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August 2019

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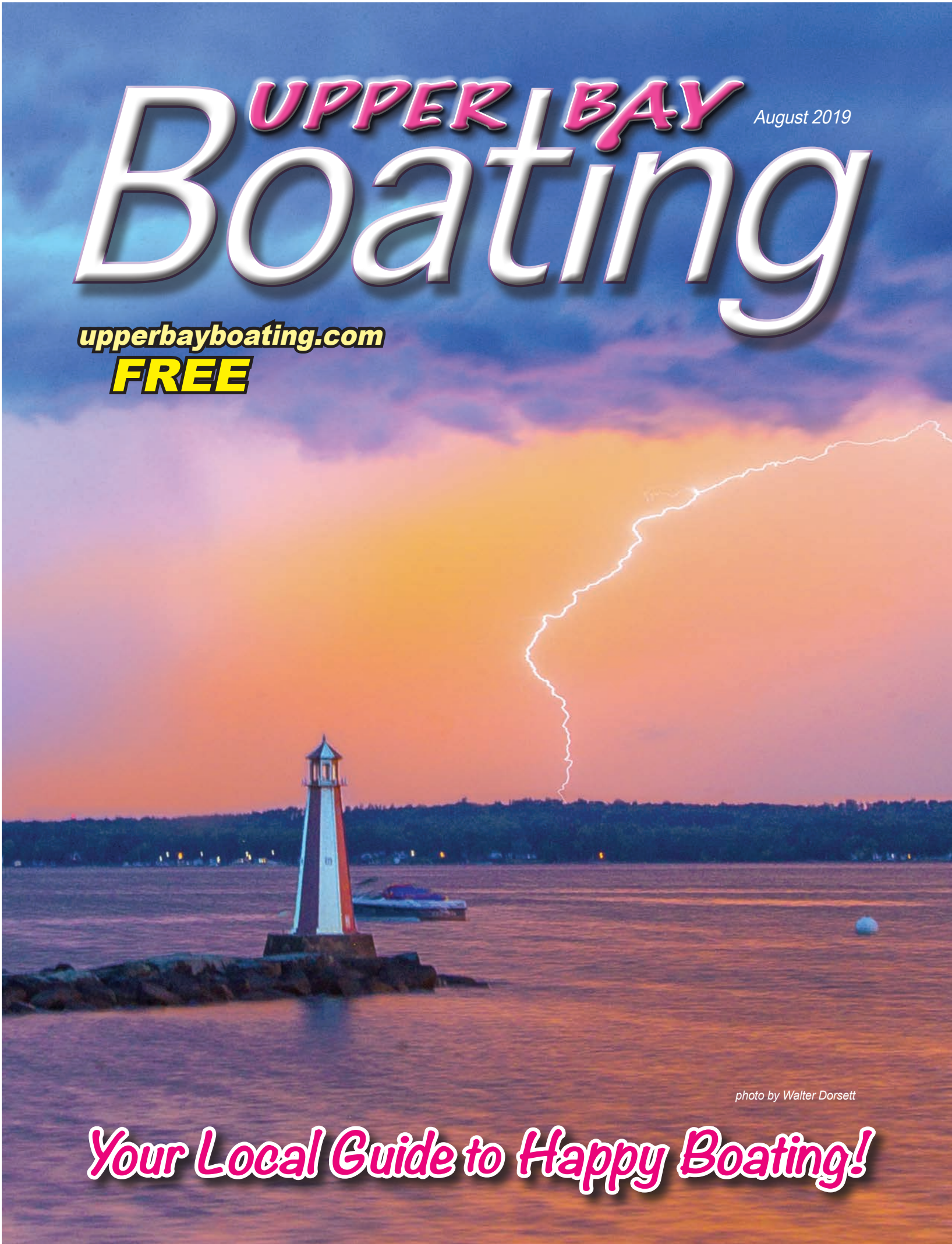


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# UPPER BAY Boating

August 2019

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photo by David Sites

## Upper Bay Boating

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## Summer Storms

Just when I thought we were going to have a fairly safe summer on the bay, the news has recently been full of reports about deaths out on the water. Some of them could have been prevented by watching by the weather. Nothing stops fun on the water faster than unexpected soakings, suddenly violent waves, or any activity that can lead to a serious risk of falling out of the boat. And few events can end a good time on the water as precipitously as being hit by lightning.

These summertime risks can vary greatly in degree of probability depending on your knowledge of - and respect for - the weather. There may have been a time, when ignorance of the elements was an excuse for mishap or disaster. But incredible modern-day refinements in satellite-based forecasting and communications technology have removed the last traces of an alibi for being caught on the water unaware. These days, if you didn't know what to expect it was because you didn't ask - or you just didn't take the time to learn. Take a refresher safety course, have a weather app on your phone, pay attention to weather alerts on your radio, and even check out your social media. One of our local Facebook groups, Upper Chesapeake Recreational Boaters has members whom constantly post weather updates during those iffy hot summer days.

Even though we still have a few months of hot weather ahead, once Labor Day comes around, some boaters begin to make plans for winter storage. Some of the advertisers have

even begun to start to mention winter storage in their ads. I have always thought fall was the best time to boat on the Upper Bay. So when we begin to have a few of those cool crisp evenings I enjoy the change from the Hazy Hot Humid dog days of August. However, I appreciated the reminder to plan ahead for when I needed to haul the boat. With the reservations made, I can just enjoy the best part of the season without worry of being caught unprepared for when to boat is hauled.

So I hope the last third of the 2019 boating season is a safe one for all of you. I hope you continue to enjoy reading Upper Bay Boating, and continue to support the advertisers whom support me in getting this FREE magazine into your hands. And don't forget, we have an online version you can read or download from our site, [www.upperbayboating.com](http://www.upperbayboating.com).



**Stay safe & cool - Dave**

**[dave@upperbayboating.com](mailto:dave@upperbayboating.com)**



# Twister on the Neck

By Wendy Gilbert – Features Editor

It was a dark and stormy ... afternoon. Well, technically it was evening, but let's admit it, a dark and stormy afternoon has a little more flair. Besides, it was a week before the Summer Solstice and very bright outside.

I was tucked safely in my cape cod when a torrential rain created an all-too familiar whiteout condition. The rain pelted the windows ferociously for about 10 minutes and then the other all-too familiar condition happened – power loss.

Unfortunately, my husband was not safely tucked in at said cape cod. He was driving home when a rare tornado ripped through Elk Neck State Park last month. Fortunately, we were both just far enough out of the danger. He on one side and me on the other.

The following day was our wedding anniversary and we were both looking forward to a long weekend away. We hadn't

gone anywhere in such a long time, we were beyond eager to escape. My bags were already packed.

Our joyful reunion would have to wait as that Level E F-1 tornado felled so many trees and power lines, the police were not letting anyone through – even on foot. I'd like to think my husband of 33 years was desperate to return to my loving embrace, but I think sleeping in his own bed was the higher priority.

Ah well. He tried valiantly but was turned away and had to spend the night at his sister's house.

The good news is that despite the near 100-mile an hour winds, there was little substantive damage. A few outbuildings were knicked, but as far as I have heard no people were harmed.

Road closures due to downed trees is certainly nothing new out on the Elk Neck peninsula. And it was not the first time the love of my life was on the wrong side of the downed trees for the night.

Early the next morning, he returned triumphant. Not only was he home, he was ready to pack his bags and



get out as quickly as possible. We had booked a room in a quaint stone farmhouse a couple of hours north and were eager to get going. He was also eager for me to see the damage and to admire how far he'd walked in his attempt to get home.

We quickly packed the car and as we closed the hood on the car, we were giddy to be leaving. If memory serves, I believe my husband whooped aloud in utter triumph.

And then, our neighbors pulled into the driveway in their little orange car.

Now what?

"Turkey Point Road is closed."

No, it's not. Rich got through over an hour ago. It's open.

"No, it's not. They are taking down a tower of some sort and the road is closed for at least another hour."

Whatever the opposite of a triumphant whoop sound is was made.

While Rich waited very impatiently on the sofa watching auto auctions, I busied myself like a housefrau.

Exactly 60 minutes passed, and we hopped back into the car and within a couple of minutes took in the extensive tree damage. I could smell it before I saw it. A previous twister felled 100 trees several years ago and that green stick smell lingered for over a week in what the orange car neighbor's daughter called The Valley of Despair.

It's a bad smell. The kind of scent that the word malodorous was coined for.

We were not alone in our curiosity. Much like rubberneckers on the highway, folks were slowing their roll to gawk at the damage and take photos.

As impressive (in a bad way) as it was then, looking at it now is even more so. Felled trees have been pushed aside and the thousands of limbs that crashed to the ground are now lying in a bed of withering leaves. Great tree sticks protrude from the wreckage. Some alive, some stripped – all affected in some way.

Our new Valley of Despair.

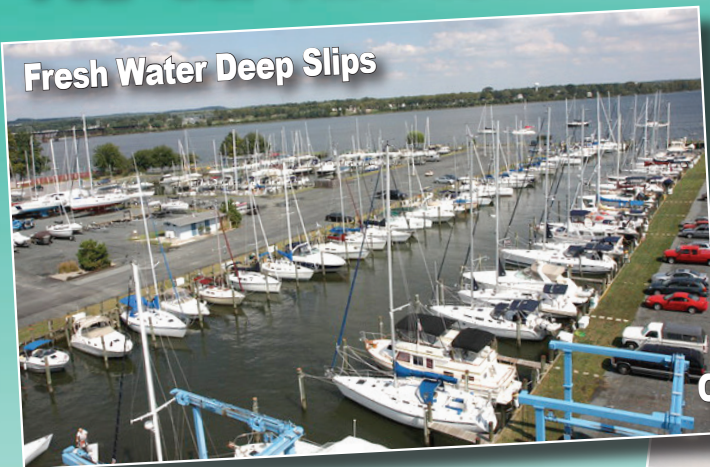
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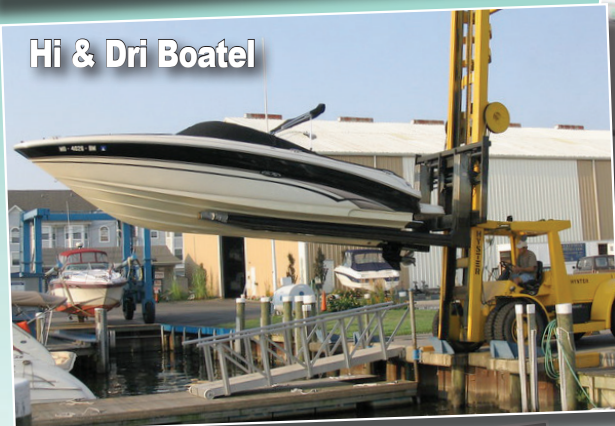
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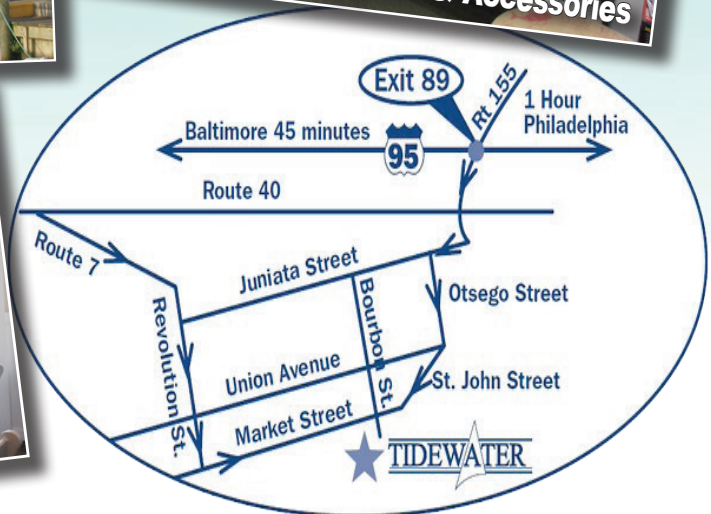
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# A Classic Bullseye *By Wendy Gilbert- Features Editor*

Nope. I'm not talking about axe throwing, a very interesting and trendy pastime, which I intend to try in the off season. I'm talking about tick bites.

Sadly, the number of cases of Lyme Disease in Maryland is doing nothing but going up. More people are getting bit. More tick-borne diseases are being discovered and more ticks may be arriving.

Maryland is currently home to five of them, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

- **American dog tick.** (shown) Diseases transmitted: Tularemia and Rocky Mountain spotted fever.
- **Blacklegged or deer ticks.** Diseases transmitted: Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, B. miyamotoi disease (a form of relapsing fever), ehrlichiosis, babesiosis, and Powassan virus disease
- **Brown dog tick.** Diseases transmitted: Rocky Mountain spotted fever
- **Gulf Coast tick.** Diseases transmitted: Rickettsia parkeri rickettsiosis, a form of spotted fever.
- **Lone star tick.** Diseases transmitted: Ehrlichia chaffeensis and Ehrlichia ewingii (which cause human ehrlichiosis), Heartland virus, tularemia, and STARI.

My recent encounter was most likely with the second one on the list -- a garden variety black-legged tick. Seeing as my neighborhood is home to herds of deer, I should not be surprised.

When I first discovered the huge red bite mark on my back, I thought I had been bit by a spider. The red mark was as big as a baseball and I immediately started applying hydrocortisone cream.

After 2 days, I noticed no improvement whatsoever with that treatment, although it was difficult to see my back. On the eve of day 3, right before bed, after a grueling long day, I spied the circles! The original mark was now the size of a dessert plate. Off to Urgent Care in the morning.

Diagnosis – classic bullseye presentation. Yes, it's Lyme

Disease. Here are some honking strong antibiotics to take for 3 weeks. Call your doctor.

I've been bitten by plenty of ticks and spiders over the years and have even been treated on a "just in case" fashion more than once.

No guessing this time.

And believe it or not, I am counting myself as a fortunate one indeed. Not everyone gets a classic bullseye, in fact only 70 to 80 percent do and that can lead to a late diagnosis, which can lead to very pervasive and persistent health problems. Don't believe me? Look at the sheer number of Facebook support groups! Incredible.

Known to be a bit on the outdoorsy side – loving boating, hiking, etc. – I know the drill and don't feel that I was negligent. In fact, I hadn't been outside to do any of the things I enjoy during the "bite time."

I was working in an office. Every single day for the entire window of biting opportunity—I'm talking 12 days straight.

The only time I could have been nabbed was to and from the garage to get to the car. I was wearing shoes, often socks and long pants – some of the most important preventative mea-

sures to be taking. I might have spent an entire half hour on my deck once or twice, so it wasn't like I was hiking in the woods or yanking my canoe out of the river.

Dirty little bastards. Ticks are not only becoming more abundant during these warm wet seasons, they are so desperate to suck our blood, they lie in wait and pounce when opportunity presents. If my research is to be believed, some folks even think they can sense a shadow passing nearby. Another reason to keep up the diet and exercise my friends – cast a smaller shadow so the ticks don't bite you while you are taking out the recycling.

Once the little ticklings have latched on and feasted on our precious blood, they leave the table (us) with nasty bacteria and diseases. And in turn, we must act like vampires, hiding from the sun because the anti-biotics make us super sun sensitive. And that's another reason for vigilance. That little tick bite just lost me about 3 weeks of prime boating time. Ack!



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# Everything else is just driving

by L. Alan Keene

Sometimes a trip to a far off paradise helps us better appreciate the paradise we have right here at home. A trip “down under” many years ago did just that and sailing the upper Bay has never be quite the same.....

My wife’s gentle nudge confirmed what I thought I’d heard.....the captain ask, “Are there any sailors aboard who who’d like to take a turn at the helm?” Up I hopped from my seat astern, excusing myself from a conversation with a vacationing couple from Perth.

“I’d like to give it a try,” I blurted at the captain, as I wove my way up to the starboard wheel. “I’m from the east coast of the U.S. and sail on the Chesapeake Bay.”

“The Chesapeake, eh?” Is she a deep body of water?” the Aussie captain queried.

“No, pretty shallow, actually, with a soft bottom,” I responded, taking a firm grip on CAMIRA’s wheel. “Most Chesapeake Bay sailors keep a close eye on the depth sounder!”

“Well, you don’t have to worry about that out here,” the captain motioned. “Just keep her close to the wind and have some fun.”

“Out here” were the waters of the Whitsunday Islands, Australia’s version of the British Virgin Islands. Off the coast of Queensland, the Whitsundays rise majestically out of the Coral Sea, with its azure blue waters protected by the Great Barrier Reef. This was a sailing venue that would excite even the most casual of sailors!

CAMIRA was an 85 foot catamaran with her aboriginal name, meaning “of the wind”, emblazoned from bow to stern on its narrow purple hulls. The advertising brochure touted her as “85 feet of pure adrenalin” -- a world first with her sleek lines, spacious deck areas and breathtaking performance, she is capable of sailing at up to 30 knots!” Taking her helm with blue skies, two foot seas, and 20 knot winds was a dream come true!

My first concern, of course, was to avoid embarrassment. While 25 years of sailing experience certainly qualified me for the helm, those 25 years consisted of tiller sailing in boats under 30 feet. TACKFUL, my 25 foot Capri, was quick for her size but a mere child’s toy compared to this multi-million dollar speed demon.

Gripping the leather covered wheel, I glanced down at the myriad of dials and gauges, grouped like a sports car’s dashboard. There to the right was the knotmeter showing a speed of 14.2 knots. Fortunately for me, a knot is a knot is a knot. No metric system conversions required. I knew what 14 knots was and I had never experienced that speed on any wind-driven vehicle before. While I didn’t question the accuracy of the knotmeter, I was surprised that it didn’t feel faster.



As CAMIRA sliced through the white-capped waters of the Coral Sea, I was seduced by the moment.....”here I am guiding this gorgeous sailboat through one of the most beautiful sailing locales in the world, under the flag of one of the premier sailing nations in the world. Wow! What a high! The excitement of the moment was even heightened by the captain’s approval of my diligence at the helm. (I think he was just being nice to the old American!)

As I adjusted to each wind shift, though, I was surprised to find that I couldn’t feel the pressure of the sea on the rudders. That little bit of weather helm that tells your hands that you’re carving a course that’s not totally

acceptable to the wind.....that pull on the tiller or tug on the wheel.....it was missing. A result of hydraulics, the captain later informed me. “She’d wear you out without it!”

As we entered the harbor that late winter evening, the sun barely visible over the distant horizon, I was floating on that proverbial cloud in an otherwise cloudless sky. Convinced that I had just experienced the most exciting half hour of my sailing life and that nothing, short of a full day at her helm, could ever top it, I turned to snap another digital image of CAMIRA as we headed for the hotel shuttle.

Well, it’s been almost 15 years since we sailed the Whitsundays and the glow has faded just a little. While I still reflect fondly on the sail that day, I no longer consider my time at CAMIRA’s wheel the apex of my sailing years. The hundreds of hours spent sailing the upper Bay, TACKFUL’s tiller firmly in hand, have provided more thrilling moments.....true sailing moments.

The exhilaration of hitting 7 or 8 knots surfing down the swells near Turkey Point, the excitement of burying the rail as we beat toward Fairlee Creek, the delight of being pulled along by that green and white spinnaker heading up the mouth of the Sassafras.....those are the special moments in MY sailing life! The feel of the sea in my hands and the speed in my gut.....without them, everything else is just driving!



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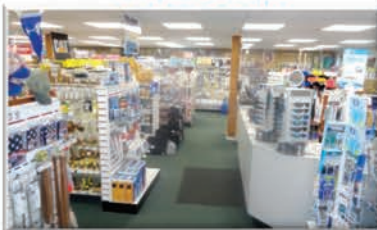
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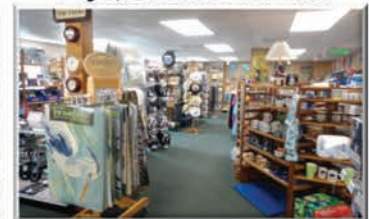
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# Wish-A-Fish at Sandy Point State Park By Tim Campbell

Wish-A-Fish is a yearly event for special needs children and their families to enjoy some time fishing. WAF premiered in the year 2000. Since then, over a thousand children and their family members have experienced a fun and exciting day of fishing. WAF events are coordinated in Annapolis, Ocean City, Virginia Beach, and now Pennsylvania. The WAF Annapolis event takes place at Sandy Point State Park with assistance from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. A uniformed DNR officer is there to help direct participants and answer any questions. DNR waives the park entrance fee to participants. WAF at SPSP was previously held in July, but because the park is so popular on weekends, some park goers had to be turned away as early as 8:30 a.m. due to overcrowding. Now the event is held in September when the crowds are down, fishing is good and the weather is typically pleasant.

Experienced boat owners, including recreational anglers and charter-boat captains volunteer their time for this worthy cause. WAF volunteers start setting up at 6 am. By 8 o'clock, up to 44 boats are ready and waiting at the dock including a backup boat and a Press boat. All boats must be at least 22-ft long and have a current U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Safety Inspection sticker. Some families need a big boat to be able to accommodate a wheelchair and provide shade. Families arrive at the park around 9 am. Matching the families to the boats and scheduling the first meeting with the volunteer boat captains is important. For many of the families, it is their first time being on a boat and first time fishing. The fishing fun starts at 9 and goes until noon, although some boats may come in early, and some may stay out a little longer. At 2 p.m. the group picnic begins. The event is over by five o'clock.

Skip Zinck, Coordinator of the WAF Annapolis Chapter has been involved for many years. A soft-spoken and humble leader, Skip is quick to acknowledge the many volunteers. Skip freely admits, "I do 1 percent of the work, but get 90 percent of

the credit." Many enthusiastic volunteers and generous supporters work together to make this special day happen. Even some past participants in WAF have stepped in to help.

There are no criteria for what makes a special needs child and there is no age limit. Some participants are in wheelchairs, or are afflicted with life-threatening illnesses such as cancer. Others may have serious developmental disabilities. WAF tries to help the participants in every possible way. For example, one year WAF got an interpreter for a deaf child who wanted to fish.

Skip likes to say, "It's a reality check for some able-bodied teens to see these children. Not having a smart phone or the latest video game is no comparison to what these special needs children and families have to deal with."

To host a WAF event costs about \$10,000. Every dime goes directly to the event. Everything including bait, drinks, food, ice, snacks, tables, and tents is either donated or bought at a reduced price. Each child gets a WAF hat, T-shirt, and a rod and reel. Each family receives a small tackle box with hooks, lures and sinkers. Before the trip, each family also gets a little goody bag. The boats are supplied with bait, ice and drinks prior to heading out on the water.

When the families come in from fishing, they can get their picture taken with their catch and the crew. Volunteers process the photographs on site to give each family. Besides a family photo, each youngster gets a Maryland DNR award certificate and a trophy to commemorate the occasion.

Most years, every child catches at least one fish be it a catfish, white perch, or Norfolk spot. Some crews catch striped bass by live-lining spot. One year, a little girl caught a small flounder. She was thrilled.

The families and volunteers begin as strangers, but the fishing helps to bond everyone together. Seeing the smiles on everyone is a gratifying and humbling experience. For more info see [www.wish-a-fish.org](http://www.wish-a-fish.org).



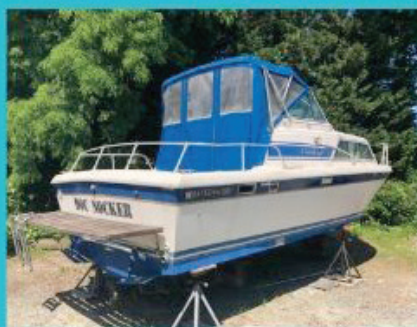
*Paul Buckmaster helps a kid hold his Wish a Fish*



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# Outboard

## Repower

When I bought my boat back at the end of 2006, I did so with the family budget in mind. Maximizing the vessel with a 150 horse power (hp) motor would have been financially impractical. I powered it with a 90 horse power Suzuki four stroke that was sufficient enough to cruise around upper bay waters and hit fishing spots not so far away from the ramp where I would launch. I have felt a little inferior in charity bass tournaments that I've entered, not having speed and range to hit distant bass grounds. However, I didn't buy the boat to be a tournament angler; so, I have no complaints. The Suzuki served me well.

Over the winter, my boat got a transformation. I repowered it with a 150 hp Yamaha. It was the right time financially. It didn't max out the power so I can blaze across the bay at top speed. Although, a bit more speed will allow me to venture out to fishing spots a bit farther from the ramp in the same time as it would take me, in the past, to get to the ones I frequent now.

There are other reasons for repowering your boat. Obviously, if you have blown your current motor, you'll need a new one. If you've logged a lot of hours and you've noticed a fall in power and/or performance, it may be time. While, in most cases, you will have a motor payment, there are savings to be had along the way.

Those who are repowering from a two stroke to a four stroke will see instant savings. There is no need to buy outboard motor oil. An avid bass and striper fisherman friend uses 5 to 7 gallons a year. A bass tournament fishing friend uses around 12 gallons a year. At \$19.99 to 33.95 per gallon, that is a savings of approximately \$140 to \$235 for an avid fishing friend and \$239 to \$407 for a tournament angler. Winterization is more economical, too. Except for long term storage, there is no need for motor fogging fluids or anti-freeze. You simply need to stabilize you gas.

Jon Bentley, head technician at Hooked on the Bay in Elkton, Maryland, says that today's outboard motors are far ahead of those from the past. Two stroke motors did not have near the longevity as the four strokes of today. Jon



By Tim Sherman

says that even the old, dependable Yamaha HPDI motors would need to be freshened up at around 800 to 1000 hours. The technology in today's four stroke have the reliability of automobile motors. There are documented, commercially used, four stroke motors with over 8,000 hours on them. When I called Jon for his input, he had a Yellowfin with twin Yamahas 250s that each had 3,000 hours on them with only routine maintenance performed.

Bentley says that another savings is with fuel. If you repower with the same horse power motor; and depending on the rpm range that is run, savings can be 20% to 40%. He also suggests that with today's motors, if you consistently run below 4700 rpms, you'll have even more savings on fuel. Four stroke motors have more torque through the entire rpm range. This especially helps with the fuel economy through the mid-range and upper end of the power band.

Today's outboards are computer aided, which provides many added benefits. Available digital gauge functions give you more information than ever before. Computer diagnostics are always being performed. This will allow you to find a potential issue before it becomes a major problem. You will be notified through the gauges. There are also fail safes built in that can prevent catastrophic motor failure while, in most cases, allowing you to return to home port safely.

There are also creature comfort features. Some manufacturers offer fly-by-wire throttle and steering, joystick steering, and trolling speed functions that take away the need for manual throttle adjustments. So, if you have been thinking about it, or have a need to repower, you don't need to have an internal debate. The advantages of the current generation of outboards will have you at ease with your decision for many years to come.



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photo by Donna Bedell



# Braided Line

By Tim Sherman

Way back in the 1990s -- it seems like forever now -- fishing line manufacturers introduced super lines. Made by braiding fibers of Spectra, the new line category would soon change much of how we fish. Anglers now refer to braided line as "braid". The super lines were touted as having superior sensitivity, low diameter, longer casting distance, and very little if any stretch. Once anglers got their hands on it, some of the negatives -- truths and urban legends -- started to echo through the fishing community like a yodel through the Swiss Alps. Broken rods, grooved guides, poor knot strength, high visibility, busted reels, unmanageability on spinning outfits, and horrendous backlashes were the tales of woe. Like everything in fishing (and in life), you have to take the bad with the good. Through the years, manufacturers have made great strides in mitigating some of the unfavorable traits of braided line.

I have been using braided line for longer than I can remember, though it took me a while to try it. I can honestly say I have never broken a rod, grooved guides, or shattered the inner workings of a reel. There have been some monstrous backlashes in baitcasters and loops in spinning reels, but that has a lot more to do with angler malfunction. While fishing with a Kentucky bass pro Mark Menendez, I had loops so far into the spool that he asked me, "What ya doin' back there, knittin' a sweater?" The success I've had with braid far outweighs the few mishaps through the years.

Braid does have superior sensitivity over monofilament, copolymers, and fluorocarbon lines. The properties of Spectra are the determining factor. Because of the low diameter per pound-test, it does cast farther than mono and fluorocarbon of the same pound test. Many braided lines of 20-pound test have the diameter of 6-pound test monofilament, 30-pound/8-pound, 50-pound/12-pound, etc. The low stretch/no stretch trait affords an angler sure hooksets. If you are a bass fisherman who flips lures into heavy cover, or casts artificial frogs over submerged vegetation, braid is the line for you. Stripper fisherman who use jigs also benefit from braid.

There is some cautionary advice for using braided line. Many anglers believe that they can use heavy braided line on light tackle. For instance, 20-pound test line will spool up nicely on a spinning reel rated to hold 110 yards of 6-pound test line. The mistake here is that, while 20-pound test braid has



the diameter of 6-pound test mono, it's still 20-pound test line. Rods and internal parts of reels are overpowered and are subject to breakage.

Braid has no memory like other types of line. Thus, it is very easily tangled upon itself. Windy days, slack line, and any other rationale for why line would wind back loosely are major reasons why big-time loops end up in the spool. These are also reasons why braided line will occasionally wrap around a guide. Backlashes on baitcasting reels are inevitable for the vast majority of fishermen. Some backlashes in braided line can cause expletive-laden tirades. In the past, I've had to retire a rod for the day after using a less than educated thumb on a baitcaster spooled with braid.

Spectra is a slick material, another trait that leads to long casts. But, the downfall is that many knots will slip.

The truth is, some brands slip more than others. Knots in the slick brands will often hold when you give it a tug but may pull through under the pressure of fighting a fish. I have lost a fish to knot failure. It was heart breaking to lose a big striper. I use a J knot or an Albright knot to join fluorocarbon to braid. It was the J knot that failed but I don't blame the choice of knot. Needless to say, I do not use that brand of braided line anymore.

Braided line is highly visible. The angler can see it, which is good. A fish can see it and that can be bad. Bass anglers shouldn't fret, especially when flipping jigs and pitching plastics. The presentation puts the line in and out of the water so quickly that a bass has only a second or two to make up its pea-sized mind on whether or not to strike the lure. It doesn't get a chance to think. "Oh, that lure is tied to braided line, I'm not going to bite it."

Stripers are a different story. They can be line shy. A lure has a longer period of being in the strike zone and the line can be detected. I tie on a fluorocarbon shock leader when striper fishing. It has light refracting properties and is nearly invisible in the water. I'll also tie on a fluorocarbon leader in clear water when using finesse tactics for bass: shaky head worms, senkos, etc.

I can truly say that fishing with braided line has made me a better fisherman. I can't imagine how many fish I would not have caught if I hadn't started using it. As fishermen, we have to put the odds in our favor once we find the fish. Braided line will aid in detecting the bite through getting the hook set. If you haven't spooled up with it yet, it's time to invest in braid.

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# Effective Anchoring

By Captain Mark Galasso

Yesterday morning we headed north out of Kent Narrows for a fishing trip. The winds were a moderate 10 knots out of the southwest. The tide was ebbing just slightly. My mind was made up I was going to anchor up somewhere and chum even though I knew the wind and tide would be opposing one another. And if that didn't work I would troll a 5 rod spoon rig until we found something to jig on. As I motored past the Old Love Point Lighthouse rock pile at 7:30am I could already see 30 boats jockeying for position. Glad that wasn't in my plans. I knew we were getting a late start. The bigger fish had been hard to come by in the middle of the day. The 82 degree water temperature and a few big dead "Floaters" drifting with the current made me guess the big fish were stressed and just trying to survive in waters with little oxygen. That would explain why the bigger fish were active early in shallower water like the rock piles and bridge pilings where wave action hitting structure could aerate the hot water.

My depth finders showed lots of fish. I finally found a likely spot and dropped my anchor. Fish were stacked up under the boat but we could only catch undersized ones. After trying a few spots we gave up and started trolling. Truth be known I was getting tired of going up on the bow and hand pulling my anchor off the bottom. We caught a few nice fish trolling when my cell phone rang. It was a buddy live lining on the rock pile. He only needed one more fish and he was willing to supply me with live Spot when I came in and anchored on his set. How could I refuse? We reeled up the trolling rods and headed his way.

When we got to the rock pile he was in the middle of the fleet. I explained to one of my guys how to run the boat and walked up on the bow. Not ideal. I don't have confidence in my anchor to always catch and I surely didn't want to drift over some small boat. We caught a few fish and the bite died. Fast forward a couple hours. The wind picked up but the boats thinned out and we tried anchoring up in a different position. We finally got set and caught our fish. However, as more boats showed up we saw at least half of them dropping and dragging anchors as they drifted away from the fish. You could hear the frustration as boats drifted away or worse drifted into one another. I couldn't wait to get out of there.

So here's the thing. Get an anchoring system that works for your boat. And test it out BEFORE you try and anchor up in a fleet of boats on a rough day. I know my systems limits. (I should after 24 years of climbing up on the bow and dropping the same anchor.) I know I need to upgrade MY system. So I've been doing a little research.

There are basically three types of anchors used in the Bay. The first is the Danforth. It is a good general anchor and works great in mud or sand. The next is a Plow. It works pretty well in mud or sand but it works very well in hard shelly bottom. The third is a Grapnel which is more designed to work in shells and rocks. I keep a small aluminum grapnel on my Everglades specifically to drop on rock piles. It actually has bendable hooks I can leverage out of the rocks. Many of the bigger charter boats have gone to a Rock Hall Anchor. This is basically a Danforth with a two prong Grapnel welded to it. This helps the Danforth lift up to the right angle and dig into harder bottom. I don't recommend this anchor for a boat where your pulling up the anchor by hand.

One item many people, particularly on small boats, overlook is chain. An anchor needs a shot of chain between the main line and the anchor. How much and what size depends on the anchor and the boat. The chain should be long enough and heavy enough to drag on the bottom when drifting so it keeps the angle of the anchor down enough for the flukes to dig in. The main



line needs to be long enough for the depth of water you will be in. There are all kinds of formulas to figure that out with scope and all. Ask the guys and gals at your marine store.

The most important thing though is practice getting the Anchor to hold in different conditions, different bottom conditions as well as tide and wind conditions. Unless you have an anchor windless no matter how small the boat it is generally a two man operation. And both individuals should know how to operate the boat and deploy the anchor. Don't just toss it out and hope it holds. Chains and lines do get tangled in the anchor and anchor lines DO get run over by props. Practice.

If I've learned one thing over the years with anchoring. It's know what you might drift into if the anchor doesn't hold or if the wind and tide suddenly shift. It's like the old hunting saying. "Know what's behind your target." Some Captains learned it the hard way this year already either drifting through a pound net or drifting into other boats. Or even worse the anchor all of a sudden catching just as a wave shears the boat and flips it over. I once saw a couple guys anchor up in Kent Narrows right in front of my slip. Their anchor caught on an old Ferry cable and they were tight. Happy they were tight on the first drop they started fishing. As the tide quickly began to ebb hard helped by a strong Northwest wind they decided to pull the anchor and leave. They didn't realize the anchor was on the cable and before they could cut it loose it pulled the nose of their Jon Boat under water. The only saving grace was they both had life jackets on. However, that didn't save their fishing gear. DON'T BE THOSE GUYS. Be safe for you and the boats around you.

**Safe boating—Capt' Mark**

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# Perfect Harmony

By L. Alan Keene

Boating has provided Peg and me with the opportunity to meet many interesting and accomplished people over the past 35 years, but none more interesting or accomplished than the young man we met on a warm afternoon a few years back.

It was the Saturday before Easter, I think, and Peg and I had just snugged up our lines. Our morning sail had been great, but since NOAA radio had mentioned the potential for violent thunderstorms and penny sized hail in the afternoon, we decided that the darkening skies were reason enough to enjoy the rest of the day in the marina.

As we sat back in the cockpit, enjoying the unseasonably warm Spring day, a young man approached from down the pier. After the usual pleasantries, he expressed admiration for our sailboat, comparing our "thoroughbred" to his "slug", a 25-footer that he kept in a slip close by. After checking out another sailboat in a nearby slip, he returned and we began sharing sailing tales. While he spoke with all the usual vernacular, there was the hint of an accent that piqued my wife's curiosity.

"May I ask where you're from originally?", Peg asked politely. "I detect a slight accent that I can't quite place."

"Well, I'm from all over, really," he said with a chuckle.

"I was born in Romania and moved to New Zealand when I was a boy. That's where I took up sailing."

"Wow, what a place to learn to sail!", I responded. "In the nation that STOLE our cup!"

After a good laugh, we told him of a recent trip we had taken to Australia and how we regretted not visiting New Zealand while we were there. For the next half hour or so we shared our love for the Aussies and he, his love for his adopted homeland. We learned all about New Zealand's climate and topography, and the Kiwi's obsession with the sea. Curious to know what this very likable young man did for a living, I offered that I was retired after 35 years in mental health work. "What kind of business are you in?", I asked.

"I'm a musician," he responded, failing to go any further.

"And what instrument would that be?", I queried, unable to control my curiosity.

"The piano," he responded, "I play and teach the piano."

"You play, too. Are you a concert pianist?", I asked, by now fully aware that I was prying.

"Yes, I play about 45 concerts a year and teach at a university in Pennsylvania.

"May I ask your last name?", I continued, suspecting that we might be in the presence of a local celebrity.

"I'd prefer not, if you don't mind. It's Romanian and a little cumbersome. I hope you understand?"

Assuring him that I did, I led the discussion back to sailing and our mutual love of the sport. Before long though, I found myself asking about the dangers that sailing could present for the hands of a pianist. He concurred that some hazards certainly existed, but that sailing was as much a passion as his music and he chose to enjoy both. After a brief discussion of our shared liberal politics, our new friend excused himself and, with a wave, was gone.

"What a nice guy," Peg said, amazed that almost an hour had passed since he took a seat on our finger pier. "I wonder who he is?"

"Well, it's clear that he wants to keep a low profile, so he's probably well known in the area," I answered. "Maybe he plays with the Baltimore Philharmonic or the orchestra down in DC.... when he's not teaching. I'd love to hear him play sometime.... but first we have to figure out who he is. I'll check him out on the internet when we get home."

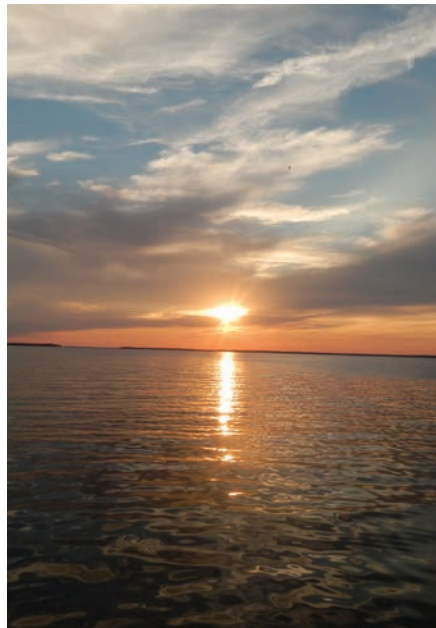
With that, the discussion turned to dinner.

Since we knew our young friend's first name and the university where he taught, it was just a matter of checking the music faculty for an instructor with the same first name.

As I perused the university's home page, clicking on the music department, what I discovered literally took my breath

away. There next to a picture of the young man who shared a Saturday afternoon with us was the biography of an internationally acclaimed concert pianist! There next to his photo was the bio of a performer whose work has been universally praised around the world....an international award-winning artist who has performed at the White House, the Winter Olympics, and Carnegie Hall!

As I caught my breath and Peg was losing hers, I was struck by two things. First was the modesty and affability of our new friend. While you would expect a person of his stature to be aloof and self-consumed, he was clearly the opposite; again, and again redirecting the conversation away from himself. And second.... his love of sailing. It was evident from the moment we met that he was passionate about sailing. But even more.... he was passionate about sailing the upper Chesapeake. It occurs to me now that if his skill with the tiller ever approaches his skill with the black and white keys, anyone with a fragile ego better stay clear of the "slug"!



# On the Waterfront

with George Waters

photo by Donna Bedell

## To 'George' (Verb)

We got new name tags at work recently, and my job title was gone. My last tag said "George Librarian," which allowed my library customers to joke that with a last name like that, what other job could I have possibly ended up in?

Now, due to the ever-unexplained vagaries of city government, it simply says "George." Now I could be anything. Now I could be in Public Works. Code enforcement. Planning. In a way, it is freeing.

Maybe I should consider "George" my job title now. My new job description? To George. So I have resolved that I will George the crap out of any task given to me. Georing will be the new goal from here on out.

"What are you doing?" a coworker will ask as I settle new DVDs into the New DVDs rack.

"Georing the crap out of these DVDs," I will say. "What are you doing?"

And because she also went from a titled name tag to a name-only one, she will say something along the lines of "I'm about to Jackie the hell out of these periodicals."

George meant farmer in the old days, but now it can mean anything! Georing has got to be easier than Bobbing, don't you think? That's got to be tough on the neck. Easier than Kenning too. To Ken you have to know stuff. Georing is easier than Billing for sure. And Georing has to seriously beat the heck out of Harrying. I do not think it is even possible to break

a sweat Georing. I'll get back to you.

Imagine if Shakespeare had gone a different way:

"To George or not to George. That...well...that is just puffery. When in doubt, by all means George!"

If George as a name goes in the direction I think it soon will, years from now when they ask schoolboys what they want to be when they grow up, instead of cop or fireman or TV talking-head, they will say "George." And the person asking the question will smile, knowing that all things are possible, and surely a kid should aim high. "Good answer," they will say. "Stay in school."

I have had name tag jobs before, and they never had my job title on them. It was always obvious what my job was because of what I was doing. I was delivering plates of food. I was serving up boxes of popcorn and sodas.

What customer, upon approaching me and my previous name tag and reading my job title, would smack his forehead and say "Wait, seriously? You're behind a desk on the main floor of a library but you are a LIBRARIAN? I thought maybe you were in custodial. Mind BLOWN."

So titles on name tags are mostly a perk, a bit of an ego thing, like the chevrons on a sergeant's sleeve. Ideally, we shed ego as we age, so this name tag revision is a good reminder. Accepting change is hard, but I tell you this—I am going to George the living daylights out of it.

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# Linda & Ed's Excellent Adventure

By Ed Gerner

Having sold our much-loved Fast Trawler in early March we were desperate to locate and buy just what we wanted in a new boat. Extensive research pointed to a new or newish Sabre of 45 or more feet LOA.

Unfortunately, the suitable supply was rather thin. Undaunted, we arranged to spend multiple days at the Palm Beach Boat Show, where we bought the boat of our dreams, a nearly new Sabre 48. After suitable surveys and sea trials, she was ours.

But now we had to get her North!

We went to sea out of a reasonably benign Jupiter Inlet on Mother's Day, and enjoyed a pleasant passage to St. Augustine, where we arrived nearly 8 hours later. The weather gods were smiling on us, and the boat ran well at 23-24 knots.

Day 2's plan was to run a rhumb line course from St. Augustine inlet to Charleston, SC, standing out to sea 30-40 miles offshore to make the course good. Despite Southwest winds of 10-15 knots, this too was a pleasant passage, albeit a little bumpier. Our only challenge was slipping our 53-ft overall boat into a 60-ft space alongside, with a 20-knot crosswind blowing us off, and a 4-knot current attacking the bow. Joystick docking, and pods did the trick.

Pushing our luck, we decided to again jump offshore on day 3 on a longish passage to Beaufort, NC, despite the forecast of 15 knot winds from the West. Our strategy was to follow the coastline, staying only a mile or two off



the beach, secure in the knowledge that wave fetch would be reduced by proximity to shore. There was one problem with our strategy: winds were from the Northeast at 15-25 knots. After beating our brains in for about 55 nautical miles, we got religion and turned into Georgetown inlet. Unfortunately, Georgetown inlet faces Northeast, and the tide was ebbing at 4 knots, creating 9-ft standing seas in the longish inlet. This was definitely the signal "pucker point" of the trip. With a lot of wheel work and throttle work, we managed to safely ride the backs of a couple well-chosen combers in to the relative serenity of the ICW.

The next few days witnessed the agonizingly slow passage of the infamous ditch, except for a side trip out to Masonboro Inlet at Wrightsville Beach to Beaufort Inlet.

Other "pucker points" were the infamous "Rockpile", and the numerous uncharted shoals that shift in the open water narrow channels between the various canals of the ICW.

Near the end of our ICW trip, we ran into a stuck swing bridge ( 6-ft vertical clearance) at Centreville. After a 2 hour wait ( thank heavens for "Skyhook"), we passed through the anchored boats, only to make Atlantic Yacht Basin just below Great Bridge that evening.

The next morning, we locked through at Great Bridge, endured the numerous bridges and extensive construction barges impinging on the ICW, passed through Norfolk, cleared Hampton Roads, and entered our beloved Chesapeake.

Our refrain was "Free at last, free at last. Thank God we're free at last".

We Chesapeake boaters have no idea how blessed we are.



photos by Colleen Smart





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Tiki Lee's Dock Bar is named for Lee Carey, founder Dave Carey's father, who was an avid fisherman and outdoors-man. Besides fishing and spending time in the Great Outdoors, there wasn't much that Lee enjoyed more than relaxing, having fun and spending time with his family and close friends. In tribute to his Dad, Dave Carey founded Tiki Lee's Dock Bar in hopes that family and friends (old and new) would have a place to kick back and relax with those they love most. So when you visit us, raise a glass to Lee! Cheers!

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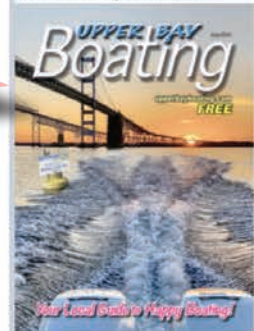
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# Weather's Role in Boating Safely

by Captain Dale Plummer



Several of our boating friends have lost their lives in tragic boating scenarios on the Chesapeake Bay this summer which makes our thoughts go to “How can we all be safer on the water?” The common thread in their deeply sad stories is

unexpected, violent localized storms and not wearing PFDs.

First and foremost, check the marine weather forecast for your area before leaving the dock. Winds may be calm inshore, but the Bay could be rockin’ and rollin’. Access the most recent marine weather reports direct from your VHF radio aboard your vessel. Always heed the coast guard warnings of impending storms, Small Craft Advisory, or Gale Conditions. This warning system was created to keep you safe.

Even when you’ve done your homework and it seems like a good weather day on the Bay, a pop-up thunderstorm can create a dangerous situation. Keep your eyes on the skies throughout the day and check weather sources often. If you see dark clouds looming on the horizon, head for port. If you can’t make it home, make the wise decision to take out those PFDs and wear them. Take safe harbor in a tributary, or small creek, anchor up and wait out the storm on the leeward side of a cove.

## RECOMENDED ONLINE RESOURCES

BoatUS Foundation’s Weather for Boaters course  
<http://www.boatus.org/weather/>

NOAA Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System  
<https://buoybay.noaa.gov/locations>

BoatUS Towing App - Weather and towing assistance on the water  
<http://www.boatus.com/towing/app.asp>

Dark Sky App - “Hyper-local, weather with foul weather alerts” <https://darksky.net/app/>

During the storm, be sure to check and re-check that your anchor is holding. The last thing you need is to have the wind blow you aground when you are huddled in the cabin trying to stay dry. When the sun pops out again, you can head for home without angry clouds and 4+’ waves scaring your crew.

There also are phone apps that we rely on daily to help us avoid sudden weather emergencies and BoatUS offers an excellent “Weather for Boaters” course so you can learn more about good boating practices Become an informed, weather-wise boater so this boating season can be your safest yet.

As always, happy to help and please, wear your life jacket. There isn’t time in a boating emergency to find, fit and secure a lifejacket.

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# Prepping Your Crew

by James Bedell



Every time you hop onto your boat you feel ready. This is YOUR boat, your world. Hop on, start your checks- lines, bilges, smell around, etc. You've got your outline and you know how to go about preparing for a day out. Now your family hops on to. Do they know the drill? Do they stand in a corner and wait for you to tell them to sit down and get ready to take off? It's important that those who will be on your boat most often know what they should be doing. Do things need to be stowed, if so, where? Should they help with lines? Getting everyone on the same page is crucial to safely enjoying a day out on the boat. We all know the timeless tropes of a captain trying to bring a boat into the dock, barking orders, yelling at everyone, and still it seems that no one is getting it right. Docking can be frustrating for sure, but if everyone knows their duties and positions ahead of time, things go a lot more smoothly. You can't just assume that your family and friends will watch and learn; some may pick it up, but others won't. Take the time to explain how you like things done and help them to understand why. It's not enough to say "put this line here". What if the next dock you go to is configured differently? You have to give them enough information to understand why things are done a certain way to allow them to adapt to changing circumstances. If your crew understands why the boat moves this way or that or why your spring line is the most important, then they are better equipped to jump in and help when needed.

On the other hand, sometimes you just don't want anyone jumping in and helping. Period. That's alright too- as long as you communicate that to the crew. Don't get upset when someone tries to help if you haven't specifically asked them not to. I find that this holds especially true when you have new people or non-boaters aboard. Tell them plainly ahead of time that, when the time comes, their duty is to be out of the way and not touch anything. If that's what helps you the most, give them that instruction, otherwise they are going to want to help. For that matter, you need to give every newcomer and non-boater a thorough rundown of what they should and should not do. Sure, "Beer is in the fridge and be careful with the head, it's not like the toilet at home" covers the basics, but you really need to get in-depth about how to be on a

boat. The number one thing that non-boaters don't understand is balance. Especially with smaller boats, balance is a delicate thing and needs constant attention. Someone walking from the port to starboard can really cause a mess if you are on the bow pulling an anchor or leaning over a gunwale to reach a piling. You don't need everyone aboard to pass a Coast Guard class, but they do need the basics. Show them where all of your safety equipment is. Give basic instructions on the use of the radio, engine controls, and windlass in case of emergencies. And please, please, teach the kids that the VHF is not a toy! I know its fun, but it's an important piece of emergency equipment and should not be misused. Besides these safety based rules, think about anything specific to your boat. Being in a small aluminum boat I always have to tell non-boaters to keep their hands out of the water at speed. Not only does it cause a drag and act as a rudder, but smacking a log at 16 knots is going to hurt. A lot. And of course, if you do any swimming off of the boat be sure to keep people well clear of the transom and running gear, even if it's all shut down. A prop can do serious damage when that big wake comes and rocks your boat about.

By now we are beyond two of the biggest holidays of the boating season and closing in on the dog days of summer. Hopefully these tips will help you to keep boating safely and enjoying your summer. The more your crew knows, the more they can help. And the more your guests know, the less damage they'll do to your boat and themselves. Remember, not everyone is lucky enough to be a boater, so be patient, be kind, and when all else fails- makes sure they know their job is to sit and down and stay out of the way. Everyone will be happier and safer for it, and that's the goal after all.



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photo by Donna Bedell

# A Guide to STEAMERS!!!

By Montana Grant



Now that crab season is here, let's get down to the basics of pigging out on crabs! For many true crab pickers, a crab feast would make for a wonderful Last Supper. A couple big jimmies, a cold brew, and great friends would seal the deal.

Here are the **10 commandments** of eating crabs! These commandments came from an old crabber that climbed atop the Bay Bridge and was struck by lightning. God then gave him two bushel basket lids with the 10 Commandments scribbled on them. The original lids can be found hanging on a shed in Crisfield. Don't get Steamed about eating Steamers! Follow these commandments the next time you enjoy Maryland Steamed crabs.

**1** When buying crabs, order medi-

ums when you're having guests over. Order larges for you and your better half. Order jumbos when you need a real treat to celebrate something special. And smalls are just if you can't find anything else.

**2** Every picking style is both right and wrong. Legs first? Apron first? Butter knife? Mallet? Vinegar? Butter sauce? Save your claws to the end? Just don't wear a lobster bib or gloves. Crab picking is a time to socialize. Enjoy your company and learn to talk with crab in your mouth. Share your skills, styles, and stories.

**3** Once you touch a crab, IT'S YOURS! None of this weighing-each-crab-with-your-hand stuff. Look for full legs, dark shells, and other signs that identify a heavy crab. If you pick a loser, pick it anyway.

**4** Plan a crab feast by having at least 6 crabs per feaster! When the crabs get dumped on to the table, there are many crab sprinters. They usually feast out fast. Watch out for crab poachers that are pocketing crabs for later. What is served at the feast stays at the feast! Once everyone says "uncle", then divvy up any survivors for take home treats.

**5** You're being monitored by everyone. If you are not cleaning your crab completely you will get called out. Not eating your mustard, claws, legs and point fat? You won't be invited back. Save the legs and claws for last. Crabs are too special to waste. Learn to be a "Pickin Pro"!

**6** Don't dare ask anyone to pick a crab for you. You pick crabs for yourself. If you're a newbie, you'll get taught once, so pay attention. If you pull off a meaty backfin, show it off! If you cut yourself, keep eating. No tears. Old Bay will seal the cut quickly.

**7** If you leave the table to wash your hands, you become everyone's personal slave until you're back and their needs are met. Take orders, clear shells, get paper towels, fill the beer pitcher, grab some more crabs, scratch my back, oh and ...

**8** Crabs are just an appetizer. Have some corn, shrimp, tomatoes, and Utz plain chips on hand. Not everyone is willing to pick until their fingers and elbows bleed. If you have crab soup on hand, pick crab meat and throw it into your soup for a super crabby bowl of soup. Crab pretzels are also amazing. Nothing should go to waste.

**9** The last man/mom standing at the table gets bragging rights. Good full crabs are easier to pick and fill you up faster. If you dip crab meat into butter, they become even more rich and may cause you to eat fewer crabs. Light crabs require more picking and more crabs. Skilled pickers can enjoy them, but pickers spoiled by eating only great full crabs will get bored quickly. It's not how many crabs you can pig up, it's how well you pick them and leave no waste.

**10** If you're invited to a crab feast, that means you're special. Not just anybody gets invited over. It's love. Be sure to say, "good crabs!" or "really full!" or "lots of mustard!" even when they're crap. Poor crabs are still better than no crabs. Also bring something. Beer, dessert, Brownies and ice cream. Don't just

be a mooch! Be a helper, especially during clean up and you will be invited back.

Some crab feasters may have a crab shell crafter in the mix. Ask if anyone is saving the shells. This way, you can be careful to pull the shell off more carefully. These crafty Crustaceans can make awesome decorations and Christmas Ornaments.

Kids can enjoy crabs too but don't waste them. Rookies use the hammer to smash these tasty critters and ruin a great crab. Teach them and they will learn. If not, make sure that you have hot dogs for them.

Left over crabs are even better cold. Place them in a fridge and pick them for crab cakes or soup. This is a perfect past time when watching dem O's or Ravens.

On a trip to Crisfield, we went to a picking house. It was here that I learned to become a proficient picker. I sat down with several large ladies that were singing hymns and picking their brains out. They welcomed me and showed me the ropes. Time was money for them, and each lady had a trick, tip, or suggestion. What was surprising was that most of the ladies were wearing white dresses! Even after picking a barrel of crabs, their dresses were clean!





## STEAMERS!!!

When it is time to clean up crabs, old 50 lb. dog food bags work great! Plastic bags tear easily and if the trash man is a few days out, your neighbors will hate you. Crabs do make awesome mulch. Just be sure to cover them with several inches of leaves or media. Also lay down a few layers of the local newspaper or heavy brown wrapping paper. Roll up the pickings into one big ball.

The best desserts after crabs are important. Brownies and ice cream are always a favorite. Pineapple Upside down cake and some whip is good. Frozen Berger cookies are wonderful. Ice cream sundaes or something sweet helps to cleanse the Old Bay pallet.

Bugs can be a nuisance when eating crabs on a typical Maryland summer day.



Humidity, Sun, heat, and did I mention humidity? Many Bay folks wear shorts. "Squitos" also love to feast. Try getting some Thermocell Bug Repellent lights and portable units. These propane units heat a treated pad that keeps bugs away and your bare legs and ankles bug free. If you need to bring bug spray, try making your own from various oils like citronella, lemons, and witch hazel. Search online for recipes. That way you can keep the DEET off your fingers when licking crab mustard.

Maryland Crabs are an annual tradition. You will never get enough. To non-believers, Blue Crab pickin' is like cleaning spiders. That's ok, more for the rest of us.

For more Montana Grant, find him cruising at [www.monatagrantsfishing.com](http://www.monatagrantsfishing.com).

### 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](http://www.montanagrantsfishing.com).



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# "Scattered Thunderstorms"

By L. Alan Keene

Have you noticed the large number of "scattered thunderstorm" warnings that have been predicted for the Upper Bay this summer? You know, the ones with "damaging winds" and "possible hail" that we should "seek shelter" from? If you have a first mate like mine, she made sure you noticed. Let me begin by telling you a little bit about Peg, the woman who's sailed with me for the last 35 years and lived with me a lot longer than that. Unlike a lot of sailor's wives who become uncomfortable when the boat starts to heel more than a few degrees, mine loves to bury the rail. Unlike a lot of sailor's wives who shy away from leaving the cockpit on a breezy day, mine loves the thrill of hanging her legs over the high side and feeling the spray from the wave tops on her face. Get caught with a little too much sail up?.....no problem. It's all fun to her.

Then what am I upset about, you ask? What's the big deal? I've got it made, you say.

Well, that's true, up to a point. And we reached that point when the weather forecasts for the summer days began to read "possible scattered thunderstorms in the afternoon". That one three syllable word, THUN-DER-STORM, turns this adventure loving, thrill seeking first mate of mine into a timid, whiny, 71 year old wimp.

Now, the logical explanation for her fear of storms would be that we've been caught in a bad one or two and she's suffering from PTSD....post traumatic storm disorder. But that's simply not the case. We've always been able to duck into a safe harbor well before a storm has hit, and we've never suffered any damage or injury. We were caught out in gale force winds from a passing cold front many years ago, but her fear of thunderstorms seems to have popped up overnight.

As any Chesapeake Bay boater knows, forecasts of "scattered afternoon thunderstorms" make up over 90% of the weather forecasts for the Bay from mid-July to mid-September. If a boater wants to avoid the possibility of an afternoon thunderstorm popping up on the Chesapeake, he or she better limit their boating to early Spring and late Fall or find a cooler place to sail. Peg knows it's true, but it doesn't help.

One weekday back in mid-August typifies the debilitating effect Peg's new found fear has had on our summer sailing. It was a beautiful, sunny, 85 degree day with the forecast of.....you guessed it, thunderstorms in the afternoon. After a lot of urging and a bribe of dinner out (she'll follow me anywhere if I take her out to dinner), she succumbed, with the stipulation that I would not wait to the last minute to head for shelter. I agreed and off we went.

Since we do most of our sailing at the top of the Bay south of the Flats and north of Still Pond, we left our Havre de Grace slip and started down the channel toward Turkey Point. But before we had gotten 100 yards, Peg, who was listening to NOAA radio, popped her head up from the cabin to inform me that a line of storms was headed our way and would be over the Bay in two hours.

"Why don't we just stay up here and sail near the marina today", she pleaded. "That way we can head in before it gets bad."

Although I'd much rather sail in open water than in that small area at the mouth of the Susquehanna, I spun TACKFUL around and headed back up toward Concord Pt. light. ANY sailing is better than NO sailing, I figured..... and besides, if a storm does hit, Peg's right....it's better to be close to home.

With a steady 10 knot breeze blowing out of the northwest, we raised our sails and headed off on a broad reach toward Perry Point. The forecast for "severe thunderstorms" notwithstanding, it was a gorgeous day for sailing. After about two hours, however, Peg pointed out the darkening sky out to the west.

"We better go in," she insisted.

"Hon, that storm is over an hour away," I reasoned, "and besides, it looks like it might pass us to the north. RELAX, will ya? We can be tied up in our slip in 15 minutes. RELAX!!!"

To make a long, sad story shorter and sadder, down came the sails and into our slip we headed. And after the storm had passed to the north and the sun had reappeared, not another dark cloud was seen the rest of the day. Unfortunately, we had packed up and headed out to that meal I promised....another great sailing day lost to Doppler radar.

But why? Why would Peg suddenly panic at the sight of a distant dark cloud? Why, after all these years, would she suddenly want to avoid being out on the water simply because a thunderstorm might or might not develop? I've spent hours trying to figure it out and I think I've finally got it. Peg is suffering from WCA.....Weather Channel Addiction.

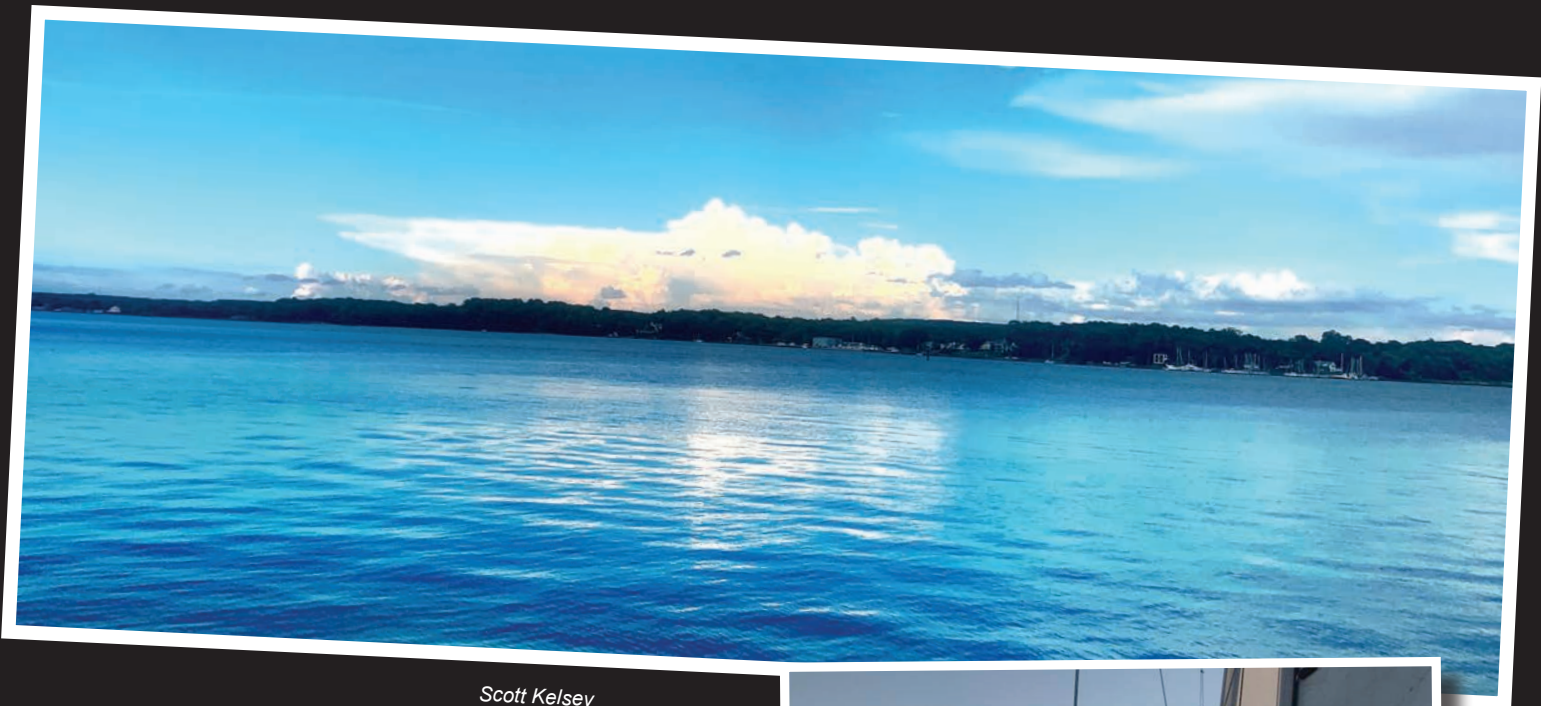
It all began several years ago when both of our adult kids moved to other parts of the country; our son off to the Sierras of California and our daughter to Missouri, smack in the middle of "Tornado Alley". Every time I walked into the den last winter and spring, Peg would be watching those green, yellow, and red blobs dropping snow on our son or hail on our daughter.

She couldn't help herself. She felt it was her job to text the kids with weather warnings....."watch out, heavy snow coming your way" or "dangerous wind rotation spotted southwest of you, take cover!" It got to the point that the kids wouldn't open her messages. I finally had to threaten to cancel the cable if she didn't watch something else.

But, that was back in the spring and I honestly thought she had recovered. I apparently was wrong. It's clear to me now that the end result of Peg's 12 straight months of total immersion in the Weather Channel is that dark clouds simply aren't dark clouds to her anymore. They're "upper level air disturbances containing nickel size hail, damaging winds, cloud to ground lightning, and torrential rains."

I figure I've had to take her out to dinner at least 25 times this summer just to get her out on the boat with me. It's the only thing that works. Hmmmmmm, you don't suppose.....?

# Photo Gallery



Scott Kelsey



Colleen Smart



David Sites

# Dollar for Dollar, What kind of fun can you have for \$250?

By Wendy Gilbert, Features Editor

So, the idea is that with a little creative financing you can be boating this season for about \$250 a month.

Assuming the weather will be at least as nice as it was last season that is a lot of weekends and vacation days out on the Bay and its tributaries. Summer is also chock full of special occasions like weddings, graduations and festivals, so let's assume that at least one weekend a month might be "lost".

That still leaves about 10 weekends of prime in-season boating days and about the same during April, May, September and October, again weather-permitting. Throw in a few vacation days and we are looking at roughly 25 beautiful boating opportunities for a busy family. Twice that for the leisure crowd. Dollar for dollar, that sounds like a pretty good deal.

I was curious about how much other recreational pursuits cost and although boating is at the top of our lists, there are a few other ideas I might consider at some point. Thanks to a little on-line research and a bucket list or two, I made a few discoveries.

World Luxury Tourism and Costhelpter Fitness.com were immensely helpful and I would highly recommend them if something on this list sparks your curiosity.

Sky Diving is pretty high on a lot of bucket lists, so I looked into that first. For beginners, a tandem jump can run between \$100 and \$260, depending on the location and instruction provided. My daughter decided this would be a lovely way to celebrate her graduation from college. Luckily she did not elect to do an advanced free fall jump, which will cost \$250 for the first jump. Don't forget to add in the cost for photographs and even videos of your adventures. They will run you an extra \$30 easily.

Five hours of Wind-surfing lessons run about the same. I'm not sure I could get \$250-worth of fun in five hours, but then again, I might be a bit beyond wind-surfing at this point.

Swimming with dolphins (for all you Snow Birds) runs about the same for a Royal Dolphin Swim \$250. Snorkeling for a couple of hours with the bottlenose dolphins in open water costs between \$100 and \$220. Now that sounds more like my speed as does some river rafting.

White Water River rafting costs can vary quite a bit, as I'm sure you can imagine, depending on where you attempt it. There's a bit of difference between the Grand Canyon and West Virginia. A decent multi-day excursion can run between \$400 and \$1,315.

Solo day trips can run significantly less \$55-200 per day.

As a former resident of the Mountaineering State, I can recommend the rafting trips there as most all of the venues have family-friendly as well as Olympic caliber courses and packages.



You can select the class of rapids you wish to conquer and the cost goes up slightly, accordingly.

If rafting isn't quite your thing, canoe and sea kayak trips offer and even less expensive black water experience. This is how my husband and I chose to celebrate our daughter's graduation from college. A peaceful paddling excursion in West by God Virginia.

Need to feel the wind in your hair? Try windsurfing, a cross between sailing and surfing is becoming increasingly popular. Beginning classes cost between \$70-140 per day, depending on the location, class length and equipment provided. A two-day group lesson or weekend "camp" can run between \$160 and \$500.

If trail, pony or carriage rides are of more interest, you can investigate places like Fairwinds and Fair Hill Stables among others. Costs can run as low as \$35 per person for a trail ride up to \$125 per person for a 3-hour carriage ride and lunch at the Fair Hill Inn.

If none of these tempt you, you can always invest your \$150 on an at-home Pole Dancing Party for ten.

## **Publisher's Note:**

*When my family was young, we often vacationed for a week each summer in Ocean City. When we added up what we actually spent each time at the ocean, we could easily spend less over the course of a year on monthly payments on a new entry level 24' cruiser. I have to tell you, now that the kids are grown; our finest memories of fun family activities are all of being on our boat, Land Escaper. And your four legged family members would prefer being aboard the boat instead of being boarded in a kennel. Take the plunge, I promise it will be worth it!*

**-Dave Bielecki**

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# To wheel or not to wheel – that is the question

by Doug & Brenda Dawson

“Yes, you do use the wheel, when docking twin power boats” says one boater.

“No, you don’t use the wheel, when docking twin power boats” says another.

There is great confusion around the question “should I use the wheel, when docking my twin engine power boat?” The question is simple enough, but the answer is rather complex.

You may be surprised to learn which boater is right. Actually, both are correct and both are wrong. It depends on several factors, but most importantly, whether you are docking twin inboards, twin sterndrives or twin outboards.

Most instructions for docking twins don’t differentiate between sterndrives/outboards versus inboards. There is even a YouTube video by a well-known magazine captain, who advises boaters to dock their twin sterndrive using the twin inboard method. But, what works for one drive system, doesn’t work for the other. Why?

On twin inboards, the propellers and rudders are under the boat; whereas, on twin sterndrives, the propellers and outdrives are out behind the boat.

How can the thrust be the same? It can’t. How can the instruction for both be the same? It can’t.

The biggest problem using the wheel on any twin-engine boat is not returning the wheel back to top dead center; i.e. straight ahead, and not slightly off to port or starboard. For the maneuver that follows, the boat won’t go straight ahead, straight back or pivot on the spot, if the wheel is not dead center. You won’t be able to predict your move after using the wheel, and disaster can result.

There are tricks you can use to mark your wheel, but in the heat of the moment, with so many things going on; even with the wheel marked, seasoned captains can get it wrong.

The most important thing to consider is whether you are docking a twin inboard, or a twin sterndrive or a twin outboard. Why? Because handling for each is totally different when docking.

## Twin Inboards

The thrust on a twin inboard is from two fixed propellers under the boat with two rudders behind the propellers for steering. The boat’s bottom traps or captures the propellers’ energy improving the leverage to pivot the boat.

In the heat of the last 50 feet to the dock, adding the wheel to the 2 shifts and 2 throttles, overloads the captain’s brain. Centering the wheel gets forgotten and; therefore, screws up your docking.

Using the wheel and one shift won’t work for you. You’ll end up just going back and forth on the same path—i.e. forward to port, then backwards to port.

As a result, you never go to starboard.

When you add throttles, you overload the brain, because both throttles must be re-synchronized for the next command; otherwise, you are rowing harder on one side than the other.

If you don’t use the wheel when docking a twin inboard, you have much more control without overloading the brain with wheel and throttles, but you must know when and where to put the wheel.

Some maneuvers using the wheel and throttles when docking twin inboards, should only be done after several seasons of experience.

## Twin Sterndrives and Twin Outboards

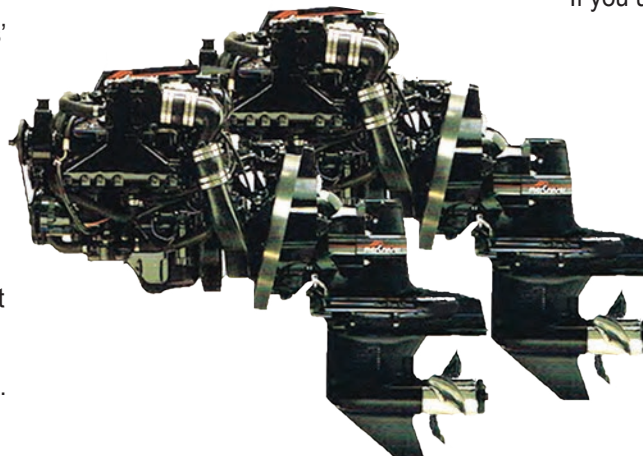
The propeller thrusts on a twin sterndrive and twin outboard are out behind the transom of the boat. The whole drive and propeller turn for steering both in forward and reverse.

The propeller’s thrusts or energy, are lost behind the boat with no hull bottom to contain it. The leverage is poor, and the props are usually closer together than on twin inboards, which also decreases leverage resulting in a lousy pivot. It’s like trying to park a car with four flat tires.

If you use the wheel on a twin sterndrive or twin outboard, shifting both motors together like a single sterndrive, you will be able to dock, but your turning radius is much larger than it should be, and you are advancing too fast. This isn’t an ideal way to dock and could result in a much bigger scrape.

If you use the wheel and only one motor on a twin, it will turn well one direction, but not the other.

If you use the wheel, with one motor in forward and one in reverse, the reverse thrust is cancelled out, because the one in reverse is aimed the same direction as the one in forward. As a result, the boat won’t



turn and the boat certainly won't pivot.

If you don't use the wheel keeping the wheel straight and try to dock using just the two shifts like you would on a twin inboard, it won't work very well for the above reasons:

So, when you add all these factors together and try to dock twins like a twin inboard, these twin sterndrive and twin outboard systems don't stand a chance to control the boat, when one motor is in forward and one motor is in reverse.

### Confused with your Twin?

So, are you confused yet? Most are. With so much confusion, you can see why so many boaters are having difficulty docking. They end up damaging their boats and alienating their First Mates and Crews, as well as providing humor and entertainment to everyone watching



Doug covers why certain procedures work and why others don't. He discusses the "what-ifs" and how to recover from them. Results count, so you'll be able to win any argument on the dock with other boaters by simply docking confidently. Be "Captain Confidence" like Martin in this picture.

It sounds very complicated when answering a question like "Do I use the wheel to dock a twin-engine boat";

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- Twin Sterndrive (I/O)
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### About The Authors

Doug and Brenda Dawson have been in the boat business literally their whole adult lives. Brenda married a man who is a 5th generation expert in the boating business. Expectations were high that she would become an expert boater and in her own right she did. Together they share decades of hands-on experience to help you shorten your learning curve and enjoy boating more. [www.BoatingWithDawsons.com](http://www.BoatingWithDawsons.com) [www.PowerBoatDocking.com](http://www.PowerBoatDocking.com)

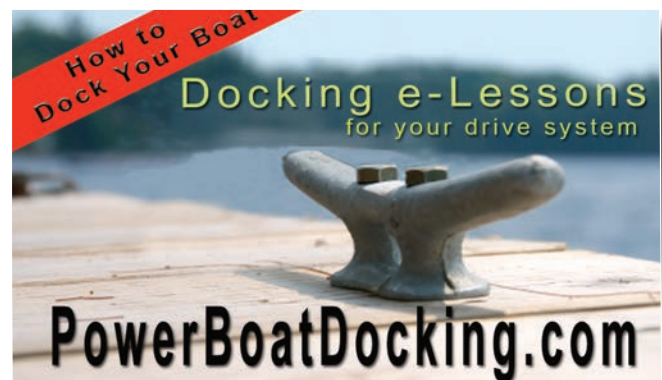
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### When to use the wheel—simplified

Doug Dawson has separate step-by-step, detailed instructions with lots of diagrams to show you how to dock your Twin Inboard, or Twin Sterndrive or Twin Outboard—the instructions are totally different from each other.

There is too much information to cover here in this article. Each introductory lesson is 130 pages with approximately 180 diagrams and pictures available as pdf downloads for only \$39.

You will learn when to use the wheel—what combination of wheel and shift to use and how; what combination of wheel, shift and throttle to use and when; and when not to use the wheel.





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- 1/4 Cup lemon juice

**Directions:**  
Combine above ingredients in spray bottle. Fill remainder of bottle with water/witch hazel mixture. Spray yourself and any objects or areas you wish to KEEP MOSQUITO FREE!



## Why I Kayak

We all come to kayaking our own way and for our own reasons. As for me, kayaking is a very personal experience that came about through a long progression of events. These days I prefer to paddle with one or two older paddlers rather than with larger, younger groups. With my older paddling partners, I can focus more on absorbing the experience rather than having to constantly be making distracting conversation. I know my fellow paddlers feel the same. It has not always been this way. I guess we are just getting older and wanting to experience the richness of what this region of Maryland/Virginia has to offer while we are still able.

My love for the water began as a Boy Scout growing up in Indiana. Each year our pack leaders would organize a multiday canoe outing that would take place somewhere in the lake region of upper Wisconsin. We would load our gear in multiple station wagons and pack trailers and head north, usually stopping along the way to spend a night at some military base. The next day we would drive to an outfitter, from which we rented our canoes. At that point the adventure began.

Our pack leaders did not lead. They gave each canoe a topographical map with a starting point and a destination. It was up to us to map a route, then navigate our way to our final destination. The outings were usually 4-7 days in length. We had to scout for camping spots along the way that were large enough to hold our group. Sometimes we paddled until dusk, but more often we paddled until mid-afternoon, then settled into an area and set up camp. We spent the remainder of the afternoon swimming or fishing for dinner and cooking. Sitting around the campfire, listening to the pack leaders tell stories until late evening was always pleasurable.

We were learning then. And like any learning experience, we didn't always get it right the first time. I recall one trip that was supposed to be a 5-day trip, that turned out

to be a 7-day trip because we missed the correct stream flowing from one of the many lakes along our route. We didn't realize our mistake for a day or so, when someone began matching the stream contours on the map to those of the stream we were paddling. With some backtracking, we finally found our location and re-routed our paddle, turning a 50-mile paddle into a 75-mile paddle. But that's how you learn – from experience. To this day, I believe our pack leaders knew exactly where we were all the time. In allowing us to recognize our error and correct it, they granted us an opportunity to profit from our mistake. I believe every scout on that trip carries the memory of that experience.

I dropped out of canoeing when I entered the military, then later college. There just didn't seem to be enough time to take off a few days, let alone a week or two, to go canoeing. Things changed when my family settled in Maryland. The old yearnings for the water came back. I needed the exercise and I missed the camping experience. Besides, I had boys now that I thought would benefit from what spending time outdoors could teach them. I bought an Old Town Discovery and we spent several weekends paddling Maryland rivers. Unfortunately, the outdoor bug never bit them. They grew-up and left home without developing a need for the outdoors. My wife and I were left to pack and load gear alone. She is not much of a camper, or an outdoors person either, so the time between trips grew farther and farther apart. One day I realized that if I wanted to get outdoors, I would have to do it alone.

Loading the canoe was the most difficult part of getting to the water. At first, I could load and unload my canoe on my own. But as I grew older, it became more difficult to pick up the 85 lb. Discovery and load it onto my truck. One day while unloading, I watched a kayaker unload his boat. It appeared much lighter and looked to be easier for one person to paddle than was my two-man canoe. So, I went home, sold the Discovery, and bought a Wilderness Pungo. I've never looked back.

As I noted at the beginning of this article, kayaking is a very personal experience. It can also be likened to addiction. While paddles are immediately gratifying, they leave one yearning for longer, more difficult paddles. When I began, I wanted more time on the water than a once a week paddle could provide. I also wanted more gear; a VHF radio, a waterproof GPS, and yes, a longer, sleeker kayak; one that I could paddle effortlessly over long distances. The Pungo was great for knocking about and for weekend camping trips, but I wanted more. I wanted to go on longer, more extended trips. I wanted to learn more about this great sport, so I joined a local kayak club. There I found that my Pungo was not up to the paddles the other group members were taking. It had an open cockpit and thus would not fare well in heavy weather. Plus, it required more effort to paddle than the sleek sea kayaks and I tired quickly on what are now consider beginner paddles.

I began surfing the trading websites for a sit-in sea kayak and eventually added a used Perception Corona to my stable. It had less primary stability than I was used to, so I sold it and bought a Perception Carolina. The Carolina was a great kayak, but I found the high-back seat was a problem when I began learning to roll. I replaced the seat with a back band, but then found other problems. The Carolina was shorter and wider than true sea-going kayaks. After a bit more searching, I got a used plastic Tempest for a more than fair price. The Tempest is a popular kayak. It is a pleasure to paddle, holds a ton of gear, and has great primary and secondary stability. But the Tempest has its own problems. The bottom was not molded thick enough and it cans badly. The hull develops



multiple inward bulges. The shape changes lead to leaky bulk heads. Camping gear and anything else placed in its compartments end up soaked. I still have my Tempest, but several other kayaks were bought and sold before finding a kayak I could love.

Today I mostly paddle a fiberglass NDK Explorer. It will be my last kayak. It fits me well, performs nicely on water, and is large enough to carry everything I need to get away for a few days. Most importantly, it allows me to again focus on the important aspects of paddling. I love sitting half below, half above the waterline; as close to the water as possible. I love the serenity seeing that bow way break in quite water. I love the quiet one experiences while moving through the water. I love seeing the natural beauty of the Bay. And I love sharing these experiences with paddlers who, like me, have lived long enough to appreciate them. Life is, and continues to be, very good.

Dave Bielecki, Author

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# Live Aboard

by  
Don and Gail  
Elwell

## Disposable Boats

So, only about two weeks ago one of our slip mates stopped by and, during conversation, says "Hey, you guys want a boat?"

A what?

Turns out that yet another of our area marinas is closing--yet another victim of condo development--and all the boats have to go. Some were taken by their owners to other places, but for some folks, that course of action just wasn't either temporarily or financially possible. Either they basically gave the boats away or the marina would crush them up with a back hoe.

I'm not exaggerating. I've probably seen 20 crushed up and disposed

of at our marina alone. Some weren't functioning and the owners simply couldn't afford to get them fixed, others fell far behind on slip rental, some owners became ill or died. Every marina winds up with a stock of vaguely functional abandoned boats. But back to the story.

"It's a Pearson" says our slip mate. "The motor works and it's got sails, and they just redid the upholstery."

So we go and have a look. It's a '70's Pearson 30, racing rigged. The interior was newly painted and re-upholstered. The motor, one of the ubiquitous Atomic 4's, fired up instantly, the main appeared good, the jib iffy, and the whole thing too good a deal to pass up.

So we said yes. We spent a few days painting the hull with a new coat of anti-fouling, rebuilding the tiller which had delaminated, and the like. We met the owner at the soon-to-be-gone marina (WHERE, parenthetically, are we supposed to do our boating when all of the marinas have been turned into doomed particle board townhomes, I ask you?), splashed the boat, making sure it was floating and floating upright (the two basic boat requirements), transferred the title for the princely sum of \$1, and, after a wait of a couple of days for the freaking weather to settle down, we brought her home under her own power. So in the midst of some of the most miserably hot weather we've had here on the Middle River and in the middle of trying to get ready for a major art show at the Liriodendron Mansion (more at [Hawkwelldesigns.com](http://Hawkwelldesigns.com) if you're interested. Strong show) we've been transferring stuff from Tesla's Revenge onto the new boat. We're exhausted, but a lot more comfortable.



*Marinas wind up with all manner of vessels, some of which can be yours for the taking.*

It got me to thinking.

One of the major arguments I hear against living aboard is "I could never afford to do that." The rather daunting idea of the average, non-1 percent American being able to afford a boat and a home while making that transition is what seems to scare off a lot of people.

Yet from where I'm sitting here aboard Constellation, I'm looking at the bows of at least six boats up on the hard in the boatyard that anyone could have for--pretty much literally--a song, just to get them out of the marina's hair. Some are cabin cruisers, mostly with one functioning and one dead engine. Some are sailboats that haven't seen water for three years. At least one I know of had the owner die and the family wants nothing to do with it. All could be made into rather nice floating homes while you got them functional and mobile, and the price, as I said, is right.

We've watched our marina go from two liveaboards to something like 20. It's not an accident.

As the seas warm and rise, more and more of us will be going to the water for living space. I just look on us as ahead of the curve.

We've had seven days in a row here on the Chesapeake with heat indexes above 100F, which was perhaps not the brightest time to be moving things over, but we're settling in to the SV Constellation as our new home and should be done within the next several weeks. I'm waiting for a few parts for our rather massive electrical and solar system to get it all wired in.

Stay tuned. And, while you're doing that, contact your local marina and go get a boat.



*Dammit, somebody make me a catnip and tonic. It's too freaking hot in here.*

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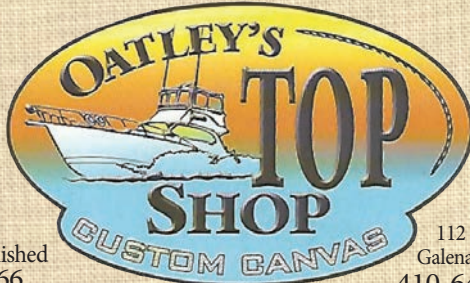
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