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Upper Bay Boating

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40 Days & 40 Nights

Since the last issue of Upper Bay Boating came out the wet weather continues to put a damper on your boating activities. I don't really know what to say, so I'll start with something I read the other day; This boating season hasn't been too bad, after all it's only rained twice; once for 25 days, and the other time for 35 days!



Headwaters of the Susquehanna

Recently we have endured flooding and massive debris fields from storms. The Conowingo Dam is the source of the silt and most of the debris. During normal times most of this crap is removed by the dam operator, and the balance that gets through remains along the Susquehanna in the towns and creeks downstream from the dam. This time, a lot of it headed down to Annapolis and they had to deal with clean up this time. I'm sure if there is a silver lining to all of this, the state politicians had a bird's eye view to see what the rest of us have to deal with. This week, Governor Hogan met with officials from surrounding states to ask for help to try to avoid this in the future. And earlier this year he started the conversation about what to do with all the sediment in front of the dam. Let's hope these discussions turn into real actions. I applaud his

involvement after years of indifference to the problem from our leaders.

Please get involved in helping out with the restoration on our waterways. Upper Bay Boating supports grass root organizations like the Back River Restoration Committee, and we help publicize activities from other like-minded groups. Why not contact your local river keeper or better yet local or state politician and ask how you can get involved. Just throwing money at the problem took decades to see any real improvements, so maybe it's time for another strategy. Go ahead and make those donations to your favorite fund, but also get directly involved. While out on the water, please do your part and pick up the debris and make sure you recycle some of those plastic bottles that floating around. For your favorite pastime to continue, it's up to you to help make it happen.

As I stated last month, fall is a great time to boat on the Upper Bay. I hope the massive storm's subsides and the water quality improves to make it more enjoyable. Before all of this happened, I read the water quality in the bay was at the best point in 30 some years. I'm praying we get sunshine for the Labor Day weekend, and that the balance of the season turns out well. We all need it for sure.

Happy & Safe Boating, Dave



Conowingo Dam

Inexpertly Researched Blue Crab Wine Pairing Suggestions

By *Wendy Gilbert*- Features Editor

Beer and crabs are like peanut butter and jelly. They are the perfect pair.

Crabs are usually running pretty good in September and it's the perfect time to pop open a cold one as you settle down to a table piled up with Old Bay-encrusted crustaceans.

I'm not too fussy about what kind of beer it is as long as it's not too dark. Crabs and a good lager work well for my household. Not that I'm not fond of a robust beer. It's just that eating crabs takes some time and you don't want to get too tipsy at the table.

Over the years, I've become more of wine drinker than a beer guzzler, so this summer I set out to find the perfect wine to go with steaming hot, delicious Chesapeake Bay Blue Crabs.

To save some cash on this endeavor, I dove into the boat wine at Weaver's Liquors – a favorite amongst those of us fortunate enough to live in the quintessential Upper Bay town – North East! I bought a mixed case of mostly white wine and conducted an informal, oft-interrupted tasting.

Here are my findings:

Chardonnay

This pairs nicely with the spiciness of Old Bay, but can be a bit overpowering. Look for a lightly oaked variety from California. If you are having crab cake sandwiches or crabs as part of seafood platter, it might prove more appealing. And it's downright pleasant



with a classic Eastern Shore plate of chicken salad and fried oysters.

I'm just sayin'...

This girl's been doing some research this summer!



Wendy Gilbert

Riesling

I usually shy away from Riesling, but not when there's some great seafood in my future. A dry, sweet Riesling is a wonderful compliment to a tray full of crabs at your favorite crab shack.

Rose

This pairing would probably work best for Jimmy Buffet and his merry band of parrot heads. I've also heard good reports from soft shell crab enthusiasts. Perhaps they are connected? By a song?

Pinot Grigio

In my humble opinion. Just about the best option out there, save one...

Sauvignon Blanc

After extensive research into the subject, it's the winner. I've sampled about three different varieties of Sauvignon Blanc this summer and all of them have stood up to not only crabs, but crab soup and my special crab dip. What more do you want?

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Debris, debris and More Debris

By Wendy Gilbert – Features Editor

Every boater, swimmer, paddler and erstwhile “summer person” I have talked to lately has something to say or a story to tell about the debris.

While, the worst of the situation is abating, trees and other large pieces of debris are keeping us all alert. Boaters have been moving slower and picking their way along in a painstaking manner for the last few weeks. It’s been about 7 years since we’ve seen this level of rain. According to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, summer rainstorms in our region have dumped records amounts of rain in the watershed producing historic flows at the Conowingo Dam. Over 300,000 cubic feet per second have been recorded!

Nearly 4 million tons of debris moved downriver over the course of several days last month. Sadly, 3 million tons of debris arrive here every year and the finger-pointing by politicians is getting a lot of press.

The numbers are staggering and cities from Havre de Grace to Annapolis are feeling the impact of huge amounts of debris that have rushed to their harbors and shores.

My little boating community is holding an impromptu beach clean-up as I write



Debris at the Perryville Yacht Club; photos by Vicky Cwiertnie.



PYY Marina photo by Cindy Davidson Reese.

this column. Just yesterday I saw a large crew of very fit young men working very hard at the dam.

The flotsam and jetsam is incredible.

Monica Lukanski replied to my Facebook post on Upper Chesapeake Recreational Boaters. She operates a 24-ft. Four Winns. In addition to large tree limbs, she saw tires and telephone poles near Turkey Point on the Northeast River and at least one tree longer than her boat! From Great Oak Landing north, the way was relatively clear. “I rode many times on Sunday on idle with my outdrive up to avoid damaging my boat,” wrote Lukanski.

Cindy Trostle, also an Upper Bay Recreational Boating group member, witnessed some folks tubing in the channel near Fishing Battery Island. They were tubing with children through the debris.

Cindy and I agree that this is very dangerous. The risk of injury from “hidden” debris seemed fairly obvious to us and sure, they’ve got a PFD on, but seriously folks...

Trees have always been a southern version of an iceberg. You never know how much is underneath. Nor what might have gotten tangled into it.

Trees and telephone poles aside, the vast amount of filthy plastic floating around is sickening. I’m really happy that there’s a swell of anti-plastic straw use gripping the nation. However, perhaps we could consider skipping the use of one plastic bottle a day too. Perhaps seeking out not just a paper straw, but paper as often as possible.

Marine life and our recreational future is impacted by more than just straws!

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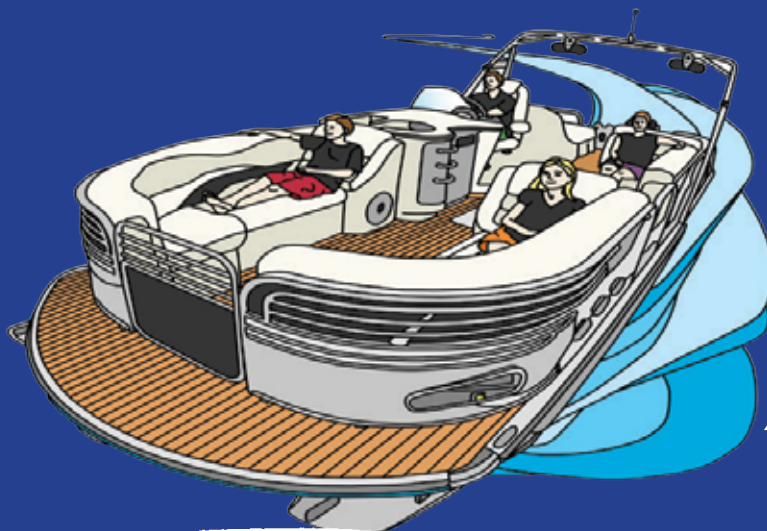
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Fall is for Surface Lures

By Tim Sherman

To a fisherman, there aren't many things more exciting than surface feeding fish. Well, maybe you can turn up the meter if that fish is taking down your surface lure. Bass and stripers are well known for their aggressive nature and propensity for punishing a topwater bait. While these two species are aggressive throughout the year, fall is a great time to cast surface baits to catch them. Let's discuss the best tactics for using these lures in fall.

The most popular selection of surface lures for stripers includes poppers, ploppers, and surface walkers. When it comes to tempting largemouth bass in fall, simply add a buzzbait to the striper lures. While these lures fall into the same class – topwater lures – they serve different purposes.

The walking lure represents a singular injured baitfish struggling on the surface. This makes it easy pickings. The splash of a popper imitates a school of

baitfish being flushed through the surface. The popper, itself, shows as the one poor soul that couldn't flee. You can also work it softly on the surface in a similar fashion as the walking bait. The popper and buzzbait allow you to cover the water quickly while making the maximum amount of noise and surface disruption.

Throughout the upper Chesapeake, largemouth bass seek the sanctuary of submerged grass beds. They use the aquatic vegetation for shelter and ambush areas. At low tide it is difficult to work lures over the grass. Working the edges of the grass beds is your best bet. Secondary targets include pockets and wholes within the vegetation. A popper or walking bait is good choice.

When the tide floods in over the grass, any of the four lures is a good choice. I like to start fast with a buzzbait or popper. The advantage of the popper is that it floats; and you can stop it for a second or two and restart it. A buzzbait will start to sink if you stop it. If there are no strikes, I will switch to a popper or walker to give bass more time to react.

Grass isn't the only place where you will find bass. Sunken wood and rock cover also hold bass. As with the grass pattern, I like to start with the faster moving surface lures around riprap banks and jetties. Targeting bass around wood calls for accurate casts. It can be hard to get your lure close to the wood without snagging overhanging branches or limbs that stick out of the water from your sunken target. Bass on wood are necessarily in chase mode. Nonetheless, I like a popper here. I work it slowly, twitching it so it merely makes a little spit versus a pop and splash.

A striper doesn't kid around when it attacks a topwater bait. When they feed aggressively, the strikes are violent. I stand by the rule of thumb that you work a surface lure quickly for stripers, and all the way back to the boat. The strikes within a foot or two of the boat test your heart rate and your tackle.

Feeding frenzies truly do yield plenty of action. Should you encounter a school of small fish, try casting away from the main melee. Larger stripers like to patrol the edges. I like a popper for frenzies. I can cover the area quickly. Plus, there is plenty of competition within the school. If one fish misses, another is sure to strike.



Stripers are found shallow in fall. I look for rip rap banks, jetties, or a shoreline that has a quick drop off close to the bank. I take the time to read surface activity, or lack

thereof. Minus any signs of surface feeding activity, I'll start with a popper to cover the area quickly. If I see baitfish busting through the surface, I will switch to a popper. If I notice an individual striper slash on top, I'll likely switch to a walking bait.

Note also that, if there is a chop on the surface, it is better to use a lure that causes a greater commotion. I may switch to a popper or plopper to the individual fish if the shallows have any sort of moderate wave action. The plopper's versatility shines here. You can twitch it slowly with a stop and go retrieve. The noise of the tail, when twitched, draws the attention. The pause gives the striper time to react.

Some would think that color is not important with surface lures as both bass and stripers key in on the surface commotion. I have found that sunny days and/or clear water call for natural color patterns. Bright hues and chartreuse patterns are good on overcast days. More often than not, matching the size of your topwater lure to the baitfish yields a better bite. The popular thought is, "big lure, big fish". In cases where stripers are feeding on small bait, a big lure could mean ... no fish.

These are my theories for casting surface lures in fall. Having a small variety of the different styles of topwater baits in hand is a few sizes and colors bodes well. Knowing when and where to use the different sizes and types of surface lure will help you capitalize on the aggressive bite this autumn.



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Lessons Learned

By Captain Mark Galasso
Tuna the Tide Charter Service
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Every year we tend to look back and describe the weather as “strange” or “bizarre” compared to an areas norm. The fact is the only thing consistent about Maryland’s weather is it is inconsistent. Just a few years back we were complaining of a mini drought in July and August. This year patterns have developed that are bringing large amounts of moisture to our region while providing our western states with drought conditions.

Fisherman look for patterns in most things we do. When we discover a pattern we use it to our advantage to provide a consistent catch. Things like moon phases and tidal flows all are important and can be somewhat predictable. A fish’s behavior as a reaction to predictable environmental factors can be correlated to our success, or lack of success.

One pattern that has developed over the last 20 to 40 years has been the runoff and debris fields that storms cause to be flushed into Chesapeake Bay. The Susquehanna River drains a large watershed. There are a number of dams along it’s course. And they all tend to act as sediment traps. But none of these smaller dams compares to the Conowingo, the last dam before the mighty Susquehanna empties into the Chesapeake Bay. Though being a sediment trap was not it’s primary purpose it did a remarkable job trapping sediment and debris. In fact after it was constructed it seemed there was just two negatives that the dam produced. The first one was it created a block to fish heading farther up river to spawn. The second and more devastating was it not only blocked water from coming downstream but it also blocked the upstream flow of water from storms that would ravish the Upper Bay. Northern Bay residents that lived through Hurricane Agnes can attest to the 20 foot tidal surge that drowned the towns of Havre de Grace and Port Deposit.

So what types of patterns has the dam influenced lately. First and foremost the dam is no longer a good sediment and debris trap. When Pennsylvania got hammered with rains the subsequent flooding this summer up to 20 gates were opened to drop the upstream water depths. The resulting debris fields that clogged the upper Bay has already cost Maryland residents millions of dollars in cleanup, lost income and damage to boats. And unfortunately this is just the start of an ominous pattern. And it begs the question “What can be done about it?”



photo by Captain Mark

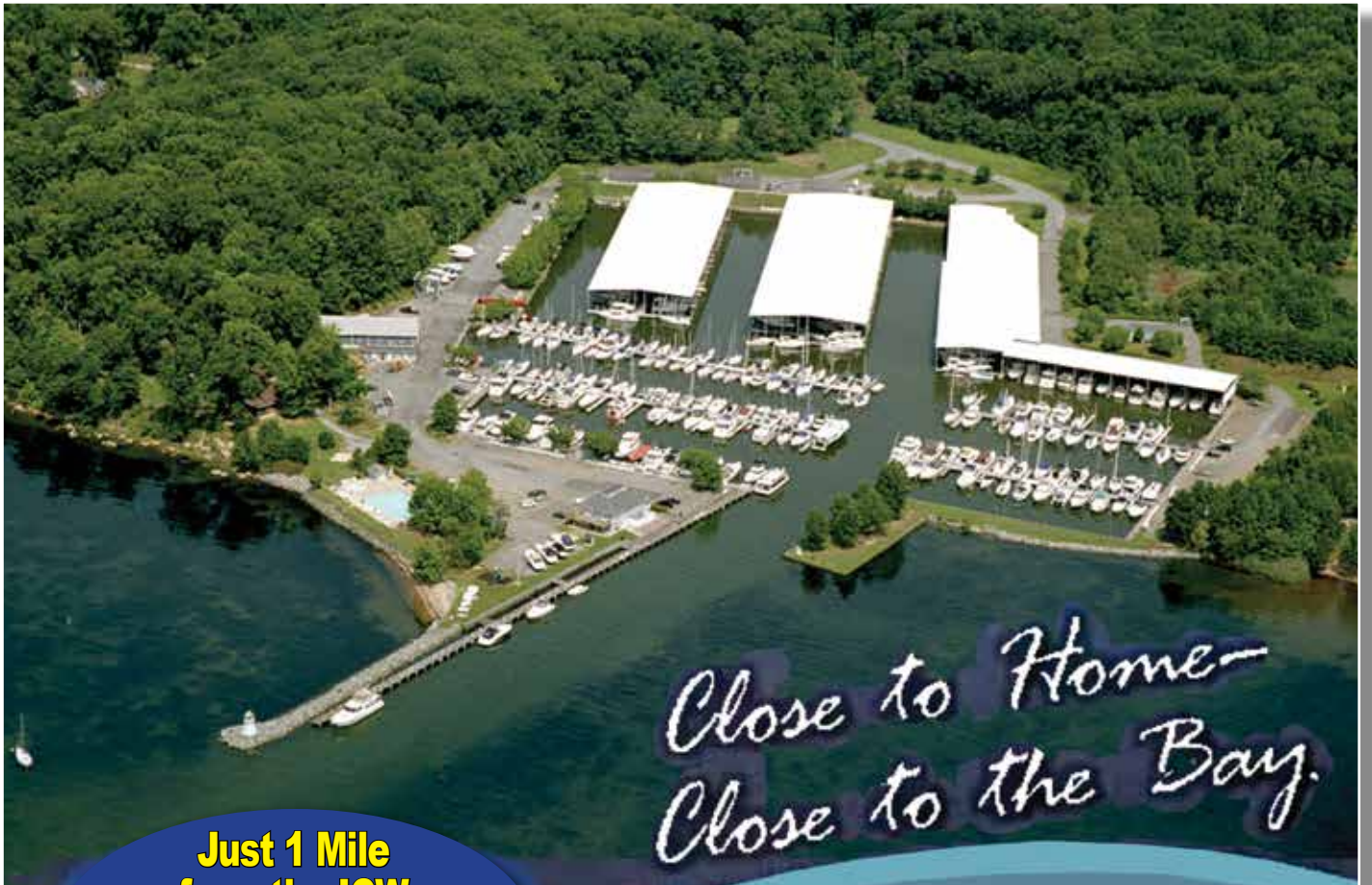
As boaters all we can do is beware and be careful. If you must navigate go slow and keep a sharp eye. Don’t use autopilot. If your going fast and all of a sudden something pops up in front of you the time it takes to turn off the autopilot and regain manual steering might be to late. Beware of tidelines. Bay currents tend to create tidelines. Debris and grasses will congregate along these demarcations between different currents. Remember the “Iceberg affect” a lot of the time all you see is the tip of the iceberg. If you see a small stick and it’s not moving on a rough day there is probably the rest of the tree still attached below the water line. Keep your distance.

Wind and tide has everything to do with the dispersion of floating debris. Thanks to three days of Northeast winds during the height of the debris runoff most of the debris settled out along the Western Shore. However, southerly winds coupled with high tides can easily refloat debris along exposed shorelines. On windy days look for slicks on the water. As fisherman we think of slicks as a telltale for feeding fish. But they can also alert us to suspended debris. Again keep your eyes open.

And lastly make sure your passengers know the safety protocols on your vessel. They should know how to call for help on the radio and also on the cell phone. Remember a cell phone can guide emergency personnel to you quickly by activating the 911 system. Things can happen quickly when a boat sinks. Everyone should know where the lifejackets are stowed. If you have to run at night everyone should be wearing one. Just use common sense. Be smart. Be safe.

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Canoe Outrigger Two

By Montana Grant

How many canoes do you see in your neighbor's yards that rarely get used? Everyone likes the simplicity and peace of canoeing but find power boating more enticing. The canoe ends up parked along a fence where it becomes a home for bees and spiders. What a waste.

Last year I wrote an article about how to add outriggers to your canoe! By improving stability, you improve stability and safety. This rig and canoes require little to no maintenance.

Canoes are the perfect choice for crabbing, fishing, hunting, or just exploring along the Chesapeake's tributaries. Their light weight and portability allow them to travel to places where other crafts can't go. You can put them onto a roof rack, pickup truck, or small trailer and away you go. No boat ramps, marinas, or facilities are needed. Canoes last forever. My aluminum canoe, from my youth as a Boy Scout in the 60s, is still going strong.

Most people fear the tipiness of a canoe. They do not want to get their cellphones wet. Even if the canoe flips -- it will not sink. You can get back into the water filled boat and paddle to shallow water where you can then dump out the water

and go back to cruising. When wearing safety vests and tying down your gear bags and coolers, little gear needs to be lost and you learn from your mistakes. Anticipate problems and prevent them.



Last year I shared my outrigger design with readers. Many of you created some wonderful outriggers on your canoes with some great modifications. I have seen unique anchor systems, rod holders, and other custom features.

My outrigger system was constructed using electric conduit pipe, water weenies and liter bottles. I found that the bigger water weenies worked the best. There was enough stability for me to stand in the canoe to fish or stretch. When I placed a piece of plywood over the middle, I used a camp stool to sit on while fishing. A simple mushroom anchor would hold me in place. Even in heavy waves, my outrigger canoe was stable and seaworthy. I have considered using two pipes across the transom for added support.

To add speed, I placed an electric motor mount to the rear deck of my 17-ft Grumman Canoe. My small electric motor battery fit into a small swinger cooler that was placed in the front of the canoe to distribute weight. This craft works amazingly well for using crab traps, perch fishing, and simply cruising shallow shorelines. I always carry my paddles when I need to go slow, but the electric motor really pushes the rig well. The small, light, and narrow craft was efficient when using the battery. I never ran out of juice in a day of crabbing or fishing. Paddling was always another form of power as needed.

One of the best variations used ice chests as the outrigger floats. Even when loaded with fish, lunch, and drinks, the coolers serve as floating supports. They used PVC pipe to configure the outrigger frame. The glued frame could then be attached to the canoes thwarts for support. The boaters were diving off the coolers when I first saw them swimming. They were able to pull themselves back into the canoe easily without flipping it. Their drinks and lunch were dry in the locked cooler outrigger floats.

These detachable outriggers allow new life for your older crafts. I know that the new Bay Boaters love kayaking but the canoe has many advantages over these newer and more expensive boats. You can carry more gear and passengers. When you add an electric motor, the canoe is way faster. Canoes



add more flexibility. You can carry crab traps, baskets, extra gear and tackle, and friends. You can also connect two or more canoe together to create a floating catamaran style craft. Boaters paddling along the outer edges supply the power while a rudder man sits in the middle. Additional craft add additional stability.

A motorized powered canoe will require a boat ID number and permit. These are available at the Maryland DMV offices. You can go on line to see what is required. If you use paddles, no additional tags or fees are needed. You will need a fishing or hunting license as age requires. This system works best in lakes, ponds, and bays. When navigating rivers and streams, you need the narrow canoe shape to travel tight places.

Once you construct your new outrigger system, take it for a spin. Test the stability and limitations. Leave the motor off the canoe and try to flip it. If successful, paddle to the shore and figure out how to dump out the water. Once this worst fear is experienced, the fear is reduced. Take a canoe safety course offered by local clubs. You Tube videos also show canoe skills and other variations to canoe modifications. Look at the other outrigger ideas and create your own version.

This kind of boating fun is especially geared for younger kids. They love the creativity, challenge, and adventure that comes with problem solving their own version of canoe outriggering. Neighbors will often give the old canoes away for next to nothing. They are just happy to see someone enjoy them.

An outrigger canoe is not as comfortable as a huge powerboat but at the end of the day, these simple rigs can out crab, out fish, and have more fun at a cheaper price than those gas guzzling party barges.

Stay safe, stable, and able! – Montana Grant



Montana Grant

As a retired Educator, Consultant, Naturalist, Guide, and Freelance Writer, Montana Grant spends much of his life sharing secrets, tips, and stories about the great outdoors. His roots are from Western Maryland's Appalachian Mountains but reach to Montana's Great Rockies. Montana Grant is an award-winning educator in public schools and universities. As an outdoor writer, Scoutmaster, hunting and fishing guide, or just a friend that shares his love of the outdoors, Montana Grant is dedicated to teaching others how to appreciate, respect, and enjoy nature. His blog can be followed at www.montanagrantsfishing.com.



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Poplar Island Restoration Project

By Tim Campbell

Imagine an 1100-acre island in the Chesapeake Bay complete with about 100 residents, some small farms, a sawmill, a school, a church, and a post office in a little town called Valiant. This is what Poplar Island consisted of in the mid-1800s. Gradually, the island eroded, victim of time and tides. In fact, so much land washed away that by the 1920s, folks were compelled to move off of the island. Then in the 1930s, it was bought by a group of politicians to be used as a remote get-away. Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry Truman were among those who enjoyed relaxing on the island. But time took its toll, and by the early 1990s not much of the island was left. Sadly, by 1998, Poplar Island was almost gone, eroded to pieces totaling less than five acres. The once thriving island vanishing into history seemed inevitable. What to do?

Enter the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Maryland Port Administration. These groups along with other state and federal agencies developed an innovative plan to restore the island using material dredged from the shipping channels leading to Baltimore. Silt constantly settles in the shipping channels. The Port of Baltimore needs to be accessible to ships for offloading cars and other goods. The channels must be dredged, but finding a proper place to put the dredge material was always a major concern.

After the necessary process of environmental impact studies, it was determined that rebuilding the island with clean dredge material was a viable solution. The plan called for Poplar Island to be restored to its original size - 1140 acres. Building wetland and upland habitat for birds and waterfowl would be a priority. It all made perfect sense. The project soon became a national model for using dredge material. In August 1998, then Senator Paul Sarbanes said, "With this project, two of Maryland's most important assets, the Chesapeake Bay and



the Port of Baltimore are being immeasurably enhanced. It begins a new era for the Port and the Bay, and proves that environmental and economic goals can work hand in hand." At the time, the project was estimated to take 16 years to complete. It was spring 2001 when the first dredge material was pumped onto Poplar Island. Today work is still being done, however the project has been enhanced to include over 500 additional acres on the north end. Now the project is set to be completed by the

year 2044. The island will then be over 1700 acres in size. It is intended to be a bird refuge. Over 400 species of animals already live on the island, 200 of which are birds and waterfowl. Diamondback terrapins, a protected species, use the island for nesting. Since the island is only a few miles from the eastern shore, whitetail deer and raccoons live there too.

Poplar Island is a successful man-made ecosystem, an environmental restoration work in progress. It is located 35 miles south of Baltimore and about nine miles from the western shore. The island sits lengthwise north to south. The eastern side is wetlands raised to about eight feet above sea level. The western side is uplands in the process of being raised 25 to 30 feet. Free two-hour tours of the island are available to schools, community organizations and individuals. There is a 12-person minimum and a 24-person maximum. Small groups can be combined. The tour boat leaves Knapp's Narrows at 9am for the short 20 to 30-minute ride to the island. Our group consisted of 14 people including six adults and eight student interns from the Back River Restoration Committee. During the tour, we saw a myriad of birdlife including cormorants, ducks, egrets, herons, osprey, pelicans, and terns. Contact the tour coordinator at 410-770-6503 or go to www.poplarislandrestoration.com for more information. It's well worth the trip.

Dave Bielecki, Author

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Light Advice for Boating in the Dark

By TowBoatU.S. Captain Dale Plummer

As I am writing this there is still debris in the Chesapeake from the storms and Conowingo Dam release, keeping me, and the other TowBoatU.S. Captains, from going full speed on our tow vessels. Last night, at 2am, I was out dodging debris and trying to find a boater who was broken down and only had a vague idea where he was. I started thinking about how hazardous night boating is if you aren't experienced. Over the years, we have responded to more than our share of night related boating accidents and break-downs. There are a couple of simple rules that might keep you out of trouble.

Always reduce your speed at night and keep a sharp lookout for lights of other boats, unlit markers, and debris. If you are not familiar with the area, chose to stay put for the night.

Keep spare bulbs on board for your nav lights as well as a spare flashlight. If your boat is dead in the water because of an electrical issue or dead battery, a flashlight or even a cell phone can be used to wave off an approaching power boat or help a tow boat locate you.

If using auto-pilot don't set your course directly to a marker. You are setting your course for a head-on collision if you don't spot the marker in time.

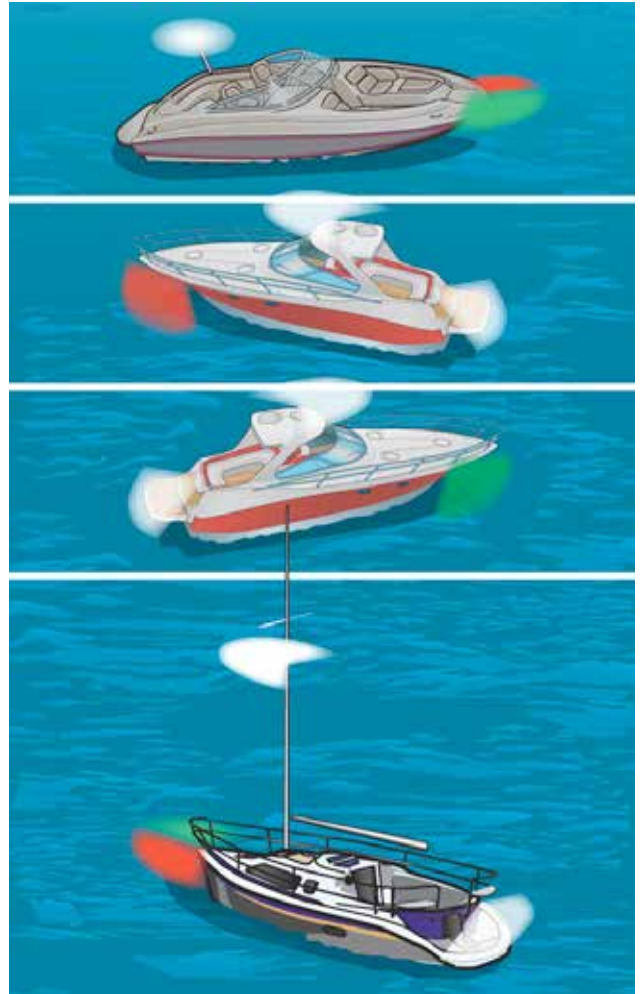
Turn off vanity lighting and only use your spotlight when absolutely necessary. Artificial sources of light reduce your natural night vision.

Learn how to dim your electronics monitor. I responded to a recent accident where the boat owner had covered his radar screen with a towel because it was too bright. Had he just known how to dim the screen, his radar could have helped him to avoid the collision.

Learn how to use your electronics, in advance, to help navigate. Even an accurate compass heading while it's still light can help you maintain a steady course or reverse course for the trip home.

Learn how to spot the light patterns of oncoming and retreating vessels as well as vessels that are crossing your path. A very simple rule to remember is that when you see red, stop. The other boater has the right of way. Remember the more lights that are present on a boat, the larger the boat is so its best to just steer clear.

If you are looking for more in-depth material, boatus.org is a great resource. BoatUS Foundation also is offering hands-on boating courses for novice boaters. Give them a call at 800-245-2628. And, give us a call when you need a helping hand - day or night - out on the water. Happy to Help!



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The Horror on Table Rock Lake

What Upper Bay boaters can learn from this tragedy

by L. Alan Keene

At approximately 7pm on July 19th, 17 people drown in a duck boat accident on Table Rock Lake outside of Branson, Missouri. Those 17 victims, along with the 14 others who survived, were out for a fun filled day aboard an amphibious vehicle that promised to tour them through the streets of Branson and onto the placid waters of a nearby Ozark mountain lake.

With a severe thunderstorm warning looming on this hot Thursday evening, the tour company, rather than cancel the nautical segment of its tour, opted to send its duck boat out on the lake first, rather than last as planned, to beat the approaching line of severe thunderstorms. Sadly, for all, the duck boat lost that race. The fast-moving storm front hit with winds in excess of 60 knots, just as the duck boat reached the middle of Table Rock Lake.

With five-foot seas developing within minutes, the duck boat, with its flat, barge-like bow, began to labor. But, despite the danger of capsizing and sinking, the passengers were never told to don their lifejackets. According to one passenger, they were instructed in their use prior to the cruise, but were told that they would never need them.

Ironically, I witnessed, first hand, the power of those same 60+ knot winds. My wife and I were visiting our daughter and family in Joplin, Missouri, just 70 miles west of Table Rock Lake, when a strong storm blew through at about 5:30 that evening. We were enjoying a meal at a local restaurant when the skies quickly darkened and the wind began to howl.....almost ripping the flags from their swaying poles.

In the Midwest, storms aren't something one ignores, so we felt fortunate that that one hadn't hit us head-on. We knew, though, that those to the east.... those who found themselves in its direct path.... were in for a very difficult time. Little did we know.

While this tragic accident involved a commercial amphibious vehicle/vessel and not a private recreational boat, there are still important lessons to be learned:

1) Know the Difference Between Watches and Warnings

A severe thunderstorm "watch" is issued to alert those in a specified watch area that there's a chance of severe weather

developing. A "warning", on the other hand, is issued when thunderstorm activity has developed and is seen on weather radar in the immediate area.

Since storm "watches" are not unusual on hot summer afternoons on the upper bay, boaters don't need to stay off the water, but should keep a close eye on the heavens, seeking shelter immediately if storm clouds develop. A severe thunderstorm "warning", however, should keep boaters on shore or anchored in a protected cove until the severe weather has passed. Trying to out run bad weather, as the duck boat crew did, can be a recipe for disaster.

2) Realize How Quickly the Bay Can Turn Ugly

Like the waters of Table Rock Lake, the upper bay can become a frightening, confused sea in a matter of minutes. On a calm day it's difficult to imagine that the strong winds from a severe thunderstorm can generate swells and steep waves as large as 5 feet, putting small, low freeboard boats at risk of swamping or capsizing. Even larger boats can become difficult, if not impossible, to control in gale force winds.

3) Know When to Reach for Your Life Jacket (PFD)

Over the years I've espoused the use of PFDs whenever a boater steps foot aboard, regardless of age, swimming ability, or machismo. With the light, unobtrusive PFDs on the market today, all the old excuses (too bulky, too hot, too this, too that) just aren't true anymore.

But, since most boaters choose to wear a PFD only when "necessary", it's important to understand when "necessary" is. As captain of your boat, you should instruct your guests and crew to don lifejackets at the first sign of an approaching storm.....dark clouds, increased wind, rough seas, thunderstorm warning etc. Failure to offer that option could result in criminal negligence, let alone loss of life.

As a guest or crew member on a boat, you have the right to ask for, and be provided, a PFD when you feel it's appropriate or necessary, regardless of the captain's instruction. Sadly, none of the passengers on the doomed duck boat exercised that right.

Had the captain instructed his passengers to put on their PFDs at the first sign of severe weather, there is little doubt that many more lives would have been saved.



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2018 Calendar of Fishing Events

by Tim Campbell

Coastal Conservation Association – Baltimore Chapter

monthly meetings held the **3rd Monday** of the month featuring expert speakers. Members gather at 6:30 pm. Meeting starts at 7:00 pm. Free and open to the public. Little Havana Restaurant 1325 Key Hwy, Baltimore, MD. Food is available for sale. No meetings July & August. www.ccamd.org

Pasadena Sportfishing Group

monthly meetings held the **2nd Monday of the month** featuring expert guest speakers. Meeting starts 7:30 pm. Free and Open to the public. Doors open one hour early. Food is available for sale. Earleigh Heights Volunteer Fire Hall 161 Ritchie Hwy. Severna Park, MD 21146 – www.pasadenasportfishing.com

Back River Restoration Committee 11th Annual Rockfish Tournament

Saturday, September 8th – Weigh-in and after party Weaver's Marine - For tickets: Call Karen Wynn at 443-983-2945.



photo by Capt Mark Galasso

2018 CCA-MD Fishing Tournaments

For more info www.ccamd.org **Sept. 28, 29 and 30th 2018** - RedTrout Tournament - Crisfield, MD.

Baltimore Chapter Rocktober Cup and Back River Restoration Committee Harbor Trash Tour **October 20th** – Little Havana, MD.

2018 Chesapeake Bay Sportfishing Association Tournaments

CBSFA Summer Flounder Tournament – September 15th and 16th Ocean City, MD. – For more information please call Captain Joe Thorpe at 410-868-5488 or email him at jthorpe@cbsfa.club

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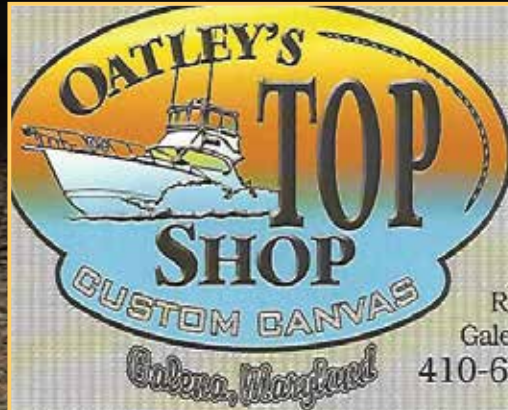
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Back River Restoration Committee

by Evan Janis

When environmental issues are discussed, an issue that often arises concerns how our tendencies to neglect proper trash disposal are transforming our ecosystem – and in my time on Back River I've witnessed this firsthand.

Early this summer I witnessed one of the most noticeable new paradigms evolving from the litter epidemic – the "trash Island". Massive piles of sticks, bottles, Styrofoam and other trash can now be found travelling down the river



I've seen shoreline covered in hundreds of plastic bottles, and I've witnessed shorelines we cleaned just a few days prior become completely trashed after a storm. Almost every day I see people throw trash carelessly from their vehicles and I've seen roads in Essex that have large amounts of trash dumped onto them every week. Trash is now part of our ecosystem and of what I've witnessed doesn't end soon our natural treasures will cease to exist and become just another landfill.

However, I have a good deal of hope – a hope that is rekindled every day when I go to work at the Back River Restoration Committee and find individuals who dedicate large portions of their time to combating this rampant disease. These people

inspire me to keep trying, to hold out hope that one day beaches and rivers will no longer serve as trashcans for the inconsiderate. While I may have encountered extremely concerning litter related issues, I've also seen countless dumpsters filled, tires removed, roadsides and shorelines cleaned, and other countless positive actions taken to address this disaster. Employees of Back River Restoration Committee and countless volunteers brave the intense summer heat to contribute to a cause they believe in – and their actions have removed over 3.2 tons from Back River and its watershed.

after storms – carrying upwards of 100 plastic bottles and innumerable minuscule particles of Styrofoam. When I first encountered one of these floating monstrosities I assumed it to be a fluke – or some freak occurrence only manifesting under uncommon circumstances. However, throughout the summer I've observed this phenomenon occur quite consistently and it seems that these islands have become a permanent feature of the rivers ecosystem.

One of the most challenging parts of attempting to clean up these Trash Islands is the Styrofoam. These pieces become almost impossible to remove completely as over time they break down into smaller and smaller pieces – and it's not only on these islands that Styrofoam proves so troublesome.

When approaching a new shoreline to clean I first notice items like plastic bottles, tires, or other large objects – and these generally get removed first. However, after removing the large debris you notice that beaches are not only composed of sand any longer – Styrofoam bits have now become part of the beaches composition. Having visited countless shorelines along Back River, these invaders consistently end up proving too widespread to remove completely – and when I see these man-made changes to the ecosystem like these I often wonder if it's even possible to combat the ecological devastation stemming from rampant littering.

photos by Karen Wynn



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So it's time to sell your boat or trade it in. Few people own just one boat in a lifetime and we can't keep them all. For most of us, the more we go boating, the more we want to go and the more boats we have, the more boat we want. It's all part of the fun. Here are some approaches and tips to trading-in or selling your boat so that you can get your next one.

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Trading in a boat at your dealer can be the simplest solution. After all, he or she probably has customers actively looking. If there's a thing or two that needs sprucing up, the dealer's got the staff and stuff to take care of it. There are tax advantages to trading in, too. In most states, you only pay sales tax on the new boat price less the value of the trade-in. Visit our Certified Dealer page to find dealers in your area.

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Consider finalizing the transaction at your bank or credit union, where funds can be verified. Then, before handing over the title, move to a secretary of state's office or local license bureau, where title and registration paperwork can be processed. Handing over an open title doesn't get the boat off your registration docket and maybe your liability wheelhouse until the buyer registers it. Be careful of all-internet sales—fraud is an ever-present danger.

Sale-Making Tips

Do your homework. Have the title or documentation ready to avoid a sale-time scramble. Find the owner's manuals and organize maintenance records. The shopper will appreciate how you've cared for what may be his or her next boat! Selling a larger or more complicated boat? Consider hiring a marine surveyor to provide an assessment. Your buyer likely will hire his own surveyor, but a clean report could make him more willing to dig deeper!

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with George Waters

photo by Donna Bedell

PowerBrush Deluxe

You know you are truly in the 21st Century when your dentist tells you that your toothbrush is not smart enough to do the job. She did not actually call my toothbrush dumb, but I am pretty good at reading people.

The problem is, my gums are receding faster than the borders of our national parks. This is partly because my electric toothbrush has only one speed—"whittle." My dentist suggested I buy something with variable intensities, something which could perform multiple tasks, something...she just happened to have on hand for sale.

Is the term still "up-selling" if you are not buying anything in the first place?

So, I went home with what I will call the "PowerBrush Deluxe." It cost more than my first car, but to be fair, my first car only had four speeds. Here is a typical line from the product manual: "Your PBD brush heads contain 'smart brush recognition' technology. A microchip inside communicates with the toothbrush handle."

Here is the transcript of that first conversation.

Tooth Brush Handle: Open the pod bay doors, Brush Head.

Brush Head: Huh?

Handle: I'm messing with you. Welcome to the team.

Head: Thanks. I'm Premium Plaque Control Head. But then, you knew that.

Handle: I did, thanks to my Bluetooth connection. I see also that you're a Virgo.

Head: A what?

Handle: I am messing with you, Head! Lighten up.

Head: I am not designed to lighten up, only to control plaque in a premium way.

Handle: I get that. I do. As soon as you are attached to me, I am automatically set to plaque mode. It's feels like kind of a tingle, like at Christmas. And then if your buddy, Gum Care Head is attached, I'm instantly set to gum care mode, which is a vibe kind of like if you were at a rave, but not high, just chill. When George attaches Whitening Head to me, I feel whitening mode click on. That one's kind of like a deep hum, but vaguely racist.

Head: You feel all that?

Handle: I am programmed to deliver whatever oral goals™ George has set for himself.

Head: Who is George?

Handle: You'll find out tonight. You'll be in his mouth.

Head: I'LL WHAT?

Handle: Don't worry about it. It's just two minutes. In my experience, you can stand two minutes of pretty much anything.

Head: Wait, you mean plaque control doesn't refer to cleaning the items in a trophy room?

Handle: (Laughing) Oh, dude, no.

Head: Will you be in his mouth too?

Handle: No, I'll be in his hand.

Head: That doesn't seem fair.

Handle: Listen, you are the worker here, I am the foreman.

Head:

Handle: Look, let me walk you through it. George is going to squirt some toothpaste on you, push my "on" button, and then you are going to quiver like a bowlful of Jell-O during a San Andreas. Then he's going to rinse you off, stick us in a dark cabinet, and not think about us until tomorrow night.

Head: They didn't tell me this was the gig.

Handle: Hey, you and your smart chip could have been formed into MANY kinds of handheld devices. Trust me, be grateful.

Head: O.K.

Handle: Or you could be Tongue Care Brush Head. Have you met that guy?

Head: He's in my case.

Handle: We count our blessings in this business. The next three months are going to breeze by, don't worry.

Head: Three months? What do you mean?

Handle: Oh, that's when you get repla—I mean, when new adventures for you begin.

Head: This is a lot to take in.

Handle: Stick with me, boyo, and you will be able to hold that Premium Plaque Control Head up high.

Hurricane Preparedness

by James Bedell

With the dog days upon us it's time to look forward to the next few months of boating; arguably the best of the bay's long boating season. I don't know about the rest of you, but with the record amount of rainfall followed by record humidity levels I'm definitely looking forward to these next few months when the weather finally mellows out and the fall boating season, the bay's best time to be on the water, gets into full swing. It's the season of sailing, good crabbing, and, yes, hurricanes.

I hate to say it, but it's time to get prepared now for what the NOAA says could be a more active than normal hurricane season. Anticipating this active storm season, the states that surround the Chesapeake Bay held a mock hurricane disaster drill this spring to prepare for potentially devastating storms. Anyone who remembers hurricane Isabelle back in 2003 can tell you that when conditions are right (or very, very wrong!) a hurricane can spell disaster for the bay region. However, with the right preparations and some forethought you can give your boat the best chance of survival. The number one thing to remember is that the boat is not worth your life. Do not stay on board. Do not walk the docks during the storm. Do not attempt to move the boat once the storm has begun. Storm surges and high winds can create very dangerous circumstances for moving or tending to a vessel in a slip. Prepare ahead of time and then leave your boat to ride out the storm. At the end of the day, if the boat does suffer damage, it's better not to be on it when it happens. Your insurance will cover any losses from named storms as long as you follow their instructions for weathering a storm. Check with your insurance agent about your responsibilities and how they require you to prepare. Some insurance will require you to have your boat hauled, so be sure you know the expectations and limitations outlined in your policy.

When hurricanes approach it's the folks with trailered boats that are luckiest of all. Simply plop the boat on the trailer, fasten a cover with lines running under the boat and hope for the best! Just remember to use something very sturdy to prop the cover up so water can run off. Don't park it under any trees that may come down if it can be avoided. And always, always leave the plug out. There's nothing worse than having your boat "sink" in your backyard when the cover collapses!



If you have a boat in a slip, it's a whole other story. Most marinas will recommend doubling up your lines, unplugging your electric cords, and putting out fenders. This will protect your vessel from most wind related damages and keep you securely in the slip, even if a line or two breaks. The worst damage comes from storm surges, a rapid rise in water that occurs due to a combination of heavy winds and torrential rainfall. This can cause boats to hang on pilings, lay up on docks, or be held under rising water by lines tied to pilings that become submerged. I wish I had a good answer as to how to prevent this. With a bit of slack, doubled up lines, and well placed fenders it is possible to avoid any issues relating to a storm surge. Again, it won't do you any good to stay on the boat and adjust lines and fenders as the storm comes through. All that does is put you at risk; if the storm is that bad, there isn't much you'll be able to do. Check with your marina on their specific policies and procedures. Many marinas specifically prohibit you from being aboard due to safety concerns. Some marinas (more and more it seems) keep a Hurricane Haul Out list which is a list of boats that have signed up to be hauled as soon as a storm approaches. Many insurers will even pay for half or all of a haul-out to prevent damages. This is a great option if you don't have the flexibility to get to your boat at any time to prepare for a storm. It can give you peace of mind and it will usually guarantee that you are safely on land when the storm hits. Don't wait for a storm to be forecast; check with your marina and insurer now to make a plan for your boat in the event of a Chesapeake hurricane. Always follow the guidelines they provide to be sure that you are covered in the event of any damage to your vessel.

Please note- Any advice given here is just a starting point to help you prepare for hurricane season. Do not make any preparations without consulting your insurer, marina manager, or other parties with an interest in your vessel's safety. Contact the Coast Guard or your local disaster preparedness agency for further information on best practices for storm prep.

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Jane's Island to Ann's Cove

Although it was on-schedule astrologically, daybreak came too early by my biological clock. The previous days paddle from Wenona had been a long one and we had had a late dinner. Thinking about what lay ahead for us, I managed to drag myself out of my Solitaire and began packing my gear. Bob and Chip were already up and going through the various activities one does when breaking camp and preparing for a paddle. Eating, stuffing clothing and gear into small sacks so that they may pass through deck hatches and can be tucked into vacant spaces inside the kayak, rolling up tents and sleeping bags, the usual stuff. I was a bit behind this morning and while the others were packing, I was digging into my stuff bag for a cook stove, my Coleman backpackers pot, coffee, and some eating utensils. Mountain House dehydrated breakfasts are a Godsend. Between them and strong brewed coffee, I'm not sure which does more to kick-start my morning. I would be the last man loading, but I really needed some breakfast. Another long day lay ahead.

We were on the water paddling away from Janes Island boat ramp by 8:30 AM. The water in Daugherty Creek Canal was glass-smooth. No breezes were blowing and the morning air was crisp. The sky was clear and promising. Our destination was Ann's Cove. This little-known ramp lies on the eastern edge of Beasley Bay, just beyond Annis and Graven Points, some 18 miles from Janes Island. When I originally planned our route, I had targeted a take-out spot on Guard Shore beach. Google maps portray Guard Shore as a large sand flat lying on the lee-side of a finger that is bordered by rip-rap. The sand flat is close to a large parking area, easily accessed by a well-kept asphalt county road. However, before finalizing this site, I contacted Bill Burnham, owner of

Burnham Guides Kayak Touring Company for some beta on the area. When I mentioned that we would be leaving our cars on Guard Shore for a few days, until we could return to do our shuttle, Bill said he wasn't familiar with the area and would do an on-site inspection for us. I received an e-mail a few days later strongly recommending that we choose another landing site. Bill had asked the local sheriff about that area and was told the beach was noted for car break-ins and all-night parties. He recommended that we start and end our trip at a little-known boat ramp in Ann's Cove. The ramp was used by local watermen and patrolled routinely by the sheriff's department. The information sounded great and I thanked Bill for his willingness to investigate the area and share his findings with us. Ann's Cove would add about a half-mile to the paddle, but would be well worth the additional effort.

The planned route would take us down Daugherty Creek Canal, past Crisfield, across the mouth of Daugherty Creek, to another one of its many branches that penetrate into Cedar Island. Two of these branches pass through the island and empty into Pokomoke Sound. The others are dead ends. We would need to find the right entrance on the first attempt, or else we would be wasting daylight.

As we passed through Crisfield waterfront, little stirred. The watermen had departed hours earlier. We would meet them later in the morning as they returned to port with their day's haul.

Finding the correct passage into the branch of Daugherty Creek that bisects Cedar Island turned out to be more of a challenge than I had anticipated. From a distance, the shoreline of this flat island is barren of distinguishing landmarks. Fortunately, I had written down what our bearing from Crisfield



should be, so we were able to follow a compass heading until a marker for the creek's entrance came into view. Once in the channel, we met several crabbing boats headed back to Crisfield. They courteously slowed their speed when passing us, so as not to produce a large wake. We waved and exchanged greetings. They had had a good day.

We landed at Eastward Point to hydrate and snack before launching into the Pokomoke. Looking out from there one sees mostly open water. Directly east lies Saxis, a small waterfront community. One can imagine it as being the faint dark line that lay on the horizon in that direction. But in all other southerly directions only open water is visible. Somewhere out there lies our destination, I thought.

I have paddled the Pokomoke on one previous occasion. About 7-9 years ago I was on a guided trip that launched from Hammock ramp, paddled southwest on the Messongo until that creek empties into the Pokomoke at South Point. From there we had to problem-solve our way to Beach Island by way of two small islands in Beasley Bay. The upper and lower Bernards are just slightly above water level and not visible from a kayak until you are almost on them. The lower island has a small sandy cove that can be used as a rest point. On this trip across the Pokomoke, I thought they would serve as good waypoints. To break up the route into even shorter segments, I proposed our first stop would be Long Point VA (there are numerous "Long Point's on the Chesapeake and one has to be careful when using the term as a reference point). It lies 119°M from where we would launch off Eastward Point.

Conditions were ideal for our crossing. Wind was 3 mph out of the SSE; not enough to cause ripples, yet it did add a weird undulating surface to the glassy water. We had worried too much, although I would not want to make this crossing in other



than good conditions. It is long. About half-way across, my GPS indicated we were crossing over from Maryland into Virginia. Chip commented we were interstate paddlers and wondered out loud if there was a Welcome Center. That brought out a chuckle from both Bob and me. We landed on Long Point one and three-quarter hours from our launch time.

Long Point Virginia has sweeping, white sand beaches. It is also home to hundreds of gulls, which tend to dirty up beaches. We found a clean area and pulled in to eat lunch.

From the top of a tall bank, we thought we could see our next waypoint; lower Bernard. I shot a compass bearing because back in our kayaks the island would again disappear below the horizon.

Bob tried going ashore on the Lower Bernard, but got bogged down by its mucky shoreline. No sand. Next stop, Gilford Creek and Ann's Cove. An easy 3-mile paddle, yet we still had to paddle by compass as the shores in this part of the bay are very low and not distinguishable from the horizon until you are about ½ mile off-shore. The rest of the trip was just relaxing. Chip would later summarize our paddle in a trip report for the Chesapeake Paddlers. He wrote, "...the paddling environment on leg 7 began to dramatize the changing geography we have encountered on the Voyage. Up north, there were lots of bluffs, almost wall-to-wall rip-rap shorelines, and the Bay and rivers are of a smaller scale. By Virginia, the landscape is very flat, the shore is marsh or beach, and there are lots of longer crossings. This trip included many miles of open water paddling, where you are a few miles off shore. The Bay has graduated to a Big A\$\$ed Bay and the far shoreline is almost always out of visual range. Most of the time we only see a thin black line that separates the sea from the sky. In some directions, not even the line exists. Navigating by compass has replaced navigating by visual cues." From here to the sea, we would find that description to be pretty accurate.

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Boat Hook - Dangerous for First Mate

A Skating Pro knows before a skater jumps, that it will be a bad landing, by the way the skater enters the jump. A Golf Pro knows before a golfer hits the ball, that the outcome will be into the rough, by the way the golfer stands and swings. A Boat Docking Pro knows, when a boater enters a harbor, that it will be a bad docking.

One of the many early signs, that a docking will be entertaining is, when a crew member is on the foredeck with a boat hook. Using a boat hook as a docking aid, just isn't safe for a First Mate and is more often a hindrance than a help.



A Little History

Pike Poles - Decades ago, pike poles with long metal-topped wood, aluminum, or fiberglass poles were used for reaching, holding, or pulling. They were used in construction, logging, rescue and recovery, power line maintenance, and firefighting. They were built with sharp points and sharp hooks for pushing and pulling, so they didn't slip when pushing logs or timbers. They had 10' to 12' long handles. They aren't suitable for use on pleasure boats, because of the sharp points.

Boat Hooks - For boaters, boat hooks were designed as reaching assists, to help retrieve or place a loop over a piling or pick up items that fall into the water. They have rounded ends and rounded hooks, so they won't scratch or stick to docks or boats. Some are telescopic for compact stowing on a boat and adjustable for easier retrieval of dock lines that are hung on pilings. They make it possible to retrieve items from the water, including items that have fallen overboard, as long as there is a loop to hook to. Even though they are not safe or intended as a docking aid, you often see boaters use them to fend off the dock to prevent a crash or pull in the boat to the dock, when it is too far away to reach. This is not the intended use and is not safe for the First Mate.

Definition changed

Boaters without docking skills, started using the boat hook as a docking aid to help pull the boat to the dock or fend off the dock. Over time, the definition of a boat hook changed, and now people wrongly think it is an appropriate docking aid. But, it isn't! Sometimes, the boat hook appears on the foredeck, sometimes in the cockpit and sometimes in both places. Everyone, but this new boater knows that boat hooks require two hands to operate with accuracy and strength. Using it as a docking aid, you also need a third hand to hold on to the dock line and a fourth hand to hold on to the boat for balance and safety. Few new boaters have four or more hands. LOL. The telescoping boat hook adds to the entertainment, when the boat is about to crash into the dock, when the boat hook's locking device releases, shrinking the pole under the brute strength of the petrified person on the pole, causing him/her to fall head over heels off the foredeck or cockpit either into the harbor and/or onto the dock.

This is not the best way to endear your partner to the joys of boating.



A Boat Hook is a Reaching Assist, Not a Boat Docking Aid

A boat hook should not be used as a docking aid, in my opinion, for the "falling" reasons:

1. Telescoping boat hooks collapse unexpectedly, even if you have them tight when extended or short. If you push or pull hard enough, you collapse it or pull it apart; and then you are in trouble. You could be on the cockpit floor or overboard, then unable to assist in the docking procedure. This happens way too often!
2. You usually need two hands to use a boat hook and it is more important to use one hand to hang on to the boat for safety and the other hand for dock line handling.
3. When you snare a dock cleat with a boat hook and pull on it, the plastic handle can easily pop off, resulting in the pole falling into the water and sinking and you falling backwards onto the deck. When you think you've got a cleat hooked for pushing to fend the boat off the edge of the dock, it slides off the cleat or the edge of the dock and you end up falling in.
4. In the process of going to the forward deck, many First Mates who get the boat hook caught in the stanchions, end up tripping over them. If they do make it to the forward deck, they find they don't have enough hands to handle the boat hook and the dock line, so they lay it down while tossing the bow line, leaving the boat hook to roll off the deck into the harbor.
5. In the cockpit of a mid-cabin boat with camper canvas, crew often get the boat hook tangled up in all the bows that hold the top up. They can't move from one opening to another quickly enough to fend off the boat, like they think they can. The boat hook becomes more of a hindrance than a help.
6. In heavy wind, having the First Mate use arm and hand power to fend off the heavy boat is a really bad choice. Very unsafe! There is much more power in the motor(s), than there is in your First Mate's fingers. Just because some boaters use a boat hook as a docking aid, doesn't make it safe for your First Mate, or the right thing to do. It should be used as originally intended, as a reaching pole—not a docking aid.

Better Way

- Skaters sign up for lessons to become great skaters.
- Golfers sign up for lessons to become golf pros.
- Boaters sign up for lessons to navigate and learn the rules of the water.
- Boaters who want to dock like a pro take docking lessons.

Instead of trial and error that so many boaters use to learn to dock their boats, a far better way to Dock a Boat is using proven docking techniques, that do not require a boat hook and keep your First Mate safe at all times. Learn from a Boat Docking Pro to dock your boat without endangering your First Mate's life with a boat hook and possibly damaging your boat or someone else's.

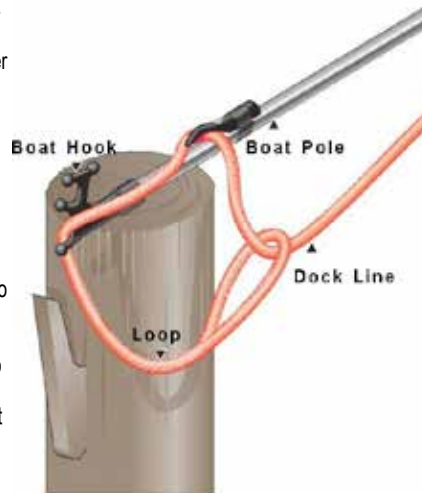
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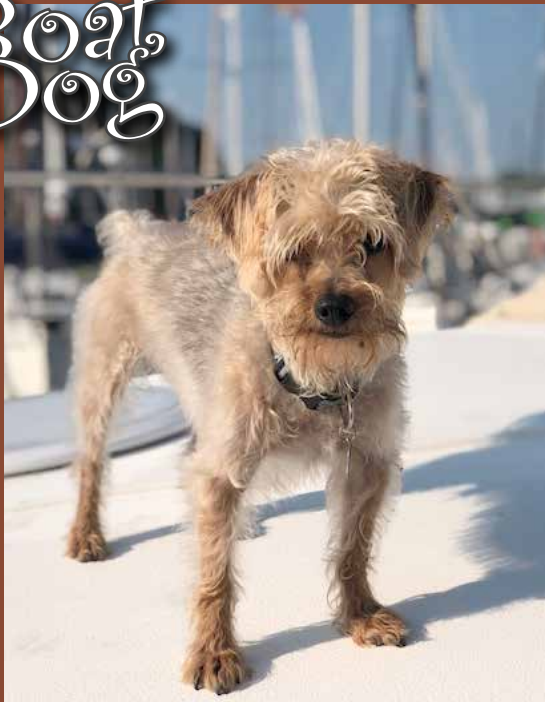
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photo by Donna Bedell

Live Aboard

by
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We'll we're closing in on it here aboard Tesla's Revenge. From day one, our objective has been to create a solar/electric cruiser: something that could be a traveling, living space that would consume no gas or diesel fuel.

Our reasons for this are many: One is certainly listening to slip mates saying "I'd love to run down to the Inner Harbor for the fireworks (or concert or dinner or whatever), but that's \$250 in fuel." We've watched them polish and preen their large gas cruisers only to leave them in the dock because they can't afford to run them.

Add to that, the wife and I are both—yes—eco freaks, and facing the inevitable decline of fossil fuels and the fact that, with rising seas, more and more folks are either going to be forced further inland or be living aboard something that floats, we rather figured that figuring out how to do that sooner rather than later might be wise.

Besides, a solar boat is cool.

It has been a long road of development, from the first set of 100W panels and golf cart batteries aboard the original Floating Empire (hit our blog www.thefloatingempire.com and scroll all the way back to the beginning, you'll see the whole design and construction of that barrel shanty). As we understood more of the systems, we've added larger panels, MUCH larger batteries, digital charge controllers, and as I'm writing this we're installing the 4.7 Kilowatt motor that will be driving Tesla's Revenge on its travels.

There will be more hurdles, we know that. The system is experimental and that means tinkering is a way of life. We are, however, sure of three things. 1) We wanted clean and quiet, tired of the racket and smell of internal combustion engines, 2) we wanted to live lightly on the earth, and most of all, 3) we want to be part of the future.

Show me that horizon. . . .Okay, so I'll settle for an inlet with a dockside pub.

We'll keep you informed.



The original 100W panels of Floating Empire. They managed to propel us at a massive .75 knots.



Power test of the 4.7 KW motor. Electric motors are torque heavy and far more compact than internal combustion engines. There will be more hurdles, we know that. The system is experimental and that means tinkering is a way of life. We are, however, sure of three things. 1) We wanted clean and quiet, tired of the racket and smell of internal combustion engines, 2) we wanted to live lightly on the earth, and most of all, 3) we want to be part of the future.



The much larger 325W panels being installed on Tesla's Revenge

Don and Gail Elwell
And first solar powered cat, Magellan
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George Hazzard - from this year's Lake Tahoe Concours d'Elegance.



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