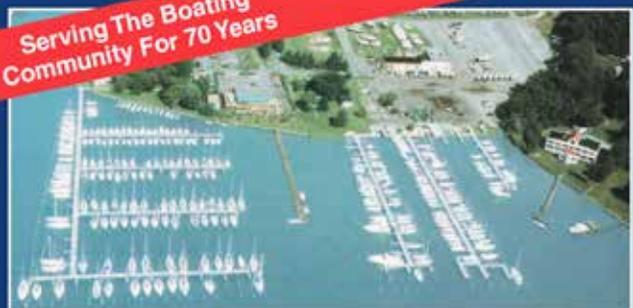
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CONOWINGO:

An Angler's Cornucopia

by Tim Campbell



Several species of gamefish live in the waters below Conowingo Dam. From catfish and carp to striped bass and walleye, and from perch and shad to large and smallmouth bass, the variety is remarkable. Deciding which species to target is the angler's first step. Occasionally, an angler fishing for a certain species, striped bass for example, will experience an incidental catch such as a flathead catfish, largemouth bass, or white perch. The same fishing technique often works for many different species.

Determining when to fish is next. At the dam, the best time for fishing success is when the water is flowing. Call the Conowingo Dam generation hotline number (1-888-457-4076) for daily updates. The rule of thumb is, if the water is not flowing, you're not catching fish. Then again, I say go whenever you have the time. Six years ago, on the day after Thanksgiving, my friend Ange Harclerode caught a nice musky from the shore when the water level was very low. Despite that, a flow of at least 40,000 cfs (cubic feet per second) is better for fishing there.

In early to mid-winter, yellow perch fishing is good downriver towards Havre de Grace and Perryville. The fish school up to feed before they spawn in March. Perch are easy to locate with a depth-finder. Jigging small plastic lures on 6 lb. test line in 10 to 20 feet of water is deadly on hungry yellow perch. Even with 35 degree water surface temperatures and skim ice, the yellow perch will bite. Remember, fishing in the wintertime can be dangerous. Be mindful of the cold conditions and dress accordingly. If you're in a boat, wear a PFD. After the spawn in early March, the perch scatter and are harder to find.

Fishing below the dam in the spring offers anglers many opportunities. When water temperatures reach 55 degrees, all fish become more active. Starting in late March and going into mid-

May, shad are the top species to target for many Conowingo anglers. Hickory shad are easy to catch. Cast shad darts or small spoons upriver on ultralight rods. It is not unheard of to catch 100 hickories in a day. Some anglers use clicker-counters to keep a tally. The mouth of Deer Creek is a popular location. American shad aka white shad are scarce, but can be caught below the dam well into May. Bear in mind, shad fishing is strictly catch and release.

White perch turn on in May about the time the shad run comes to an end. The lower Susquehanna River is the place to be to catch lots of white perch in the spring. The water next to the ramp at Lapidum is a good place to start. Small twister tails on light jig-heads bounced on the bottom usually do the trick. Otherwise, use the same tackle for white perch as used to fish for shad – darts and spoons.

Although striped bass can be found below the dam, fishing for them is not permitted before June. On the other hand, during the spring catch and release season, fishing for stripers is allowed downriver. An imaginary line from Lapidum across the river to Port Deposit marks the upper boundary. Trophy stripers can be caught here slow-trolling big lures. Barbless hooks are recommended to help reduce injury to the fish. Striped bass can also be caught with cut bait, but circle hooks are required. Regulations regarding striped bass fishing are subject to change. See the 2016 Maryland Fishing Guide for current rules and regulations.

Catfishing below the dam has always been popular. Catfish are easy to catch, eat almost anything and the season is open year-round. Channel cats can be recognized by the dark spots on their sides. It is not uncommon to catch one over 30 inches long. Flathead catfish grow larger than channel cats and are just as good to eat. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources wants flatheads to be removed because they are an invasive species. Hefty 20 and 30 pound flatheads are regularly taken on hook and line. There are tons of catfish below the dam.

Conowingo Dam can be fished year-round. There is no closed season below Conowingo for bluegills, carp, catfish, crappie, muskellunge, perch and walleye. Every one of these fish could be caught during any month of the year. One of the wonderful things about fishing is you never know what you might catch. With so many different species of fish below the dam, Conowingo is truly an angler's cornucopia.

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Back River Restoration Committee, Inc.

Guest Bartender Night!

Back River Restoration Committee (BRRC) is gaining more and more support and momentum as seen by the turnout at their recent Guest Bartender Fundraiser Event.

BRRC would like to thank all the people who came out to support and participate in activities at their Guest Bartender Night on March 18th, hosted by the RiverWatch Restaurant. BRRC had a variety of Guest Bartenders, including local Elected Officials, Yacht Club Commodores and M & T Bank Essex Branch representatives. The many volunteers helped serve drinks, sell raffle tickets, artistic body and face painting and solicit new BRRC memberships. DJ Show put on a great performance, helping to encourage donations for BRRC Cleanup projects. Another draw for the fundraiser was the kick-off sale of Rockin' on the River tickets which is being sponsored by BRRC for the first time this year. The event not only raised needed funds for Cleanup and Restoration projects on Back River, it also opened eyes and raised awareness for the grass roots watershed organization. Every piece of trash picked up from the Back River Watershed is one more piece of trash kept out of the Chesapeake Bay.

BRRC maintains the Trash Boom in Southeast Baltimore County at the 695 bridge and in just 3 weeks has pulled more than 61 tons of debris flowing downstream into Back River from Baltimore City since a three inch rainfall on February 24th. BRRC has prevented more than 2.5 million pounds of trash from entering the Chesapeake Bay since 2011. The organization will be participating with their many devoted volunteers in Project Clean Stream, in the Middlesex Community of Essex on April 1 & 2. If you would like to participate in this or future stream cleanups, contact BRRC at savebackriver@gmail.com



On the Waterfront

with George Waters

photo by Donna Bedell

Husbandly Errand Goes Wrong While Seeking a Simple Six-Pack

They completely remodeled my local hardware store, so now I can't find any of the things I would have bought with the best of intentions but then let sit in my garage for years from a lack of follow-through. It is almost as if my wife had a hand in this.

The word "garage," derived from the French, means, quite literally, "procrastination on parade." There are the rolls of chicken wire intended to keep the critters out of the raised vegetable beds I never built. Their steel, glinting from a crowded corner, is the only aspect of that project which ever got galvanized. Then there are the acoustic ceiling tiles I never installed. The stained glass window.

The French have a lot to answer for.

I called my wife from the hardware store. I think I was in Tools, or where Tools used to be. There were an awful lot of paint cans. I was looking for a hose repair kit. I know, right?

I asked my wife if she needed me to pick up anything. She told me I could get her four or five six-packs of flowers for the front porch pots, which currently feature bare dirt as a design motif.

I found my way to Garden, which wasn't anywhere it should have been. Spotted some nice petunias. Four six-packs?! I was looking at a rack about two feet long and a foot wide with six containers of flowers on it. That's a lot of flowers for five little pots! I called my wife. Yes, four six-packs, she confirmed. So I filled the entire hatch of the car and came home.

Turns out I bought something called "flats," which indeed have six-packs on them. 6 six-packs per flat. She wanted 24 flowers. I brought home 144. How can I live half a century, you ask, and not know what a six-pack of perennials is? My role when it comes to gardening has always been in the hacking-down, not the growing up.

I returned three of the flats and picked up that hose repair kit. I think it was in Electrical. For once I did not let the thing sit in the garage for five years. I cut off the head of the broken hose and repaired it on the spot. Five minutes. Then I watered the pots of new flowers.

They smelled like absolution.



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A photograph of the Duffy Creek Marina building and dock area, showing a large multi-story building with a balcony and a dock with several boats.

Spring Cleaning Your Interior



by Brenda Dawson

Just like spring cleaning at home or at the cottage, spring cleaning the boat isn't much fun, but necessary. It makes the rest of the season much more enjoyable and it's easier to keep the boat looking it's best for you, your family and friends.

Your whole boat is constantly in need of cleaning. The exterior is a job unto itself as is interior, the bilge and the engine room. When you spring clean the interior, you only need to do easier maintenance cleaning throughout the boating season making life much easier and leaving more time to enjoy summer.

There are many marine cleaning products on the market and you will no doubt use your preferred products to knock off the winter's dirt, clean up spider spots and some leftover jobs from last year. If you haven't started using environmentally friendly cleaners, now would be a good time to check them out at your local marine store.

Take the time to do a thorough and complete cleaning of the interior, helm and cockpit of your boat involving as many family members as possible so they appreciate the work and will be more considerate.

- Scrub the toilet(s) and sink(s).
- Wash the bulkheads, cupboards and drawers before you stock them.
- Use a good vacuum cleaner to get out dirt and sand from deep down in the carpets and fabric, then steam clean. A small handheld vac is great for maintenance cleaning.
- Remove any marks from the vinyl or leatherette seat cushions and backs.
- Steam clean interior cushions, foam mattresses, sofas etc. to freshen.

- If there is any mildew or mold smell, open the hatches cupboard doors and drawers to ventilate and plug in a fan. Use a good mold cleaner. If there is mold in cushions or mattresses, it may be worth taking them to a dry cleaner.

- Wash any window curtains, shower curtains or privacy curtains.
- Clean and polish windows and clear vinyl.
- Brush off all dust and/or mold or mildew from your canvas and re-waterproof it if necessary.
- Clean and deodorize the frig and any ice chests.
- Clean the stove and/or Barbeque.
- If your boat has interior teak, spring is the time to clean, sand and reseal it.
- The helm area around the gauges and electronics tends to gather dust, dirt, spider spots and dead insects. It needs to be scrubbed after storage. A toothbrush is a big help.
- Flush the water tank as well as the hot water tank a few times to get rid of old water and antifreeze.
- Cleaning the fenders will make a huge difference to the appearance of your boat and won't dirty your cockpit area if you have to bring them in.
- Pitch out outdated food and take home everything that you don't need on the boat any more.

Invest in a good thorough spring cleaning before the season gets started so you don't have to spend the summer inside your boat. Get out and enjoy summer!

Brenda Dawson, author First Mate 101 www.FirstMate101.com

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by Dick Greenwood



Hanging On The Cusp

Standing on the fuel dock at McDaniel's Yacht Basin in North East, summer seems light-years away. Two weeks before I'd been in Florida, hanging out, doing touristy things, and loving the warmth. It wasn't "sleep on deck" warm, but it was warm enough to see a few boats skimming over the water, kicking up a wake, an occasional dog on the bow. Two weeks later I'm back home and I conduct a quick survey.

First, I have to go into Philadelphia, so I drive down to the Coast Guard station on Columbus Boulevard and walk out to the recreation area that's next door. The weather's not what I'd call "cold," but it's certainly not "sleep on the boat" weather. I wander around the place for a while, taking photos and watching a couple of ten year old boys who are frenetically laughing and throwing handfuls of pea-sized gravel at one another. On the river there are a few working boats; one tour boat; an orange ship from some country I've never heard of; and a deep red Moran tug, the large, white "M" bright in the sun, that's following the orange ship like a turkey vulture that's spotted lunch; but no pleasure boats.

The next day I drive down to North East, and pay my respects to the folks at McDaniel's. Surprisingly, for a Sunday, the place is deserted. It's quiet there; so quiet I can hear the flag wap-wap-wapping in the slight breeze. The day before we had received an unwelcome reminder that winter isn't over until Nature decides

it's over; but the wet, thumb-sized snowflakes we received didn't stay around, so it's mild. It's not "sleep at the marina" mild, but I feel comfortable in a light jacket as I take a few photos and soak up the solitude.

A marina in the warm months is a place of sounds. Boat engines grumbling, people laughing, boaters shouting "Get the damn line around the cleat before it's too far to reach!", friends greeting and saying goodbye, a cacophony of voices and machines fills the place. The atmosphere is electrifying; minds race faster than boats. I like that atmosphere; it denotes purpose and vigor.

But this is the cusp of that time of year. This is the time when Nature teases us, holds out a few days of warm weather, then pulls back and slaps us with cold rain, harsh winds, or an occasional ration of Spring snow. It's the time of year when two or three days of 80-degree weather convince us to break our shorts and

put our fleeces away. The cusp is the wide gulf between winter worry and boating pleasure. People may be putting on a wind-breaker and going out for a cruise in Florida, but we have to deal with the realities of the northeast.

For now I'll use my time to do some reading, plan some summer cruises, talk to some friends about raft-up plans, maybe drive to a marina I'd like to try in the summer and talk with the people who work there, and check my gear. I go through my emergency gear with care, checking to see if my flares have stood up to life in the garage, handling my PFDs and checking for any signs that mice used them as a winter hideout. I unpack and re-pack my lines to ensure that they're not frayed beyond use. All the things I should have done but probably didn't do in the fall I do now. It's time filler, something to awaken my boating persona. When my gear has passed muster, I go over my charts and guidebooks to make sure they reflect the latest information.

The cusp seems wide. The time between "forget about it" and "yes, it's warm enough" feels like it takes ages to pass. But it's not that wide and the season is here quickly. "Sleep on the boat weather" is just around the corner. Be patient. Join me on the fuel dock. I'm the guy who's standing, staring out at the river, waiting for the boat with the dog to go by.



A Moran tug slowly follows a ship north on the Delaware.



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In 1963, Princeton University and Yale Law School graduate Richard Schwartz headed out on the Chesapeake Bay with a friend who had just bought a new boat. The boat was quickly boarded by the U.S. Coast Guard, who cited the boat owner for having a faulty engine-compartment ventilation system. Schwartz was stunned to discover that boat manufacturers have no liability for meeting government safety regulations, and the U.S. Coast Guard has no jurisdiction over the manufacturers to make sure they build safe boats – so the Coast Guard was going after boat owners. Schwartz asked his boating friends if there was anyone fighting for their interests – and the answer was no.

Three years later, Dick Ellison joined Schwartz and they launched Boat Owners Association of the United States (Boat US) based on a vision of service, savings and representation for the nation's boat owners.

A short year later, in the halls of congress was heard: "We'll get you, Schwartz!" These angry words were threatened by a boat manufacturing industry lobbyist in a heated Capitol Hill hearing on boating safety and consumer rights. In his testimony, Schwartz angered some in the room by telling lawmakers that boat owners were being unfairly targeted and ticketed by the U.S. Coast Guard.

In 1970, The Boat US Consumer Protection Bureau was launched to bridge the gap between boaters and manufacturers or dealers. The first significant federal victory comes to Boat US when



President Nixon signed the Federal Boat Safety Act of 1971 – which Schwartz helped to write – into law giving the U.S. Coast Guard authority to regulate boat manufacturers, enacting a defect law for newly manufactured boats, and creating the U.S. Coast Guard Office of Boating Safety.

Throughout the years, Boat US has been an advocate for recreational boaters, working on their behalf with Congress on the influential National Boating Safety Advisory Council. Efforts by the organization were instrumental in defeating Federal Boat "User Fee" taxes, and ensuring taxes on fuel were spent on boating safety programs. Boat Safety courses were set up, leading to the Boat US.com/courseline, which in 2016 is the largest source for online courses in the country. Their lobbyists were instrumental in getting the federal Wallop/Breaux Trust Fund set up in 1984 to protect our natural

resources. Today the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund continues those conservation efforts.

The Boat US Foundation has helps boaters with several Clean Water and Safety initiatives including awarding \$5000 to the winner of the first ever Life Jacket Design Competition, through the Personal Floation Device Manufacturers Association. Upper Bay Boating appreciates those efforts, as changing attitudes in wearing these devices will eventually pay off in reduced deaths on the water.

The hard work the organization has done in its first 50 years has dramatically improved boaters favorite past-time, and this magazine wishes Boat US much success in helping out future generations.



Bowleys Quarters Volunteer Fire Company

Maryland DNR Safe Boating Course

Bowleys Quarters Volunteer Fire Company offers the Maryland Department of Natural Resources 8 Hour Safe Boating Course. This state approved course is required

by law for boat operators born after July 1, 1972. Our efforts have led to teaching hundreds of boaters and family's the required course adhering to the National Association of Safe Boating Law Administrators course content which is accepted nationwide for operating a boat. Upon completion and after a written test, the student will be

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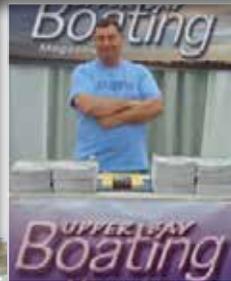
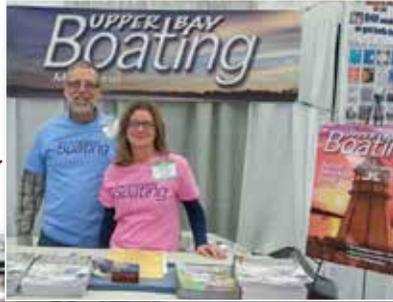
The cost remains at \$35.00 per student which includes instructional materials and certification card. Seating is limited to 28 students per class and advance registration is required. A portion of the proceeds from the class will benefit the Junior Firefighters program at the Bowleys Quarters Volunteer Fire Company.

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SETTIN' the HOOK

with Dave Kilby

News and Views

With the exception of the record snowfall, this past winter was much milder than in previous years. That saved us money on our heating bills and saved our backs from excessive show shoveling, but also saved us a lot of wondering what the Upper Chesapeake Bay would be like when spring fishing resumed.

Savvy anglers know that harsh winters and long periods of ice can cause some strange phenomena in our tidal waters. A quieter, warmer winter usually does not cause extensive loss of aquatic vegetation while severe winter conditions can reduce the amount of grass in some area and flat out cause it's total demise in others. In layman's terms, that productive grassbed you caught a ton of fish from in the summer may be gone following a frigid winter.

Early spring boaters need to be cautious of submerged trees, sandbars, and silt following the unpredictable winter tides, even in marked channels. These inanimate objects can be easily relocated and repositioned as a result of shifting winter tides and will easily devour props and lower units. Be wary!

After long, harsh winters like last year bass and other gamefish searched for warmer water and took longer to return to their usual, predictable haunts. That caused many anglers to look for their quarry in new waters. Those who researched the transitions that bass go through at different seasons and weather conditions were rewarded with success.

After decades of monitoring and studying the habits of largemouth bass on the Upper Chesapeake Bay and the Potomac River, the Maryland DNR has introduced new regulations for bass tournaments in these areas effectively immediately. These regulations are designed to maintain the success of our fantastic fishery and reduce mortality.

Tournament organizations are offered two options to be in compliance with the DNR's new guidelines. In a nutshell, each tournament angler is allowed to have in possession 5 bass, only one of which can be over 15" with the other 4 between 12" and 15".



Paycheck Angler Sean Peddicord with a hefty early spring largemouth caught Easter Morning March 27, 2016.

The second option is for the sponsoring tournament to have aerated holding tanks to hold the fish until the weigh-in is completed so they can be returned to areas away from the launching ramp insuring a high survival rate.

Speaking of tournaments, there will be a huge Fallen Hero Memorial Tournament this summer on the Upper Bay out of Tydings Park in Havre De Grace, MD. This fundraising tournament will be held to benefit the families of Officer Dailey and Officer Logsdon, the Harford County Deputies who recently lost their lives in the line of duty. This tournament will be supported by the City of Havre De Grace and will feature many local celebrities.

This weekend celebration will feature a bass tournament on Saturday and a "Catch What You Can" tournament on Sunday. There will be a silent auction to include sponsor product and autographed jersey's and other memorabilia

from BASS Elite pros and more.

If you are interested in becoming a sponsor of this event or for more information please contact Dave Kilby at paycheckbass@gmail.com



John Ford (left) and Chief Darrell Hamilton.

Names and Faces

One of the primary individuals responsible for the success of last summer's Bassmaster Elite Tournament on the Upper Chesapeake Bay is John Ford. John poured his heart and soul into the planning of the tournament and festival and the proven results speak for themselves.

John is the owner of Integrity Real Estate in North East, Maryland, one of the top real estate firms in Cecil County. Integrity Real Estate recently became a platinum sponsor of Paycheck Bass Tournament Series and any Paycheck member purchasing a home through John will receive a free home warranty.

John currently has his hand in some other tournament projects including a kids fundraiser. Hats off to a great ambassador for Upper Bay tournament fishing!



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2. Conduct a radio check as you normally would.

3. Upon releasing the mic, the system will replay your transmission, letting you hear how you sound.

4. It's that easy, but be sure to check your VHF radio BEFORE you leave the dock!

This service is available nationwide, but specifically in our area, we have towers in Annapolis, Fairlee Creek and North East on Channel 27, and in Oxford on Channel 26. Instantly receive feedback from a recorded version of your transmission.

VHF Channel 16 is for hailing and distress only! Always speak clearly and slowly when using the VHF. In an emergency, it's important to state the name of your vessel, your location, and the nature of your distress. Non-emergency conversations should be taken to another channel. Commercial traffic monitors Channel 13/16, and can be contacted on Channel 13. While most boaters today have cell phones, there is not always adequate cell coverage in many areas on the Bay. Using your cellphone when it's raining, or if wet is nearly impossible.

Knowing how to properly use your VHF to communicate as well as gain valuable weather information, can save your life.

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A River of Memories

by L. Alan Keene

It was too cold on that late November day last Fall to think about much other than just staying warm. We had left our Havre de Grace slip early that morning enroute to the C & D Canal and Summit North Marina, our boat's home for the next four months. It wasn't as if we didn't try to find a warm day to make the 25 mile trip. It was just that each day we chose was colder than the one we had just abandoned. We finally decided that, cold or not, we had to go.

As we motored around Turkey Point and headed north up the Elk River, that same pervasive feeling of loss that had accompanied our previous ten trips to winter dry dock.....that same familiar feeling of sadness at season's end, made the cold even colder. Frozen and depressed, we made our way northeast, oblivious to the memories that lay just yards away.

The Elk was a river that we rarely sailed. I'm not sure why really, other than it wasn't very wide and that lack of width had to be shared with the commercial behemoths that funneled in and out of the C & D Canal. Since this was our first winter at Summit North, there were parts of the Elk that we had never seen before....parts that we were anxious to explore. But that would have to wait for a warmer day.

If you're a believer in the balance and even-handedness of the universe, then you wouldn't have been surprised at the gorgeous Spring day we picked to head on back down to Havre de Grace last month. Blue skies, small seas, and temperatures in the upper 60s.....the antithesis of last November's choice.

As we eased out of the Canal and into the Elk, a strong outward tide pushing us along, I turned the helm over to my first mate and began examining the chart-book. There to starboard was the continuation of the Elk, I decided, surprised by it's lack of depth as it meandered northward up to Elkton. Certainly not the place for a deep draft keel-boat, I thought.

And on up ahead to port...the mouth of the Bohemia River, a river that played such a significant role in my love affair with the water.

It was the summer of 1958 or '59, I think, and my best friend Burt had invited me to spend a Sunday afternoon water-skiing with his family behind their '57 Chris Craft inboard. WATER-SKIING? The closest I had been to water-skiing was on a family trip through Florida when we just happened upon Cyprus Gardens. But the image of those beautiful girls gliding along among the Cyprus trees was enough to excite any 13 year old boy. I couldn't wait to try it.

What started as a single invitation turned into an entire summer of them. For some reason I had popped right up on the second or third try and had become quite adept at it.....even to the point of getting up on one ski. Burt, who had been less successful before I arrived, suddenly showed promise himself and before long we were skiing double all over the Bohemia. To this day, every time I cross over the Chesapeake City bridge

heading south, I feel that same excitement and anticipation that I felt almost 50 years before. It was a wonderful summer.

As we continued south past Town Point, with the early Spring sun glistening off the wave tops, I experienced what I can only describe as an epiphany. There to starboard, the chart showed, was Camp Rodney, CAMP RODNEY!....the Boy Scout camp where I had spent so many youthful hours chasing down those little round merit badges. As a boy, I didn't concern myself so much with the "where" of things.....just the "when". I knew that Camp Rodney was on the "Bay" somewhere and that was good enough for me. Hmmmm....that may explain why that Map Reading merit badge was so elusive.

Alone with my memories, I suddenly realized that Peg, my first mate, and I hadn't spoken since exchanging the helm. She was fine, she assured me.....just enjoying the peace and quiet. So back to the chart-book I went.

Up ahead to port was Buttonwood Beach, the chart showed, and beyond it was White Crystal Beach. White Crystal Beach? I hadn't thought of White Crystal Beach in years. It was there that my Uncle Herb owned a cottage and we would visit for a few days every summer. It was THERE that I learned how to swim. As a boy of 6 or 7, I can remember looking out from shore at the boats as they sailed by....wondering what great adventure they had in store. Just as some young boy or girl, I thought, might be looking out at us that very minute.

Off to starboard stood the cliffs of Elk Neck State Park. Almost 25 years before, we had spent an enlightening weekend in the Park. Peg and I had decided that we wanted to take our kids on road trips around the country during my 3 weeks of vacation. The problem was that we couldn't afford to stay in motels and eat out in restaurants for the entire 3 weeks. So instead, we decided to buy a tent and camp our way around the country. We chose Elk Neck State Park to test out our new equipment.

That weekend in the Park, I recalled with a smile, marked the beginning and the beginning-of-the-end of our tent camping adventures. Not only was the tent bulky and difficult to handle, but a car racing through the campground roads that Saturday night gave us a true appreciation of how little protection canvas walls would provide. I think we bought a camping TRAILER the following Spring.

As Peg swung wide around Turkey Point and began heading north-west toward the Susquehanna channel, I put the chart-book down, looked back at her, and offered, "Ya know, we ought to sail the Elk more often.... don't you think? There's just something about that river that gives me a good feeling. Something about it that makes me feel young again."

"That's quite an accomplishment," Peg said with a chuckle. And with that, we were off to enjoy another season out on the Upper Bay.

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Attitudes in Boating and Fishing

By Captain Mark Galasso

*Tuna the Tide Charter Service
Grasonville, Maryland*

Like most people, I made a number of New Year's Resolutions. And like most people by summer time my resolutions will be distant memories. However, there is one item I think I can really pull off. This year I intend to keep a positive attitude when it comes to my time on the water. I took the first step towards this end in mid-January. I was invited to attend a Fisheries Science and Management Workshop in Baltimore. As a boater, charter boat operator and general fan of the outdoors there is nothing more frustrating as to the rules and regulations that dictate how we use and enjoy our god given surroundings. However, I'm not naive enough to think we can have an unregulated free for all.

The three days I spent in Baltimore with the Marine Resource Education Program gave me a much better understanding as to how rules and regulations are promulgated for the betterment of ALL the people, not just me. The meetings were made up of scientists, fisheries managers and user groups, both commercial and recreational from all over the Northeast. Panel discussions included members of councils and commissions both Federal and State as well as fisherman and environmentalists. The diversity of individuals was impressive, as were their ideas as to how best to utilize limited resources. Though I have worked on the scientific end and more recently on the user end some of the management ideas have escaped my understanding until now. And I learned a number of facts that cleared up a lot of what fisheries management as well as boating rules and regulations are all about. Keep these in mind this season when you feel your blood pressure on the rise.

What is obvious to you is not obvious to everyone around you. Don't hate, educate!



There is always two sides to every story. In the case of boating and fisheries management sometimes there are dozens of sides. Learn to understand them. You may find out yours isn't the best way.

If you want to make a difference learn the process. By law managers through various commissions, councils and even the legislatures both federal and state are required to do what benefits the MAJORITY.

If you do get involved be respectful. Not only of the process but of the people. Many of the people on councils and commissions as well as advisory and steering committees are volunteers. They donate their time because they are concerned citizens just like you. The catch phrase lately is "agree to disagree". That goes much farther than personal attacks and fruitless arguments.

If you have an issue get in on the discussion early. The wheels on the train are slow and the brakes on the train are weak. Understand the process. Understand the issue and formulate your points. Consider alternatives especially in light of other's views. Remember your isn't the only view. Be open minded. Be POSITIVE.

2016 Fishing Opening Day

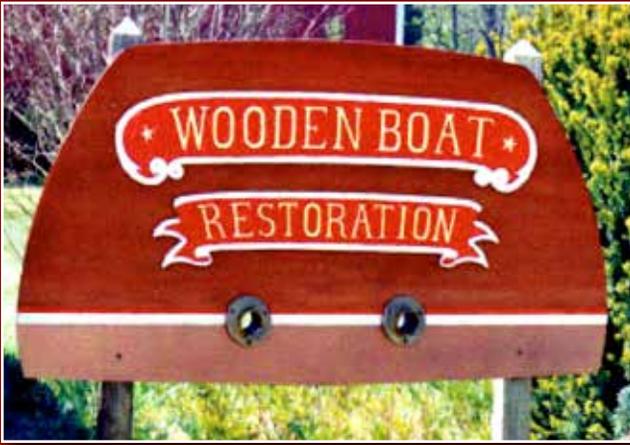
Looks like the dates are now set for the 2016 fishing season! Can't wait!

We will be starting opening day trophy fishing on the Markley Out of the Big Owls tiki bar in Kent Narrows April 16. We will also be following the fish around light tackle fishing out of our 2015 243cc Everglades. If last year is any indication we should have great fishing around Kent Island most of the early season. We also have access to a 46 ft vessel for larger groups out of Kent Narrows. We are just winding down the show season and have plenty of open dates. Give us a call or shoot us an email to reserve your days. Hope to see you soon.

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Classic Corner

Marinette Houseboat

I like to be a little different from others, so the boat that captured my attention at last years Classic Boat Festival



was this Marinette Houseboat, made in the late 60's. I always liked the Aluminum Cabin Cruisers the company sold (they had the style of wooden boats, without all the maintenance head aches). The family that owns this cute vessel found her in a frozen lake down south. They rescued the old girl, and did a nice job restoring her. I'm happy they dared to be different!- *Dave Bielecki*



Betting on the Vessel Excise Tax

by Thomas Valkenet

The Gambler's Fallacy is the mistaken belief that if a coin-flip comes up "heads" ten times in a row, then it is more likely to come up "tails" on the eleventh flip. It is a trap that ignores how probability operates. Our legislature is falling victim to a similar fallacy this session, as it works to make permanent the \$15,000 cap on Maryland's vessel excise tax. As of this writing, the bill has passed all hurdles in the legislature and is well on its way to becoming law by June.

The cap operates as a subsidy on vessel purchases over \$300,000. The cap has no direct impact on the majority of Maryland boaters who buy and sell, as our boats are much less expensive. It will directly benefit a slim number of wealthy boaters. This issue has been hotly debated among many sectors of the State's marine industry since 2005. Supporters argue the cap will promote increased spending by the wealthiest boaters, and thus benefit the entire industry. Detractors say the cap will simply deplete income needed to support the Waterway Improvement Fund ("WIF") and that the cap is a poor bet on an uncertain economic return.

Excise taxes are as old as our Country. Ten years after the British surrender at Yorktown, and only two years after the United States Constitution was adopted, the Congress passed the Distilled Spirits Tax of 1791, an excise tax on whiskey. The federal government had assumed war debt of the thirteen states and sought to offset the burden by taxing grain and spirits. The tax was unpopular, as whiskey was often used for direct trading, like currency. Larger distillers could easily pass the tax to consumers, but smaller distillers and frontier grain producers were directly burdened by the cash payment that could be as much as thirteen cents per gallon. Over three years simmering revolt roiled the frontier, particularly in southwestern Pennsylvania where tax collectors were attacked. President Washington dispatched a militia of close to 13,000 men, including many Marylanders, to preserve order and enforce the tax.

Maryland has collected a vehicle excise tax since 1933, largely without incident. Since 1966, the WIF has been the recipient of the 5% Vessel Excise Tax collected on the value of watercraft purchased or used in Maryland waters, and a smaller tax on all motor fuels. Through the WIF, our government improves and maintains the infrastructure throughout the State necessary for safe public boating. The necessity and benefit of the WIF is

not disputed by either side of the cap debate. Today, the WIF is funded solely by the Vessel Excise Tax ("VET"). A cap on the tax is described as either revenue neutral, or a downright revenue drain. Only one side can be correct.

In 2011, excise taxes generated \$15.4 Million for the WIF. In 2012, this declined to \$14.2 Million. By 2013, the State Legislature adopted a temporary cap on the VET. In August 2015, the University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center issued an analysis of the cap, with only one concrete conclusion- over 2013 and 2014 approximately \$588,000 in revenue was lost.

The analysis is coupled with several "may have" conclusions, which amount to little more than wishful thinking:

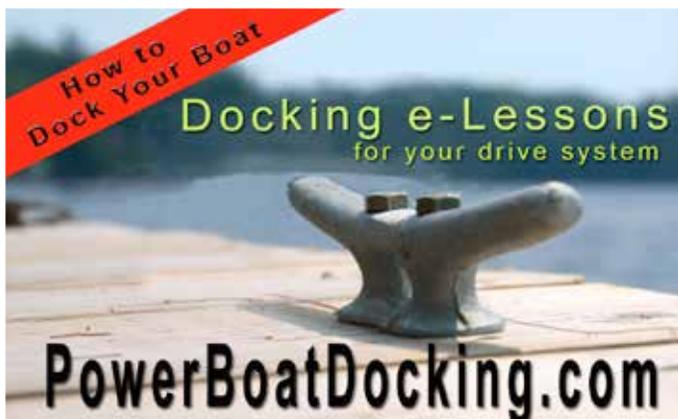
- The cap "may have" lead to increased registration of vessels worth \$350,000 to \$399,999, although "the net impact on VET revenue is estimated to be negative."
- The increase in registration of vessels worth \$400,000 or more "is likely due" to the cap, but "was not enough to offset the loss in VET revenue." The increase is attributed to 60 additional registrations in this category.

The cap is justified largely for its claimed trickle down economic effect- it "may have" generated \$1 Million in direct spending in the overall economy (citing a survey of "high valued" boat owners who averaged 25 trips per season), with a multiplier effect of \$2.5 Million over two years. Instead of reading the data as a general negation of the benefits attributed to the cap, our Legislature has simply doubled down on the initial bet by making the cap permanent on the assurance that good things "may have" resulted from the temporary cap.

With annual receipt between \$14 Million and \$15 Million, it is indisputable that the bulk of VET revenue is derived from the purchase and registration activities involving vessels well below the \$300,000 cap threshold. The cap can only be construed as a tax break for the wealthiest of boaters who already bear the least economic responsibility for maintaining our waterways. Meanwhile, the loss of revenue intended for the protection of public boating facilities and infrastructure will continue to decline, and the majority of State boaters will suffer.

On your next visit to play the slots, kindly nudge the legislator on the stool next to you and suggest that it is time for him to go home. He's playing with your money in a game where the odds remain long.

Tom is a lawyer who has practiced maritime law and general litigation for 28 years. **YOUNG & VALKENET (410) 323-0900**
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BoatUS Fire Facts

Claim Files Show 6 ways Boat Fires Happen

Fire ranks number five among all boat losses according to the BoatUS Marine Insurance Program claims files. Dig a little deeper, and those claims files also tell you the six specific areas that lead to most reported boat fires. If every boater paid attention to these six things, over a third of all fires aboard boats would be prevented. So what are the top six ways boat fires happen, and some lessons to take home?

26 percent of fires are due to "off-the-boat" sources: Over a quarter of the time, a BoatUS member's boat burns when something else goes up in flames – the boat next to theirs, the marina, their garage, or even a neighbor's house. It's every boater's responsibility to prevent fires, but when all else fails, having a good boat insurance policy is the last backstop.

20 percent of fires are due to "Engine Electrical": For boats older than 25 years, old wiring harnesses take a disproportionate chunk of the blame here. A good electrical technician can put one together for you as most boats of this age had relatively simple electrical systems.

15 percent of fires are due to "Other DC Electrical": The most common cause of battery-related fires is faulty installation of batteries - reversing the positive and negative cables or misconnecting

them in series (when they should be in parallel). So take a picture. Label the cables. Use red fingernail polish to mark the positive lug. By gosh do everything to hook it up right the first time.

12 percent of fires are due to "AC Electrical": Most AC electrical fires start between the shore power pedestal and the boat's shorepower inlet. Inspecting the shore power cord routinely (connector ends especially) and for boats older than 10 years, inspecting or replacing the boat's shorepower inlet, could prove wise.

9 percent of fires are due to "Other Engine": This one is all about when an engine overheats due to blocked raw water intake or mangled impeller, the latter of which can also happen after experiencing a grounding or running in mucky waters. Be sure to check the engine compartment

after getting underway and replace impeller every other year.

8 percent of fires are due to "batteries": This fire fact is for the outboard folks to pay attention to. older outboards, by far the most common cause of fires is the voltage regulator. At 10 years of age, failure rates on these important electrical components begin to climb. Once it hits 15 years old, it's time to replace.



Live Aboard

by Don and Gail Elwell

Patterns

Early spring has been a time of major renovations here aboard The Floating Empire. Having lived aboard for nearly two years now, we have a much better idea of how we use the space, what space we don't use, and what mistakes we made in the initial layout. So, in the midst of prepping for spring and Gail's artwork and me getting a new novel out ("An Alien's Guide to Sears and Roebuck" if anyone's interested), we've spent the last few weeks doing a bit of a rebuild: adding a settee, removing one of the kingposts and sistering its partner to take the load, and changing around the head and the aft studio space. The result has been a much more open boat plan, with fewer choke points for moving about, especially around the galley.

Now, as nice as that is, one of the things we've both been laughing about is how hard it is to break the patterns of movement we've developed over the last 18 months or so. We've spent the last few days constantly reaching for drawers that aren't there, backtracking to new locations in the galley, and, most amusingly, reflexively and meticulously stepping around invisible pillars and obstructions in what is now totally open space. It's comical, but it gets one to thinking.

How many of the things we do are by reflex, patterns we learned long ago, and not by necessity, intent, or thought? When they learned we moved aboard, half of our friends said "Oh, that is so cool, but I could never do it." Why? Obviously it's do-able. We do it. Lots of other folks do it. What I think they're saying is: "I have no idea how I would adapt the patterns I live by to a new environment," and I get it.

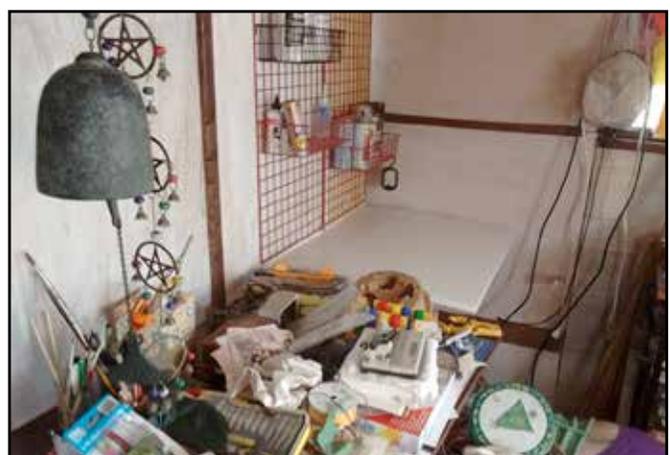
But . . . If I KEEP stepping around the kingpost in the galley, even though it's no longer there, then there wasn't much point in removing it in the first place, now was there? If I adapt and change the patterns in my head, I get a newer, more usable, more expansive galley. If I won't, then there's no reason to change anything, because even though the physical surroundings facilitate it, ultimately it's me that changes and allows me to use the improved galley setup.

In the same way, if I refuse to change the patterns of my life, then no change in circumstance—not more money, not a bigger boat, not a larger home, not a fancier car—

can ever make any real change, because I won't change to suite the new physical reality. I'm stuck, no matter what I do, until I change the way I look at things.

Wow, boats are instructive.

Don & Gail Elwell
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A Short Paddle Out of Havre de Grace

Some launch sites offer limited paddling options. This is not the case for the Jean Roberts Park boat launch, located at the intersection of Ostego and Water Streets in Havre de Grace. Paddling south and under the rail bridge you can paddle past marinas and quickly come upon the Havre de Grace lighthouse. If you wish to extend your paddle, it's a brief run down to the islands above Aberdeen Proving Grounds for a picnic or afternoon swim. If you are more venturesome, you can launch out across the Susquehanna flats to Elk Neck State Park. Later this year we will return to these routes with some detail. In this article I'd like to introduce you to Garrett Island and Furnace Bay. Each of these points of interest has a rich history and you can visit both during a single 11 mile day paddle.

Jean Roberts Park is a Harford county public park. There are no entrance fees and parking is free. The launch site is a concrete boat ramp that drops off abruptly, so be careful when you launch. Along the right edge of the ramp, paddlers from the Chesapeake Paddlers Association have placed rubber matting to protect kayakers from scraping concrete during launch.

This paddle begins with a circumnavigation of Garrett Island. It then paddles along Perry Point, crosses Mill Creek, and enters into Furnace Bay. On the return we will swing past the Havre de Grace lighthouse if we have time.

Garrett Island lies to the NNE of Jean Roberts Park. We're going to paddle along its western shoreline. Be careful of rocks lying just beneath the water's surface. About midway between the US 40 toll bridge and the rail bridge, the island rises to some 90 feet above sea level, making it the loftiest island in the Chesapeake region. I've been told the island lies on a fault line. Thus, the peak may be the remains of an ancient volcanic eruption. Unfortunately, one can no longer go ashore to explore this island because the US Fish and Wildlife Department designated it as a wildlife refuge and has marked it "Off Limits." It is currently managed by the Department of Natural Resources.

Europeans first became aware of the island through the explorations of Captain John Smith, who, upon return to England raved about the riches of the upper Chesapeake area.

It was granted to a Virginian, Edward Palmer, in the early 1600s and eventually became the first English settlement within the present limits of Cecil County. It was on Palmer island that William Claiborne, another Virginian, established his second trading post (yes, Wm Claiborne of Kent Island notoriety) and got himself in trouble with Maryland's governor, Leonard Calvert. As a result, the island was seized by Maryland. Oops. A few years later the Susquehannock Indians began raiding settlers on the island and Marylanders built Fort Conquest to defend the territory. Today, the exact whereabouts of the fort is unknown. Speculation has it that it lay on the northern end of the island and that over time, ice floes may have scrubbed all traces of its existence away. But you can still look for it as you round the northern tip of the island. Be careful of the submerged rocks here.

Rounding the northern end of Garrett Island we enter a deep channel that bounds the island's eastern edge. Soundings here range from 25 to 65 feet. Between 1820 and 1910 a fish-packing plant operated off this shoreline. The fishing operation itself consisted of two floats moored on opposite shorelines from which a seine was hung to catch migrating shad. It is said that the fish were caught by the hundreds of barrels each day. Horses were used to haul up the catches. Today no historical evidence of either the fishery, Fort Conquest, or of the farmlands marked on old maps exist. The only man-made structures on the island are the supports for the rail and road bridges which pass overhead. The island is deserted. Well, most of the time it is deserted. One November day a few years ago, a friend and I stopped along the eastern shoreline to watch a big horn ram and his ewe watch us. The federal government was in shutdown at the time and we reasoned some passerby had dropped the pair off while there were no government eyes around to see. I thought the sheep nicely complimented the high cliffs along the western shoreline, but apparently others did not share my feelings, for the sheep have been removed.

From the southern tip of Garrett island, we head east across the river. In 1695, the colonial government of Maryland built a post road that ran through the heart of Havre de Grace (then known as Stockett's town) and ended at the

banks of the Susquehanna. a short segment of Post Road still exists today. The idea for the road began as a means for solving the growing burden of mail delivery. Quickly, two business men, Jacob Looten and William York, realized that there was tremendous business potential in extending mail and goods distribution across the river. They built the first Susquehanna River ferry crossing between Stockett's Town and Perryville, thus extending Post road to points north. Due to the ferry's popularity, Stockett's Town became known as Lower Susquehanna Ferry. It wasn't until later that it took up the name Havre de Grace. In later years Post Road became Kings Highway and ran from Boston to Savannah.

The early post road connected the young American colonies and grew to become its first information highway. A postal stage line was setup such that a post rider could travel between Philadelphia and Williamsburg, with frequent stops for horse changes and sleep, in just a few days. Travelers soon began using the road as well, and with the increased traffic came lodging, boarding houses, and of course, taverns. The best known of these is now in the National Register of Historic Places. As you approach Susquehanna Point, look to your left. Sitting at the top of the hill is the restored Rogers Tavern. Originally built and known as Stevenson's Tavern, it was later purchased and operated by Colonel John Rogers. During the years in which the Continental Congress were meeting in Philadelphia, George Washington slept here while waiting to cross the Susquehanna on his jounies home to Mt. Vernon.

Paddling on from here we will steer around Stump Point and cross over Mill Creek to Shipley Point. We are now entering into Furnace Bay. This peaceful and weather protected bay serves as home to many migratory birds



during the winter months. In May of 1813 the bay would have looked much different. British troops had just burned Havre de Grace. In the process, Admiral Cockburn learned of a foundry that lay at the head of Principio Creek. Realizing its importance, he sent a small contingency up Furnace bay to destroy it. The significance of this operation cannot be understated. The Principio Iron Foundry made most of the cannons for America's new warships. On May 3, 1813 America lost one of its most important gun manufacturers.

At this point we're going to turn around and head back to home port. There is a small kayak ramp at Perryville Community Park that makes for a nice lunch break/rest stop. Afterwards, if you want, we can paddle across the river to the Havre de Grace Lighthouse. On second thought, since Concord Point has its own stories, I recommend we paddle directly back to Jean Roberts Park and save the lighthouse for a future trip.

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