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# UPPER BAY Boating

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## Welcome to the July UBB issue

WOW, after a mostly cool and wet spring, boating season has finally arrived. The 4th of July holiday is right around the corner. All those spring activities are behind you. No more excuses, just get out on the water. The Upper Bay has so much to offer, so find your favorite water related activity, and enjoy.

The boating lifestyle is one the entire family can embrace, and the love of boating can be easily passed down through the generations. Ask any boater, and he or she likely will tell you that a parent or grandparent also was a boater. What's more, avid boaters often introduce their own children to the fun, continuing the tradition. My children were out on the Upper Bay as infants and spent every weekend aboard Land Escaper almost all the way up to their late teens; that is until the "it's not cool to hang with the old folks" years. Thankfully those years were short lived!

My son-in-law James whom also is a life-long boater will be joining this publication. He hopes to bring a different perspective to these pages. There just is not enough under 35 year old boaters out there to replace folks that leave our favorite pastime as they age. The cost of getting into boating is a definite turn off to younger folks whom are just getting started in life. I have asked James to try to reach his generation by talking about affordable ways to get out on the water. At just over 60, I am about at the age of the average boater, so I'm hopeful we can bring a new generation aboard. The industry needs new blood to continue to grow. Please do your part and invite some younger folks along on your next outing.

If you live in Pennsylvania and boat on the bay, I would like to talk to you about your experience. Specifically: what you do to prepare for your time aboard; and your thoughts on why the 3-4 hour round trip from home is worth it? In the June issue, Dick Greenwood's column "Confessions of a Pennsylvania Boater" talked about his experience preparing for his weekend on the bay.

Wendy mentions the Pa. Navy in her column this month. I would like to interview someone for the next issue. Sometimes on the weekend, half the license plates on vehicles traveling along Rt. 213 are from the Keystone state. I often wondered through the years what the owners of the Upper Bay marinas and dealerships would do without you. I'm sure this publication wouldn't exist without you, so I appreciate all of the members of the Pennsylvania Navy. Let me know how we can help make your experience on the Upper Bay more enjoyable. Contact me at: [dave@upperbayboating.com](mailto:dave@upperbayboating.com)



**Happy Boating, Dave**



*photo by Donna Bedell*

# There was a real Pennsylvania Navy

By Wendy Gilbert  
Features Editor

The boss recently asked me to write a little something of interest to our good boating friends – the Pennsylvania Navy. During my many years writing for various boating publications, The term Pennsylvania Navy has only meant one thing to me – an affectionate moniker for our dear landlocked neighbors to the north who trailer their boats by the score to Maryland’s ample shorelines every season.

A typical PA Navy captain is known for his speed, if not his accuracy as well as a certain knack for bargaining and joke-telling.

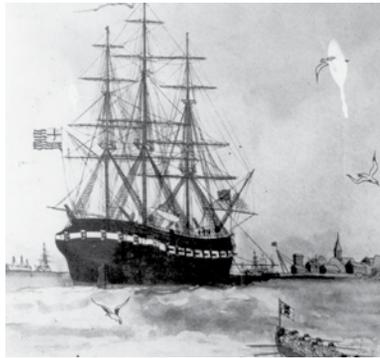
Signs dot the retail landscape welcoming them (and their wallets) back. The boating season is truly underway when the number of Pennsylvania trailer tags in the marina parking lots (almost) outnumber the ones from Maryland.

What I did not know and am somewhat embarrassed to admit, that my cursory research revealed, there is a Pennsylvania Navy. What was once called the Pennsylvania State Navy is now the Pennsylvania Naval Militia.

It began, like so many state military organizations, during the American Revolutionary War. The militia group served almost exclusively on the Delaware River protecting Philadelphia.

The vessels commanded by Commodore Thomas Read:

- |             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| Bulldog     | Experiment |
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| Congress    | Ranger     |
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| Effingham I |            |



By the end of August 1776, the Pennsylvania State Navy consisted of 768 men manning 27 vessels, with 21 more smaller vessels on order. These were armed with a four-pounder gun in the bow and were classed as guard boats.

According to the various articles about that time, the command of the fleet was at times contentious. Read was replaced on January 13, 1776 by Thomas

Caldwell, who only served briefly, resigning due to poor health in March. His replacement, Samuel Davidson, was promoted by the committee ahead of other captains, and almost caused a mutiny.

The unpopular Davidson was first removed from fleet command, and then eventually dismissed from the navy. Fleet command was then given to Thomas Seymour, but Captain Hazelwood objected to serving under the elderly Seymour. When

British operations began to threaten Philadelphia in September 1777, the council dismissed Seymour and gave overall fleet command to Hazelwood.

In September 1778, the state established an admiralty court to adjudicate maritime cases and deal with the distribution of prizes. While no explicit legislation authorizing privateering appears to have been passed, the state did issue more than 400 letters of marque between 1776 and 1782.

Trust me, if you want to know more, you are just a google search away from some very interesting history.

So next time you want to chuckle about our Pennsylvania brethren on boats, show a little respect!

Wendy Gilbert



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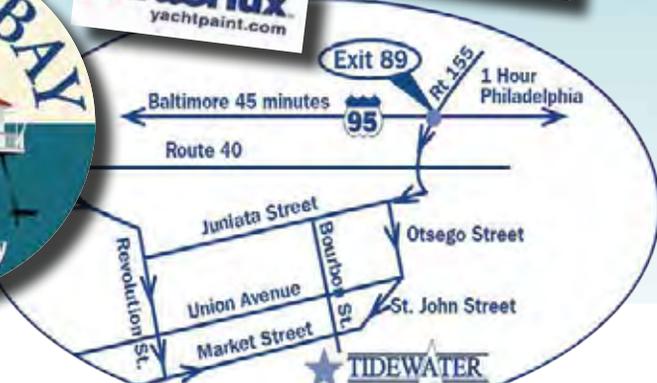


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# Attracting Younger Boaters

Everyone in the boating industry is asking the same question- how do we get younger people into boating? Countless reports and studies have been done but it all comes down to access. How easy is it for young folks to get out on the water and enjoy boating?

It's actually easier than you'd think. If you are a young person who wants to be out boating but don't know where to start then we have a few tips that can help you get on the water in no time. With the Chesapeake Bay so close and tempting for many of us, it is easy to overlook other, simpler, opportunities available for getting out on the water.

Try looking online at nearby national and state parks that offer rentals of kayaks or canoes on lakes and rivers. Maybe the local waterfront has boats for rent, or a nearby yacht club has public days you could attend. It doesn't need to cost an arm or leg to get into boating. Try asking around your circle of friends, chances are you'll find a boating buddy to take you out in no time. And if you want to learn to handle a boat, take a day trips with someone you know who boats, or with your folks. Once you get the hang of it you can get all the practice you need by offering to be the DD or chauffer a family outing. Most boaters are more than happy to help a new boater learn- don't be afraid to ask! Once you've tried it out and know you want to get a boat of your own- don't stress; the local paper,



craigslist, and of course Upper Bay Boating can help you find a great deal on a new or used boat.

Whether you have one hundred dollars or one thousand dollars you can find a boat to get you started (and if you've got even more money to spend on a first boat, start thinking about your boating goals- we'll cover boat choices at a later date). Just be sure to know what you are getting into, its best to stick to small craft if you are on a budget- fewer systems means fewer repairs (and less money spent!). Even a simple kayak can lead to a life-long love of boating and endless adventures on the Upper Bay.

*James Bedell*

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# More Lost Fish Stories – *Lessons Learned*

by Tim Campbell

Nobody ever loses little fish; the stories always involve big fish. The main thing to take from losing a big fish is the lesson. How did it get away? Was the hook dull? Was the knot tied properly? Was the fishing line old or frayed? Sharp hooks and well tied knots are basic, yet often overlooked skills. Sometimes, no matter what the careful angler might do, big fish will get away. The goal is to catch, photograph and release a trophy fish safely. To avoid losing the fish of a lifetime, learning to land large fish is critical. Experience playing big fish on the line is priceless.

Cobia grow fast to become big fish. A 40-inch cobia weighs about 25 pounds, whereas a 50-inch cobia weighs about 50 pounds. In Virginia, a citation catch and release cobia is 50 inches. A few years ago, my buddy Mike caught and released a citation cobia. We were fishing the Cape Charles area of the lower Chesapeake Bay anchored near Plantation Light. To attract cobia, the plan was to chunk cut-bait while fishing live eels. The tide wasn't right, but we anchored on our spot to wait for it to change. After a few hours without a bite, we decided it was time to relocate.

As we began to gather the lines, I noticed the brown back of a cobia just above the surface cruising several yards off the stern. The fish had taken an eel and was swimming away. No, it was two cobia, no three! That's right! We had three cobia on at the same time! It was pandemonium!

Mike was in the bow trying to keep his fish out of the fray as I worked on my two fish off the transom. He handled his fish calmly, while I struggled with mine. My two lines got tangled because the cobia swam in opposite directions. I tried to reel in one at a time, but over-reacted switching from rod to rod. Then one of my fish realized it was hooked and took off with a burst of speed. I tightened the drag and that's when the fish broke the line. At that point I grabbed my other rod which still had on a hooked fish.

As I reeled it next to the boat, the big cobia shook its head and out came the hook. I was crushed, but still had work to do. Not wanting to harm Mike's fish by using a gaff, I carefully landed it with my Boga-Grip. Once we got his big cobia on the deck, we quickly measured it, took a picture and released it. I was happy for Mike, yet felt a pang in the pit of my stomach over my two lost cobia. Lesson learned – don't over-react and don't over-tighten the drag.



My personal best red drum is 47 inches long, but I've lost two that size in recent times. One big red got off by me horsing it in. Again, it was on a trip to the lower Chesapeake Bay. It was Labor Day, my buddy Tom and I were set up ocean-side of the bay bridge tunnel fishing with fresh cut-bait. The tide was right and we had a good bite going. We had already caught and released two reds in the lower 40-inch range.

Then I got a solid bite and the fish took off. We could tell it was a big fish. I kept pressure on the rod and reeled in steadily. The fish seemed to be coming toward the boat just fine. Tom yelled, 'Set the hook!' When I did, it popped out. In hindsight, I should have ignored that command. If I'd have simply kept reeling the fish in gradually, I'm sure I would have had it in the boat. That big red would have been a release citation. Sometimes coaching is helpful, other times it's not. Lesson learned – stay focused.

Last year fishing in the same area, I lost another big red when the braid wrapped around a guide on my jiggling rod. I was using light tackle, too light - 20-pound braid with a 30-pound monofilament leader. The fish ate the jig on the drop in 25' of water and took off in a fury. Things were happening fast.

Before I could untangle the braid from the guide, the line snapped. I didn't try to pick out the braided line while the monster fish was pulling for fear I would cut my fingers. Instead I watched the line get taut and snap. That fish was a giant, but I lost it. Lesson learned – use heavier braid for this type of fishing.

Losing big fish is not much fun, but at least it makes for good stories.

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# Did I Really Do That?

By Captain Mark Galasso  
Tuna the Tide Charter Service  
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I guess as we get older we tend to talk more and more to ourselves. At least that seems to be the case for me. And a lot of the conversations seem to start with the phrase "Did I really do that?!" Over the years I've seen a few boating and fishing episodes that I'm sure elicited the same response to the participants. I won't say which ones I was involved in and which ones I witnessed. Just see which ones might be tucked safely away in your closet.

It's amazing how many lifejackets and cushions I see on the side of the road. My storage shed is full of them. I guess people just don't spend the extra few minutes to lash everything down. One day I was at a local gas station on Kent Island and heard a horrible noise out on route 50. I looked up just in time to see a small truck pulling a jon boat on a trailer towards the Bay Bridge. Trailing about a hundred feet behind the boat doing 60 mph was an anchor and chain. Sparks were flying and other cars were giving this guy a wide berth. I can only hope the anchor never dug in! I guess the lesson here is to lash everything down.

I constantly see center console boats heading down the road with a full set of fishing rods on display up in the rocket launchers. Let's see. Six feet to the gunnel. Another five feet to the T top. A seven foot rod in the launcher. It's not hard to understand why so many rods get broken. I once saw a guy get spooled by an oak tree. He had his rod sticking out on the outboard rocket launcher. The branch actually caught his line without breaking the rod. The lesson here would be put all antennas and rods down so they don't test the clearances of bridges and trees.

You have to love the guy (or girl, not to be one sided) that flies into a fleet of anchored fishing boats only to throw the anchor over just as they realize it wasn't tied to the boat. And did you ever notice that person never has a spare. Or maybe they are too embarrassed at that point to try again! The lesson here is to think before you act. Never assume something is attached to the boat without checking it.

A fishing rod is a tool not a toy. Don't tie a ball of string to a 300 dollar fishing rod and play catch with the cat. And if you do make sure you don't set the hook while the ceiling



fan is spinning! You just can't fix shattered rods, and the manufacturer will try not to laugh when you swear the rod was guaranteed no matter what.

The new four stroke outboards are so quiet it's almost too quiet. The funny thing is outboards are cooled by water. Once you take them out of the water they no longer have a cooling fluid dissipating all that heat. Make darn sure the motor is OFF before you pull the boat out and head up the road. If you're not sure remove the key. I think running an outboard out of any water voids the warranty. The lesson on these last two is the warranties probably won't cover anything you would be too embarrassed to tell the dealer.

When you are running on autopilot always post a lookout. If you take the time to read the manual it reminds the user of this fact at the beginning and end of EVERY chapter. Autopilots are great. Don't get me wrong. But they don't have a conscience and they tend to not have what we might think of as common sense. They won't slow down or alter course to avoid waking a smaller vessel. And unless you have one smarter than mine it doesn't account for shallow water and obstructions.

Last but not least. Don't forget your binoculars! I love it when a boat comes flying up to me while I'm fishing. Scares all the fish away and then apologizes because they thought I was someone else! Give me a break and get a cheap pair of binoculars. I guess the lesson for these last two is some people just don't get it.

Have a great AND safe boating season.

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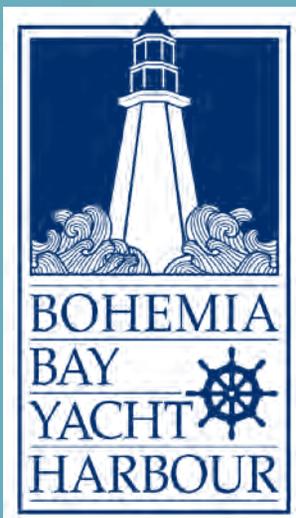


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# Marvin Haw III Safety Day a Big Success!

The weather was nice again for the second Marvin Haw III Safety Day. Boaters of all ages came out to find out about having fun on the Upper Bay, while making sure to keep safety in the back of your mind. This annual event is getting larger and better attended, and organizers were very pleased, and already making plans for next year. This magazine was proud to help promote the event, and encourages you to attend next year.



Brenda, Jim, and the rest of the crew from Baltimore Boating Center.

Sam and Karen of Back River Restoration Committee.

## Upper Bay Business Announcements

### Premium Bay Boat Manufacturer adds its first Northeast Dealer, Tradewinds Marina



**Crevalle Boats** announces its first northeast dealer, **Tradewinds Marina** of Baltimore, MD. Crevalle Boats will enter the northeast market with 3 Mercury Verado powered models, the 24 Bay, 26 Bay and 26 Open. Often referred to as crossover or hybrid style boats for the family, these models offer a porta pottie, built in removable coolers, 8 cup holders, 3 insulated live wells, lockable rod storage, a forward cushion package with reversible back rests (Bay), coffin box cooler with cushion set (Open), and electronics.

"Crevalle is very excited to announce this new dealer." said **Chad Jaros**, Director of Sales and Marketing. Tradewinds Marina is a family owned and operated business with over 34 years of loyal service to the shores of Maryland. Located on **Frog Mortar Creek off of Middle River**, the marina offers wet and dry storage, travelift service, full mechanical service, along with new and brokerage boat sales. 2018 model year Crevalle's will arrive in Middle River this July. While Crevalle credits a large portion of its success to using the highest quality components, engineering and construction, "another large portion of our success is due to the best dealers in the business" said company President **Nick Engels**.

Please visit [www.crevalleboats.com](http://www.crevalleboats.com) or [www.tradewinds-marina.com](http://www.tradewinds-marina.com) for more information.

**Tomes Landing Marina** is pleased to announce that Gary Parker has joined the sales team. Gary has years of experience in boat sales and management, most recently with Jackson Marine. He invites all his friends to stop in the marina next time they are looking for a new boat.

### Maryland Resident JoAnna Goldberg Tapped for Top National Boating Industry Leadership Recognition

June 15, 2017, Annapolis, MD – **JoAnna Goldberg**, the CEO of **Fairwinds Marina** in Annapolis and president/CEO of **Freedom Boat Club of Maryland & DC**, was chosen as one of "40 Under 40" top young leaders in the US by the editors of **Boating Industry** magazine.

In the four years since she took the helm at Fairwinds Marina, Goldberg has made major waves. Joanna is credited with transforming a neglected marina into one of the best small boat marinas on the Chesapeake Bay and the pride of Cape St Claire. She brought the store into the 21st century by converting the inventory and all record keeping from paper to electronic, while on the docks, upgraded and added finger piers and boat lifts, fuel and pump-out stations, plus a closed-loop recycled water power wash station. She also renovated customer facilities, added wi-fi and a family picnic area, plus installed a 29-camera security system.

Fairwinds Marina is a 146-slip, 5 acre marina on the Magothy River, offering lift slips and land storage, a full service repair shop, yard and marine store, along with new and used boats.

Freedom Boat Club of Maryland & DC is located in Annapolis at Fairwinds Marina and Horn Point Harbor Marina; in Baltimore at Harbor East Marina & Baltimore Boating Center, and most recently, in Washington DC at The Yards Marina near the Nationals Park.

**Baltimore Boating Center** in Middle River is always improving. They just added a new Travel Lift and have recently dredged the bulkhead slips. Jim & Brenda are stewards of the bay, and hosted a event to install a water run-off collection pond on the property along with the Gunpowder Conservatory Group. Look for photos of the project in the next issue.

### WATERFRONT BUILDING FOR LEASE at Full Service marina



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# Ramp it up right

By Montana Grant

**B**oat ramp courtesy is often less than it needs to be. There is nothing worse than waiting, and waiting, and waiting for a rookie to launch, or load their boats. Once the craft is launched, the BS and added tasks become a nuisance for waiting boaters. The boat ramp belongs to everyone, so do what you need to do, and move aside. Your boating time is no more, or no less important, than everyone else's.

On one occasion, I was trying to launch my boat, while waiting for a boatload of selfish drunks. They were more concerned about loading more beer than safely launching their boat. After the boat was in the water and floating, the truck moved forward with the strap still attached. The boat was dragged up onto the ramp before someone hit the brakes.

On another occasion, a lone fisherman launched his boat and got out of his truck to disconnect his craft. He forgot to put on the brakes and his entire rig was launched. The truck and trailer were completely submerged with the lights still on! In New England, they call these folks "Googans". In other areas, they have earned many colorful and special names.

Have your boat loaded, rigged, and ready before you back it down the ramp.

The straps are off, the gear is loaded, and everyone is helping, or staying out of the way. Keep your rig to the side until it is time to launch. Understand what you need to do and efficiently do it! Once your boat is launched, get out of the way so others can access the ramp. This should be a 5-minute task. If it takes you longer, then you need to ask for advice, and practice your skills. When it is "launch time", launch!

If the slip is empty, always give others space. Don't hog the ramp because you do not know how to back up your boat trailer. Practice backing up on an open parking lot ahead of time. Place a couple cones up and back away. Know what you are doing before you do it.

It is ok to ask for help and instructions. Other boaters are more than willing to help you become a better waterman. If you are already competent, enjoy teaching others the right way to launch and load a boat. We learn from mistakes. It is ok to lend assistance when you see a need.

Never touch someone else's boat. Keep your distance and avoid any contact with other boats. If you see a need, ask permission before touching and helping. Have boat bumpers available to prevent any bumping.



Know your ramp. I once watched a boater trying to load his massive boat using a shallow ramp. The tide was low and the boat was huge. The Captain was using his twin engines to push the oversized boat onto the trailer. The winch was smoking and straining trying to drag the "Titanic" onto his trailer. It took forever

to load a boat that was meant for a deeper water ramp and a higher tide. In the meantime several smaller boats circled while waiting their turn to load.

Trolling motors are helpful to launch and load. Using these auxiliary motors can serve as tugs to push or pull your boat where it needs to be. These are especially helpful when the wind is a problem.

Boating is about safety and recreation. No one wants to get yelled at or feel stupid at the boat ramp. Practice makes perfect. Mistakes are

expensive but preventable. Do your business and go!  
Launch, load, and leave!

**Montana Grant**

For more Montana Grant, visit his website at [www.montanagrantsfishing.com](http://www.montanagrantsfishing.com).



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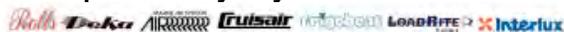
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# Local Knowledge

by Dick Greenwood

I was sitting in the airport in Atlanta—the most difficult to navigate airport I've ever been in and a place I always dread—and chatting with this woman sitting next to me. I have to confess that when I'm as bored as I typically am in airports, I'll chat with the newspaper rack. But she wasn't a newspaper rack and we were having a nice conversation. I was telling her about the daughter I was on my way to visit, she was telling me about the son she had just finished visiting; you've probably had the same comfortable, rather superficial conversation in the same uncomfortable, rather superficial chair.

At any rate we were having this pleasant, time killing conversation, and in front of us, spread out on the floor, were three generations of some typical mid-American family. There was a grandmother—probably in her middle 50s—a mother—probably in her middle to late 30s—a late teenager—her way of interacting with the others and her resemblance to the two older women suggested she was the sister of the mother and youngest daughter of the grandmother—and three little kids, ranging from about 6 months to somewhere around 4 years old.

The teenaged sister was in sweat pants and a sweat shirt and seemed to be a dutiful aunt, helping her sister by keeping the infant amused. In the process, she had lain on her back and was holding the infant up firmly grasped in her hands, her elbow-locked arms straight, and was moving the baby so that the giggling child was turning in slow, 45-degree arcs, back and forth directly above her. As the baby moved back and forth above her, the aunt would coo to her and delight in her laughter.

Then, as if she hadn't seen what was going on and had just suddenly noticed, the mother blurted out to her sister, "You need to let her down, or you're going to regret it." Something in her tone told the teen not to quibble; she quickly shot to a sitting position, still holding the child at arm's length. Precisely at that moment, the toddler's eyes glazed over and a generous stream of milky-white vomit flowed from her tiny mouth and down the front of her terry cloth outfit. As if by magic, a wad of tissues materialized in the hand of the mother, and the effluvium was wiped away. No harm was done. The young aunt, still holding the infant at arm's length didn't have time to do anything; she just looked stunned and rather relieved that a major mess—imagine three hours on an airliner with vomit-soaked clothing—had been averted.

Without thinking, I turned to the woman with whom I had been chatting and said, "Ah, local knowledge." The woman looked at me with a quizzical expression. "What do you mean?" she asked. Surprised, myself, by what I had said without thinking, I explained to the woman that "local knowledge" is a term that boaters frequently use when they see someone successfully doing something that defies the logic of the charts or the advice of more experienced boaters. Local knowledge is the thing that allows working boats to cut the corner at Kent Narrows or at the exit from Swan Creek. Local knowledge is the force that's working when people enter Fairlee Creek with their hand on the throttle, ready to goose it a bit if the current gets too squirrely. (Hmmm... Interesting intersection of animal metaphors there...)

Being an inquisitive sort, I can't help wondering where local knowledge begins and ends. It seems to me that disaster has to reside milliseconds before local knowledge is gained and milliseconds after it's lost. I can envision 50 Powhatan canoes piled up—on their way home from a run for a burger and fries at The Jetty, no doubt—on the shoal just short of making their turn to go up the Chester River. They'd all be milling about in 10 inches of water, scratching their heads, looking at each other; and the Indian in the lead canoe would be shouting, "Myopic Eagle told me we could cut this corner! He did, he really did!"

And another Powhatan would say, "No, that is not right. Before we take this course, we must give ceremony to Great Spirit, asking his guidance."

And the rest of the tribe would nod and mumble in agreement, remembering the old rule, "Red man observe rite before return."

Then, pulling their canoes behind them, they would wade to deeper water, marking the spot in their mind, saving the experience to pass along to their

children and their children's children. So local knowledge is born. But, of course, sand and silt shift, so local knowledge is a temporary phenomenon. What you know today about the Chesapeake—or any body of water for that matter—may not be true tomorrow.

A couple of years ago I wrote a piece about Rock Hall and mentioned that Rock Hall Harbor was a tricky place to navigate. Well, at least one local businessman took exception to this and suggested that I investigate further. He was right. I've been into the harbor many times now and find that it's a great place to go. You just have to be careful and pay attention. Sometimes local knowledge is just that: being careful and paying attention.

Recently, I cruised with a friend from Swan Creek up to Fairlee Creek for a cold one and got another lesson in the application of local knowledge. As we came out of Swan Creek, as is the general practice, we headed south, intent on observing the Green 3 buoy that sits to the south and is used as a reference. From there we planned to turn and proceed north. The run around



*Even a site as tranquil as this one at Fairlee Creek appears to be rife with danger to a boater who's unfamiliar with its dangers.*

the Green 3 adds a few extra miles to the trip but ensures that you won't run aground on the shoal that has built up south of Swan Point.

As we got about half way to the Green 3, we saw a Silverton that measured about 40 feet in length begin to cut across the area that shows as shoal on the charts. My friend watched the Silverton speeding across, thought about it for a minute or two, and then

announced that he was going to follow the larger boat. His logic was sound: if we stayed behind the Silverton, we'd be safe and would save ourselves a half hour or so, not to mention the gas that wouldn't get burned.

We made it across safely; sorry, but if you were expecting to read that we went aground and ended up being towed, I have to disappoint you. But that's not the point. The point is that the guy (or gal) running the Silverton either had local knowledge or was that marvelous combination of nuts and lucky. What is interesting to me is that local boaters have told me not to worry about crossing that shoal. I listened. I believed them. But I never put their advice into my chart plotter. I continued to honor the Green 3 and to take the longer way around.

I'm not sure what the reasoning was. Maybe it was cowardice, or caution, or stupidity. It could have been any one or a combination of those; but if I hadn't done it with my friend—risking his boat and reputation—I probably never would have done it. What I'm asking myself now is whether I'll take the shortcut the next time. That's a question I can't answer. I know that the next time I'm sitting in my slip and entering the waypoints into my GPS, plotting a course to North East, I will still set up the course to go around the shoal.

And maybe that points to the real nature of local knowledge. Maybe local knowledge is only part experience. Maybe it's also a large part faith that that experience wasn't just luck; but that it is repeatable, and luck that is repeatable is good fortune and useful knowledge. The guy in the Silverton certainly knew something I didn't. A lot of people certainly have an understanding that I don't.

But what about the 50 Powhatans? The interesting thing is that none of them, not Silverton man, not Art, not the Powhatan paddlers, has ever written down all of their local knowledge. Sure, cruising guides give some of that information, but the watermen in working boats that I've seen cutting corners at Kent Narrows don't seem to be cruising guide types. Do they document their local knowledge? I'd love to hear from you—any of you who feel you have local knowledge—on this subject. I'm not advocating that we assemble all of that particularized knowledge into a book—the tides, currents, and winds are too perfidious to encourage that—but it would be interesting to learn where this knowledge base begins and where it gets tested. I'd like to know, and the 50 guys in the canoes who are sitting behind me in four inches of water, coated with milky-white baby vomit would certainly like to know.



## Singles On Sailboats

The SOS club (Singles On Sailboats) recently went on a Memorial Weekend cruise from Baltimore/Annapolis area to Solomon's Island with a stop/overnight on the Little Choptank river. We put together a circle raft of about twenty sailboats on the Little Choptank. The cruise was good with wind, sun, cool, and a little rain; lots of good sailing & scenery. Find out more by visiting [www.singlesonsailboats.org](http://www.singlesonsailboats.org).



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## Ask a Marine Technician

By Kevin Ladenheim  
Mallard Marine Services

**Tip of the Month:** When there are shorepower or AC panel issues, the first question is always, is there power? A great way to answer that question is a non-contact 120V voltage tester. First, always make sure the tester is working on a known live outlet. You can then easily test if outlets are live and if a shore power cord is live. These units can be so sensitive that you can tell that the hot conductor is on the left edge of a flat cable vs the right. I recommend the *Fluke 1AC-A1-II* in Figure 1.

**Q.** The water pressure pump for my fresh water is running all the time. What's going on?

**A.** The good thing is the pump works. It's likely one of two problems. The pressure switch on the pump is bad (a pump that never runs is also a symptom) or you have a leak on the pressurized side of the system.

A leak can be anywhere on your hot or cold side and it can be really small. Let the pump pressurize the system, turn it off and then don't use any fixtures for a day. You should still have pressure when you try a faucet the next day. If you don't have any, hopefully there is unusual water somewhere you can find it. A really small leak may be difficult to find.

Pressure switches often have leads you can pull or cut to bypass the switch. This will tell you if the pump is good. Be sure not to make sparks on gasoline boats. Pressure switch assemblies are often available as parts for around 35% of the price of a new pump.

**Q.** How do I work with *King Starboard*?

**A.** *King Starboard* really does work well with all woodworking hand tools and power saws. I have never tried to power sand it, which might be an issue because of heat. It cuts readily with handsaws and the edges finish beautifully with a block plane. If you sand edges up to around 300 grit, your edges will look like they came from a mold. Regular *Starboard* has a matte finish, there is also an anti-skid version with a more aggressive texture. If you screw *Starboard* to something else, sealants work well in between but the only adhesives that work *Starboard* to *Starboard* are expensive and not strongly recommended by the manufacturer.

Figure 2 shows a set of swim ladder treads made from *Starboard*.

**Q.** I'd like to install some small eye straps on my deck with stainless sheet metal screws. What's the best way?

**A.** The best way is drill an oversized hole, dig out any core for a good bit past the hole walls and fill it all with thickened epoxy. Once the epoxy has set, drill the pilot hole for your hardware and install. Your screw will only be in epoxy and the core will be protected from water intrusion. *West System Six10* epoxy makes this easier since you can dispense just what you need using a disposable mixing tip and then save the tube for later. No mixing, measuring, weighing or fillers needed.

The worst thing you can do is break out the impact gun and just screw the hardware in and forget about it. Two screw holes can lead to a ton of water damage over time. A middle of the road approach is to drill two pilot holes and lightly chamfer the hole entrances with a countersink. The chamfer will help reduce gelcoat chipping and cracking as the screws are driven in and when filled with sealant it creates a little gasket under the hardware. You can also coat the fasteners with sealant. I suggest avoiding silicones to prevent future painting problems. Take a look at a polysulfide like *BoatLIFE Life Calk* for this application. Also buy Life Calk Cleaner and Sealer to prepare your surface and to clean your tools.



Figure 1 - Fluke 1AC-A1-II

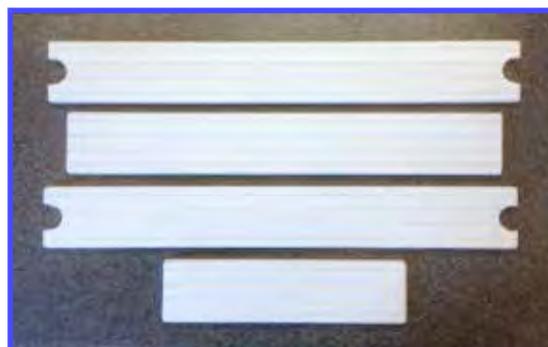


Figure 2 - *Starboard* swim ladder tread set

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It was a beautiful, sunny morning this year as people lined up early to enter Conrad's Ruth Villa on June 4th for the sixth installment of Rockin' on the River. The event is organized each year by Chairman, Don Crockett with help from Back River Restoration and Starleigh entertainment to bring the community together on land and water. The 15.5 acres of lush green grass was covered by people, chairs and blankets to enjoy the bands, Rising Tide, Kanye Twitty, Awaken, Strait Shooter and Marshall Law without incident again this year. The water of Frog Mortar Creek surrounding the property was also packed with boats rafting off one another, paddle boarders, kayaks and people cooling off on floats, listening to the music and enjoying the hot rays of the sun.

This event, the biggest in Southeastern Baltimore County with 3,000 attendees, not only brings people of all ages out to enjoy the breathtaking views and outstanding music, it also turns the meager \$10 admission price back to the community for organizations such as the Back River Restoration Committee (BRRC), literacy programs, scholarships, foster

children, little league baseball and so many more worthy local causes.

This year the BRRC will use the funds they receive from the event towards the purchase of a mini excavator to use to pull larger debris like engine blocks, large trees, and especially abandoned boats from Back River and the surrounding area. With the passing of The Abandoned Boat HB1253, introduced by Delegate Bob Long and testimony given by BRRC President, Sam Weaver and VP Mike Baumgartner, something can finally be done about the numerous abandoned boats that clutter our waterways not only creating an eyesore but also safety and environmental issues.

Everyone agrees that it is well worth the thousands of man hours put into putting this event together each year to see the good it brings to the community. While the crowds of people are enjoying the music, they can take heart that they are also playing a part in helping to clean up and protect the future of waterways, including Back River and the Chesapeake Bay.

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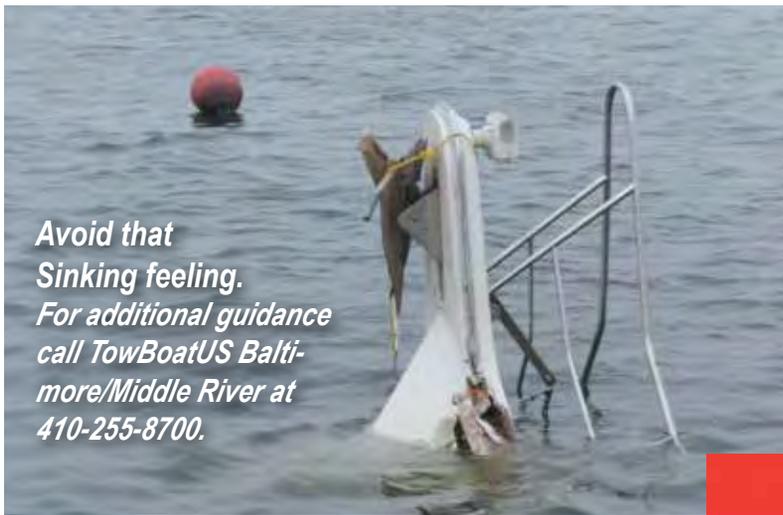
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# THAT SINKING FEELING

## Salvage Tips by the Professionals at TowBoatU.S.

When the unthinkable happens, and your boat sinks, it can be a devastating and confusing experience. Understanding the complexities of your hull insurance, and the basics of sunken boat recovery and salvage, before the situation arises will help to ease your anxiety if you ever find yourself in the midst of an emergency.



*Avoid that Sinking feeling. For additional guidance call TowBoatUS Baltimore/Middle River at 410-255-8700.*

Plummer. "As a professional, with hundreds of different salvage scenarios behind us, we know the safest, most practical options to save a sinking vessel or raise a sunken boat."

Salvage costs can be based on the boat's length and factors such as your boat's location at a pier or in open water, water depth, season, weather, if the boat's hull is intact or severe

breaches exist, and the type of equipment and crew needed to effectively raise the vessel. TowBoatUS has specialized equipment and crew for every situation. Salvage operation outcomes are based on "No cure, No pay" outcomes. Which means TowBoatUS has confidence in our procedures to guarantee that the boat will be rigged, raised, and delivered to your chosen service providers location as promised in the verbal or written salvage contract, or you pay nothing.

So do your homework now so you can avoid that sinking feeling later. For more information and guidance call TowBoatUS Baltimore/Middle River at 410-255-8700.

Above all, according to Captain Dale Plummer owner of TowBoatUS Annapolis, Baltimore, Middle River, "have hull insurance that covers salvage and know before the emergency happens what your insurance provider can offer." Ask hypothetical questions like: Is an insurance claims person available 24/7? Boats sink at night and on weekends, too. Your baby shouldn't sit on the bottom of the river until Monday morning when your insurance guy gets back to the office. Also: If my boat sinks, how do you help me in my time of need? Your marine insurance provider should offer to contact TowBoatUS direct. If they don't offer to help guide you, then maybe you don't have the right marine insurer.

Insurance companies vary as do types of insurance. Captain Plummer explains, "If your vessel is totaled, would your insurance payout equal the insured value before or after the bills for recovery, storage, etc. are paid?" After all, you love your boat and you should be able to get a new one when the old one is gone. Ask the questions before it is too late to update your coverage.

Once your emergency is reported to your insurance company, TowBoatUS staff will talk you through the process, and perform negotiations for salvage services with your insurance company on your behalf. "As a boat owner and as a salvor, I want to ease the stress on the owner." explains TowBoatUS'

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## Raymond N. "Butch" Porter

On June 5, 2017, Raymond N. "Butch" Porter passed away. Raymond operated Porters Seneca Marina along with his son for years. He was the beloved husband of Sheila, devoted father of Raymond J. Porter and wife Coleen, Kimberly Hubbard and husband Chris. He was a strong advocate for the Marine Trades Association of Baltimore County, and will be missed by so many in the boating community. Contributions in Raymond's name can be made to the Michael J. Fox Foundation

If you would like to share your stories and photos with us, and contribute to our regular columns like 'Boat Dog' or Classic Corner, have scenic or historical photos of the Bay Area, a review of our advertizers' products or services, or anything you think will be of interest to our readers, please contact Dave Bielecki and see it in the pages of

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## Sunday on the Chesapeake Bay *by Scott Kelsey*

*One last wave  
 One last smile  
 One last beverage,  
 Before the last mile*

*One last sunset  
 One last wave  
 One last thank you,  
 Before we leave the Bay*

*One last sail  
 One last ride  
 One last hello,  
 Before we say Goodbye.*

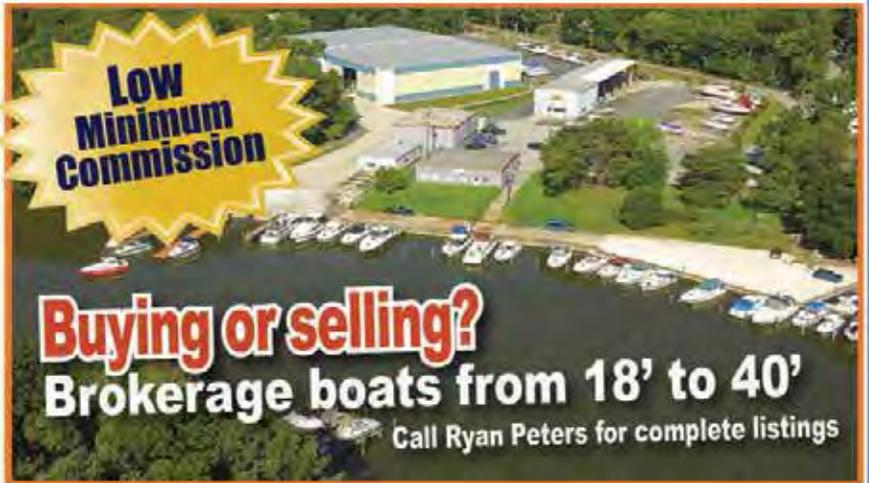
*One last time  
 To put the boat in the slip  
 One last minute and we start a new week  
 One last breath to take  
 Sunday's over quick  
 I wish it was yesterday,  
 I might call in sick.*



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# On the Waterfront

with George Waters

photo by Donna Bedell

## Computers invent new wacky paint colors

I wish I had a name as cool as paint. I would love to introduce myself to people as Kilim Beige. Imagine the impact in a waiting room full of actors at an audition when the casting director calls out “Tricorn Black?” and you purr “Why, yes.” A lot of thought goes into naming paint; more thought, I expect, than goes into most arms deals. I mean, “Adventure Orange” and “Silken Peacock” didn’t just think themselves up.

We are living in a time when people are trying to technologize things that never were before and do not need to be. This is both unnecessary and entertaining. Like with paint. I read about this scientist who used a neural network, computers rigged to work together to learn like a brain, to come up with new paint colors. This solved one problem which did not exist—effortlessly naming paint—and one which did—me needing a laugh.

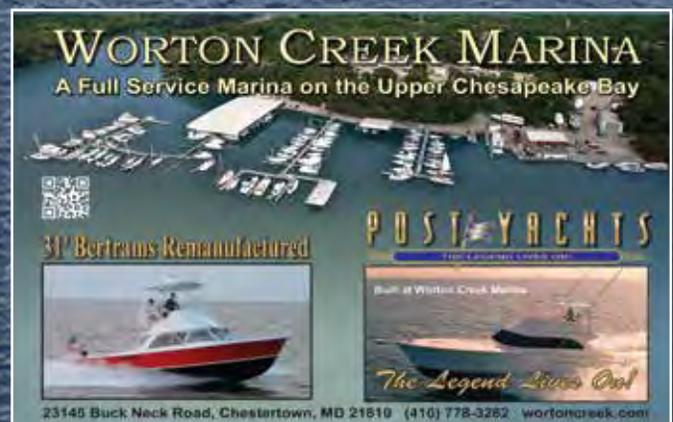
Outputs from neural networks are, understandably, only as good as their “training” parameters. Early results included hues like “Black Hand” (sea foam green) and “Gray Pubic,” the shade of a perfect springtime sky. With some tweaks, there came “Burf Pink” and “Horble Gray.” The shades were pink and gray, at least, but the names would not scream “Buy me!” to a consumer.

When the parameters were set to their highest refinement, the neural network came up with a brownish shade it called “Bunflow.” Then there was “Caring Tan,” and a pale violet it named “Bank Butt.” In its wisdom, it created a battleship gray it called “Flower.” And some gems like “Stoner Blue” and “Stanky Bean.” More of my favorites included “Burble Simp” and the evocative “Turdly.” A deep forest green was named “Catbabel.” But the best one of all, and even funnier to you British readers, was “Snowbonk.”

In the 1990s, the computer “Deep Blue” beat the world chess champion by anticipating his next moves. It is time for us to return the favor. We humans came up with the actual paint color “Warming Peach,” after all. Not to mention “Jargon Jade.” So come at us, digital overlord-wannabes. You can weld the joints of a car just fine, but when it comes to the creative arts, you blow. You should kind of be embarrassed. If you had a face, right about now I’d say it would be a shade of...what was it you came up with? Oh yes. “Clardic Fug.”



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## Classic Corner

### St. Michaels Boat Festival

Scenes from the June 2017 Antique & Classic Boat Festival in St. Michaels, Md.

*photos by George Hazzard*



# "A Yacht of Fun"

By L. Alan Keene

Well, after years of walking the docks, the four-way tie has finally been broken. No longer do "Aloan Again", "Afrayed Knot", "Freudian Sloop" and "Justavacation" share equal time as my favorite clever/corny boat name. In fact, they're not even a close second. My new favorite?....."Sailbad the Sinner".

While I rarely laugh out loud when no one's around (hmmm, wonder what the captain of "Freudian Sloop" would say about that?), when I saw this one I couldn't help myself. In the world of nautical double-entendres, this one takes the wake (sorry).

While these witty little ditties are just that, little ditties, most of them usually reveal a simple truth about the boat, it's captain, or its crew. For example, "Dock Holiday" and "Reel Time" are pretty straight forward. What you read is what you get. With "Goody Two Screws" you learn something about the boat (I hope) and Blue Bayou (Blew By You) reveals something about the captain's ego, intended or knot (oops!). But with "Sailbad the Sinner" I'm not quite sure.

I know one thing.....if I were a lawyer I'd have trouble choosing between "Knot Pro Bono", "Motion Granted", or just plain "Sue". And wouldn't it be great to be a college instructor so you could use "Prof Asea" on your stern or, if you shared a PHD with your first mate, could have "Paradocs" emblazoned down your flank. And speaking of sterns and flanks, what about "Up Your Aft", "Breakin' Wind" or "Bow Movement".....proctologists perhaps?

As a stock broker you could choose "Mutual Fun" or maybe even "Blew Chips", if you had a bad run of luck. And how could a sales associate not give "SalesmanShip" at least a passing thought? A scientist or lab technician who loves the thrill of hooking a 20 pounder might name his boat "Nuclear Fishin'", while his buddy, who knows it weighed only 17 pounds, might suggest a name change to "Fish Tales".

But, while most boat names divulge superficial information about us, like "Ancient Mariner" discloses an advanced age or "Czech Mate" a native land, some names share more personal little tid-bits.....some of "Victoria's Secrets".



Take "Viaqua" for instance....only if you have to, of course (if it lasts longer than 4 hours, better "Sea Doc" right away!) Or how about "Reely Nauti" or "Berth Control". I'm not so sure I want to know. Have you seen the ones that compare their boat to a motel or hotel? My two top choices are "The Merri Yacht" and "Hotel Deep 6". Or how about the ones that focus on the results of imbibing those myriad of libations that we hold so dear...like "Sir Osis of the River" and "Sotally Tober" and, lest we forget the longtime favorites, "Aquaholic" and "Happy Hours".

Of all the themes that seem to capture a boater's imagination, however, the high cost of boating ranks right up there just behind "Sex Ta Sea". And since most of the sexual innuendo (and not so innuendo) that adorn the aft end of boats these days is more accept-

able at the dock on a Saturday evening than in a family magazine on a school night, I'll leave the "Miss Conduct" up to your imagination.

Boater's love to complain about the expense of buying and maintaining their boats through names like "Docked Wages", "Direct Deposit", "Debticated", "Knot Paid IV", "Moby Debt", "Fuelish Pleasure", "Play Dough", "Sum Fun", my former favorite "Aloan Again", and on and on and on. But, after all the complaining, they all seem to have "No Regret\$".

Which brings us back to my new favorite, "Sailbad the Sinner". After much "SEAliberation", I've come to the "ConCLEWision" that any captain whose boat sports this moniker can't take himself too "SEAriously". Like the captains of "Fastidiots", "Going Sea nile", "Knotaclew", "Oops", "Neversink II" and all the other refreshingly self-deprecating names that make us smile, the captain of "Sailbad the Sinner" is a "Happy Semen" who loves to have fun.

So this SEASON when you spot a particularly clever or funny name out there on the Bay, don't be a "Keel Joy"....."Seas The Day". Show your "AppreSEAtion" with a "Happy Wave". If you do, it's a "Shore Thing" that we'll all have "A Reel Good Time"!

"Sea Yawl".

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# Shore Cords are Dangerous

by Doug and Brenda Dawson

Boats, both power and sail, that are wired for 110V, need Shore Cords to plug into marine power at the dock. Some use one while others need two cords.

How do you safely run the shore cord from the power post/pedestal on the dock, to the power inlet fitting on your boat to supply power without causing harm to you, your guests, your boat or others?

## Unapproved Cords

Shore cords are specifically designed for marine use where water and hydro are in such close proximity. Unapproved cords should not be used—in fact in most marinas, they are not allowed. Domestic extension cords, for example, are not approved for marine use and could actually be dangerous.

Inspect Shore Cords for any damage to the cable and replace if necessary to avoid any stray electrical current in the water. Boaters or pets falling in or swimming in a harbor where there is stray current will most likely die of electric shock drowning. It is invisible and deadly. Research “Electric Shock Drowning” for more information.

## Shore cords on the dock surface are dangerous.

The power pedestals/posts in some marinas are positioned in the center of the slip so that two boats can access power without the need for cords to be strung across the fingers.

If, for some reason, you have to run your cord across a finger, be sure that it will not be damaged and that no one will trip on it or step on it. You can string it under the finger tying it up so that it won't lay in the water, or jam it between the boards on the finger if there is space.

## Shore cords in the finger on a floating dock are dangerous.

The cord should be below the surface of the dock, without being in the water, so that no one can step on it; but, do not lay the shore cord in the hinge between the finger and the dock. Floating docks move up and down and the fingers move from side to side in a wind separate to the main, pinching the Shore Cord and eventually breaking the cable coating then shorting out on the framing. In many cases, the hinges are steel and the dock framing is steel. When the Shore Cord wears, the wire is exposed to the dock, and the whole dock becomes live, leaking electrical current into the water. This is extremely dangerous and a recipe for disaster. Stray electrical current is invisible, silent and deadly.

Like everything else marine, you have to know how to use, store and care for your cords.

## Coil Properly

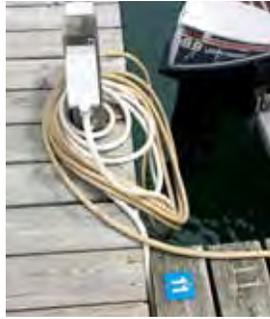
Extra cord, if not coiled properly, can be hazardous to boaters walking on the docks. So, be sure to loop it loosely around the power post.

When travelling, some boaters prefer to coil up their shore cord each time and place it in the locker. Some like to leave it laying down the side of the boat for short trips and others prefer to tie it to their finger dock for the season.

## Reduce Clutter

To reduce dock clutter for a long stay, I like to tie my shore cord under the dock out of sight, above the water or between the boards on the finger dock (not in the hinge). The major safety benefit is that it's not on the dock surface lurking for someone to step on it and having it roll out from under their foot or shoe.

We've seen people when docking, jump off their boat and step onto a



shore cord. The shore cord rolls out from under their foot resulting in a serious fall. A shore cord on the surface is like stepping on a roller skate or a hand full of marbles—it rolls out from underneath you.

Larger yachts that run with two shore cords use various methods to reduce the clutter. Some boaters will join the two cables with intervals of either electrical tape or duct tape or nylon zip ties/wire wraps. I have even seen a long black flexible nylon tube holding the 2 together that runs the full 50'.

## Hidden shore cords are neater and less dangerous.

Semi-permanentize. For most of the summer, many boaters just take short jaunts of a few hours here and a few hours there away from the home marina; and for this period, there is no need to take your shore cord. Most finger docks are high enough above the water and with enough framework that you can suspend your shore cord under the finger dock from a series of short pieces of light line. You can use light poly or light nylon, metal “S” hooks, bent coat hangers, shrink wrap cord, bungee cords, long wire ties—whatever works for you. Be sure the cord does not hang in the water. The only time it really needs to be removed is when you're going on a long trip or for the winter. It's neater and safer to secure it off the dock surface.

Loop the extra cord around the outlet post. If you find your cord is being disconnected by kids or other boaters, use a bungee cord or two to hold it into the outlet and discourage them. It gives the message that it is to stay plugged in.

## Support Your Cord

At the boat end, the weight of the cable should be supported and not hanging totally on the fitting. You can loop the cord through one of the rails, so the cable's weight is supported by the rail or use a light piece of line to support the weight.

## Plugging In

Knowing which end of the Shore Cord to plug in first is most important. When arriving at the dock, plug in the boat end first, then the dock end. If you do it the other way around, you, could be electrocuted if you accidentally drop the live Shore Cord in the water or grab the end of the cord with wet hands.

You wouldn't connect the dock end of your water hose first and turn it on before connecting to the boat.

Similarly, you shouldn't connect the dock end of the power cord first, then handle and connect a live wire to your boat.

## Unplugging

Knowing which end to unplug first is also most important. Think of your shore cord as a water hose. The only way to turn off the water flow is at the dock end first. You wouldn't disconnect the water hose from the boat first, because the water would continue to flow.

Similarly, you shouldn't disconnect the boat end of the Shore Cord first, because it is still alive and could potentially kill someone if it landed in a puddle or fell in the harbor.

Always unplug the shore end of the Shore Cord first, turning off the power; then the boat end. Do not unplug in the reverse order. You don't want a live Shore Cord on the dock. Never leave a live shore cord on the dock.

Always unplug the boat end last when leaving the dock. – boat out last when leaving. Use approved Shore Cords, and handle them with care to avoid all the dangers caused by misuse and wear.

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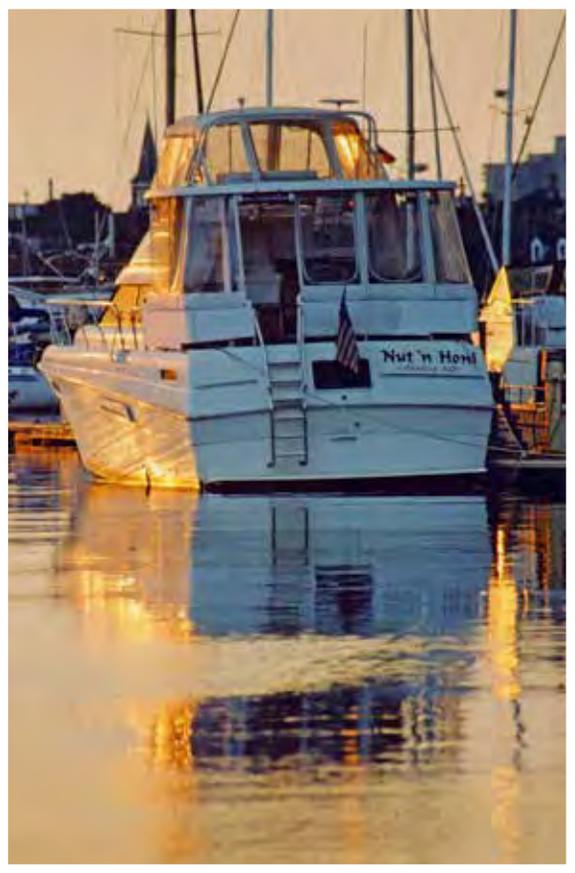
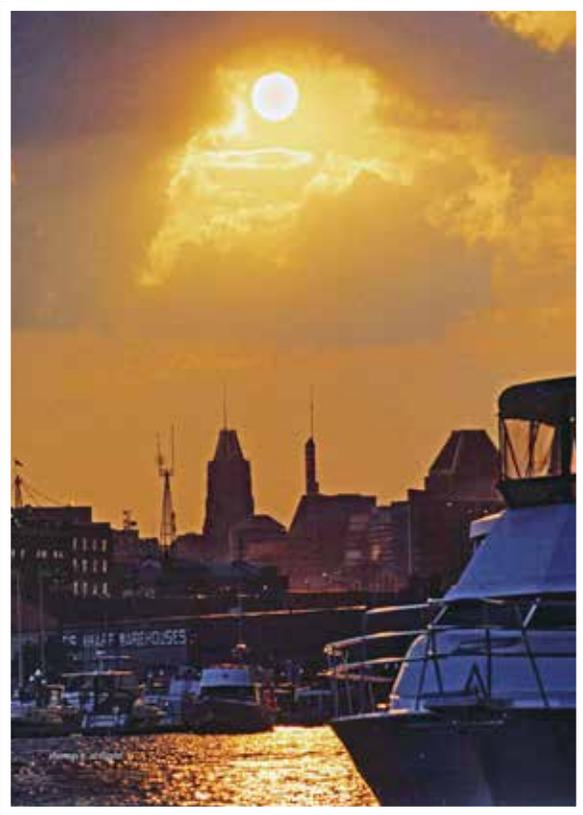
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# Thomas Scilipoti Photography



**Tom Scilipoti** has been taking photos of the Inner Harbor for a long time, in fact way before when it was just used as a commercial dock. Here are some of his favorites, along with a picture from his yacht club.



*Crescent Yacht Club 2017  
Commodore Harry Chandler and his first mate Judy.*

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## Fairlee Creek

When I plan a long-distance paddle, my main considerations are how best to organize the numerous combinations of possible stopping points between the departure and destination such that no daily segment is either too short, or too long, yet when combined they maximize the efficiency of the overall route. For this outing I divided the route into two 15 mile legs. On day 1, we would depart Fairlee creek and paddle to Bayshore campground for an overnight. On day 2, we would continue to Little Creek landing. Swan Creek, Rock Hall, Bogles's Wharf, Kent Island Narrows, and Goodhands Creek then became potential bail points, should the weather change unexpectedly or an emergency arise. The division seemed to offer the most opportunities for devising efficient paddles in the sections that would follow.

I contacted Bayshore in March to reserve campsites for a May paddle. I had heard rumors about Bayshore and was concerned that some of our paddlers would not like the accommodations. Bayshore is a seasonal RV and trailer camp. "It is a very crowded small town," I was told by a kayaker who had camped there before. "RVs have prime property rights and tents are relegated to a wooded area behind them. The carry from the boat ramp is long, mosquitoes abound, and during the summer you will bake in the absence of any sea breezes." At least that's what I was told. It sounded horrible, but it was our only option for camping. Fortunately, you can't believe everything you are told. Bayshore changed ownership the year before our arrival and was completely restructured. Our visit turned out to be a pleasant one. But, I'm getting ahead of myself. More about Bayshore later.

This paddle had additional considerations; specifically, shuttles needed to be set up at three different positions along the route. An odd number of single day paddlers, i.e., day-trippers, would be joining us for the first leg of the trip. They needed space to leave vehicles at Bayshore and Tolchester, in addition to our drop off at Little Creek. Parking space at Bayshore is premium. The RV owners are very protective of their territory. The owner recommended that I have one of our paddlers stop by before the paddle and she would show them where to park so as not to anger other campers. Devising a shuttle plan was a bit more complex, but we it worked out. My take home from this experience was that on future paddles, only paired day-trippers would be accepted. Problem solved.

On the morning of our paddle, skies were clear except for a few contrails. Departing Fairlee Creek, we quickly came upon the fish traps below Shell Point. In the upper bay, traps are set several hundred yards offshore and present no problems for kayakers. They are easily bypassed. Later in the season we would encounter similar traps in the lower bay. These are set very close to shore and can present serious problems in hazardous paddle conditions. I'll address this in later installments.

While passing the upper bay traps, I photographed a brightly dressed kayaker. In the photo, he is silhouetted against a backdrop of seemingly endless blue water. A line along the horizon, formed by a fish trap, is the only visual cue suggesting where bay waters end and sky begins. It is one of my favorite photographs.

Between Fairlee Creek and Tolchester, a paddler pointed out a lake connected to the bay via a shallow inlet. Everyone wanted to explore this before moving on, so we paddled in for a closer look. I later learned this is Mendinhal Lake. In the autumn, it fills with migratory birds. The lake was barren now, so I made a mental note to return in the autumn to do photography.

Leaving Mendinhal Lake, we continued to south. Approaching Tolchester by water presents an entirely different picture than the one I had formed in my mind after studying marine charts. The homes are built close to the edge of tall bluffs that rim the bay. Many have steep stairways leading down to private docks. The docks themselves are mostly empty, because the boats that service them are harbored in Tolchester's Marina and elsewhere. Eventually, the steep cliffs give way to lower ground. The result is Tolchester Beach, where we stopped for a short lunch break. Tolchester Beach is private property, owned by Tolchester Marina. I was assured that no one would mind a group of kayakers stopping for a quick snack.

Tolchester's history is interesting. Suffice it to say that it is the only place on the Chesapeake Bay where, for fee, you could once tour the insides of a real North Atlantic whale. I'm not sure why anyone would want to do this, but the whale was once a major attraction in the amusement park located there. The park is gone, as are the steamships that once brought tourists to this Bayside resort town. The public boat ramp, once heavily trafficked, is now fragmented and fenced off from the public for their own protection.

Between Tolchester and Rock Hall, the shoreline is undevel-

oped. Occasionally one catches a glimpse of a home or two. Most are uninteresting. There is one, however, that stands out from the others because it is so over the top, literally. The overall structure consists of two very large stone-faced dwellings, with high angle roofs that look to be surfaced with green reflecting paint, or perhaps solar panels. It lies nestled in a wooded lot set back from the shoreline. The two individual structures are connected by a high, rooftop-to-rooftop cross-bridge. If I had to guess, I would say each end of this bridge has its very own elevator. The structure is modern, yet alien in this setting. By coincidence, one of our paddlers is an architect. I asked him for his take on the buildings. He thought it was might be an architect's home. "Really," I thought.

Nearing Swan Point, we began to encounter large patches of floating pollen. When my bow touched a pollen patch, it would suddenly vanish - like smoke. Amazing. I'd like to know more about the physics responsible for this disappearance. Then again, it's probably beyond my understanding. I began to grin then; realizing that a perverted version of an old W.C. Fields saying was repeating itself in my mind. I could hear him, "Pollen? Never touch the stuff. It's the left-overs from sloppy plant sex." Yes, my mind works in mysterious ways.

We passed Gratitude and stopped in at Rock Hall for a short break. Rock Hall's public beach was already populated with sun bathers working to darken their tans. More important to most of us, however, was finding that the beach has open porta-potties! Everyone was relieved.

Due to the riprap that encloses Rock Hall's beach, a thick band of pollen had accumulated there. I took some photos of our beached kayaks sitting in very yellow-looking water. Colorful. As we left Rock Hall, I noted that our kayaks had developed bathtub rings. "Yup," I thought. "Plant sex is very sloppy."

The ramp at Bayshore is not ideal. It is mostly broken concrete, with a few large rocks thrown beside it for effect. As mentioned previously, the campground was recently remodeled. In the process, the tent area was moved forward to a sparsely wooded area that overlooks the bay. This makes for spectacular sunset viewing and partly makes up for the distance between it and the landing ramp. To be fair, Bayshore was very helpful and understanding to our plight. They provided us with a golf cart to haul gear between the two locations. Except for a bachelorette party at the far end of the camping area, we had the entire place to ourselves.

Our day-paddlers left us. Six hardy souls remained to continue on what would become one of the most memorable segments of the Bay paddle; crossing the Chester River under a small craft advisory.

Late that afternoon we set up tents and fixed dinners. An amazingly large sun set over the western horizon. Around dusk, it began to shower. The rain passed, leaving in its wake a double rainbow. I thought, "Surely, these are all good signs." Jay tuned in to NOAA weather and we quickly realized we needed extra planning for the next day's paddle. A small craft advisory for the Kent Island area would go into effect at sunrise. This didn't come as a complete surprise. We had known from the onset of the paddle that a front would be moving into the area. But weather reports are probabilistic, right? They are subject to change and often do. We decided then that we needed to revise our float plan. It went something like this. We would wait until morning to decide whether we would head south in kayaks, or call for transport to the shuttle vehicles. If the decision was to continue, then we would stop two more times to reconsider our decision. Each paddler would have a full voice in the final decision. The second point would be at the cut north of Eastern Neck Island. Should we decide to abort the

paddle, we could still paddle through the cut to Bogle's Wharf and call for a pickup. If, on the other hand, everyone was comfortable with the conditions, we would continue to Wickes Point, where once again we would decide whether to commit to crossing the Chester River, or not. Having this plan in mind, we retired to our tents and attempted to get a good night's rest.

Camp broke early the next morning. Most of us went without breakfast, perhaps snacking on a Power bar or two, before heading to the launch. At the ramp, I measured a wind velocity of 7 mph with gusts to 10 mph. Not too bad. One foot plus waves were beginning to roll in from the south; slamming into the boat ramp as they did. This generated strong wave reflections that interacted with incoming waves to create chaotic conditions in the loading area. Loading and entering the kayaks in these conditions would be tricky. We took a vote and decided to give it a shot anyway.

The further we paddled from the shoreline, the less chaotic the waves became. Jay commented, "Just a typical day on the bay." By the time we reached the cut, everyone was beginning to relax. We decided to continue. Wickes Point came up quickly. No one was yet feeling uncomfortable, so we decided to commit to the 3-mile crossing. We soon found out that 3 miles is a long way to paddle with a 15-knot headwind blowing in your face.

About half way across, I felt the wind change it velocity. As it did, it also shifted direction. The seas were beginning to quarter. Even with skegs lowered, we were constantly having to correct direction with port-side sweep strokes. My left shoulder began to ache and I started experiencing upper back cramps. I told myself to relax and the symptoms did ease off enough to continue. Others told me afterwards they had experienced similar problems.

About one half mile from Kent Narrows, Peter shouted something that I did not understand, then he dropped out of sight. I followed and felt the bottom of my kayak drop out below me. We had crossed a ledge of sorts, perhaps created by some weird interaction between the river current and the wave activity. Kent Narrows channel was near now and would be a welcome relief. We all began to relax.

Prior to our departure, Jay had contacted the Chesapeake Exploration Center, Queen Anne's County visitor center, to ask for permission to land on their ramp. I was ready for a break. We pulled the kayaks on shore and broke out lunches. Soon, discussion turned to the question of whether we should continue. Everyone realized that if we chose to do so, we would be facing even stronger headwinds in the Eastern Bay. A quick poll showed little enthusiasm for continuing. The question then became how do we recover the shuttle vehicles?

While we were mulling over who to call, a gentleman came over and asked us if we thought it would be possible to circumnavigate Kent Island on a sit-on-top. Well, sir, you certainly addressed your question to the right group. Most of the paddlers have made the trip at least once; although not on a sit-on-top. We discussed the difficulties one might encounter in a circumnavigation attempt, when, out of nowhere, Chip asked the fellow if he would take us to our cars. To my amazement, this kind gentleman replied, "If you don't mind waiting 30 minutes, my wife and I would like to look over the trail behind the Center. Then, yes, we will." Sir, if you are reading this, Thank you. Your kindness is gratefully appreciated. Another problem solved.

Bob, Jay, and Gina returned later with our shuttle vehicles. We loaded the kayaks and departed for Fairlee Creek. On the way, Jay turned on the marine forecast. Gale force winds were entering the Eastern Bay. We had made the right call. The paddle to Little Creek could be done on another day.

# Live Aboard

by  
Don and Gail  
Elwell

## Of Fear and Plywood

Most of you who have followed this column or our weblog ([thefloatingempire.com](http://thefloatingempire.com)) know, Gail and I are makers. We're artists and tinkerers and designers and fiddlers and we love inventing and making stuff. Four years ago, we built the original barrel shanty, The Floating Empire, in our backyard in Westminster, MD and lived aboard her for over three years, making constant changes and experiments to the structure before selling her to a new owner and acquiring a used CAL 2-29 hull that we're turning into a solar electric cruiser. So I'm sitting on the dock covered in sweat in the middle of a Mad-Dogs-and-Englishmen noonday sun, merrily drilling away at the beams that will encompass our new, pergola-style wheelhouse, when one of our slipmates comes up and asks me: "Why bother?"

What?

"Why bother? There are three boats up there on the hard you could have for nearly nothing, and none of them need any work, really. I mean, they'll travel too, why do all this stuff?"

I have to admit, I was a little amazed. I mean, NOT doing all this stuff would never have occurred to me. There are a lot of reasons to do all the projects we do. First of all, we know the boats we live on inside and out, having either built or rebuilt the personally. We're fearless in chopping into fiberglass or replacing structural members, because we know the forces involved, we know what pieces have to be strong and what are merely cosmetic and how to deal with those. Second, of course, we get the boat we want, not just something which is close to the boat we want that's commercially offered. If I want a port right there, I'll put one in. If the counter is too low, I'll raise it. We build the space to accommodate us, not content to accept what some designer has created to please the average public. See? Both of those are real reasons, and they make sense.

They are also just so much fish bait.

The real reason we do this is that we love doing it, and the reason I don't have a commercially built vessel is that there's nothing special about owning a commercially built vessel. Everything we have is unique to us, from "Tesla's Revenge" to "The Floating Empire" to our odd little offset rig Puddleduck "Dharma Duck." Like my writing or Gail's artwork, it bears our

stamp, and we love describing the systems and processes and accidents and disasters and successes to folks, and the idea that, somewhere, somehow, someone else may benefit from our experiments. Like artwork, it's a kind of immortality, a way of making a mark on the world in a way that simply buying something does not.

Besides, it's fun. Don't be afraid. It's only fiberglass.

**Don and Gail Elwell, and first Cat Magellan  
Aboard the EV "Tesla's Revenge"**

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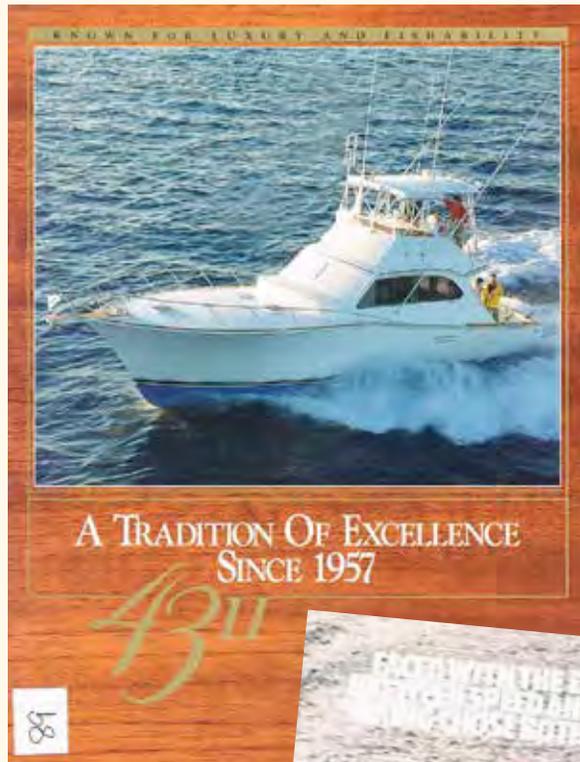
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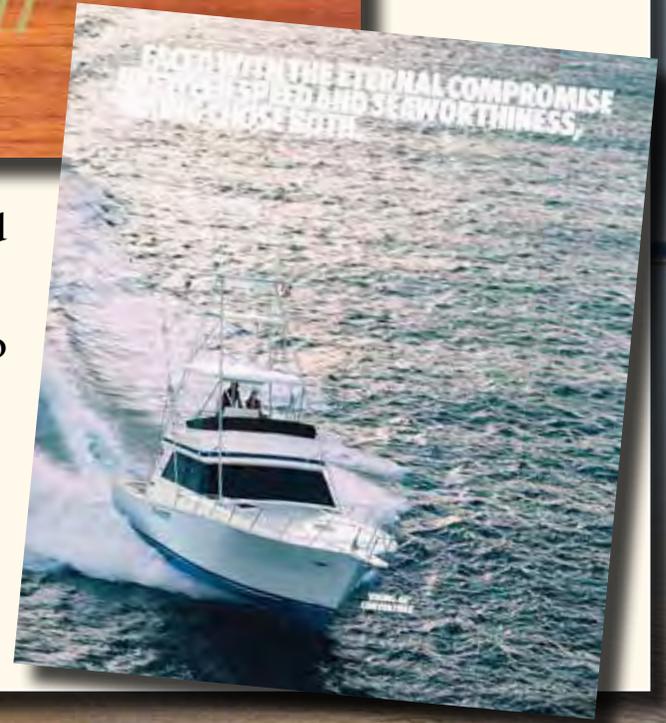
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# Photo Gallery



*Fog on the Floating Empire Don Ewell*



*View from Locust Point Angie Krapf*



*Sparrow Point Lighthouse Donna Bedell*

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