

October 2021

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On the Cover: Craig Buscher and his daughter Ashlee showing off a rockfish trophy!

Upper Bay Boating Magazine

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photo by Donna Bedell

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Marinating with Jim High

Wow ... and just like that, we are into the Fall -- the Autumn. The end of another great summer. I typically boat clear through the first of December. Now one of the reasons for that is the Middle River Lighted Boat Parade and another is that I just won't give up. Being out on the river when the leaves are floating on top the creek and a little steam comes out of your breathe reminds me another trip around the sun is almost complete. A Sunday afternoon boat ride to watch a football game or waterfront festival. A day out on the bay Striper fishing or the side creeks to nail some snakeheads! When your season does wrap up, pack the boat away, get that boat stored, winterized, and wrapped and if you're like me ... start planning some southerly destinations. This year's plans include a Tampa cruise to the Southern Caribbean and a few days in Florida on each side of the excursion.

Enjoying both boat shows this October!

The Annapolis Boat Shows are cool! And sometimes rainy. Always higher tides than normal. This year the US Powerboat Show is scheduled for October 7th-11th and the US Sailboat Show is October 14th-18th.

The two shows are completely different and so are the people that go... ha-ha... IMAGINE THAT! Still...both are worth the effort!

A second meaning of the word "Motorboating"

Up until about a month ago I had no idea that there is actually a second more unusual meaning for the term Motorboating. We were with a group of friends when somehow the term Motorboating was mentioned and I was completely clueless. Everybody around me was amazed that I didn't know. I felt real silly, but after a few

laughs and a few demonstrations I finally got it. I have been motorboating for many years. I just didn't know it had a name. I will let the reader do any additional research on "Motorboating"

A Disturbing Water Taxi ride

So... Kisha and I were out on a water taxi in Seattle. While heading across the bay a small child maybe 6 kept making funny faces at me. So, I told him my mom told me if you made ugly faces at people that your face could get stuck that way. That S.O.B laughed at me and said I should've listened to my MOM! Dang it!!!

A blonde is driving along a deserted country road with fields on either side. She looks out the window and sees another blonde in the middle of a field, in a rowboat, rowing and rowing. She stops the car, rolls down the window and yells, "You know it's blondes like you who give the rest of us blondes a bad name!" Getting no reaction from the blonde in the rowboat, she screams, "If I could swim, I'd come out there and punch you out!" source: <http://www.jokes4us.com/sportsjokes/sailingjokes.html>



At the Riverwatch Restaurant... Jim High and Carey Zigler from Carey Zigler's Expensive Hobby. Always amazing

Couple of Boat Quotes:

Captain Jack Sparrow: That's what a ship is, you know, it's not just a keel and a hull and a deck and sails, that's what a ship needs. But what a ship is, really is, is freedom.

Paula Poundstone: My Mom said she learned how to swim when someone took her out in the lake and threw her off the boat. I said, 'Mom, they weren't trying to teach you how to swim.'

Guy Fieri: I have my own boat, but when I first thought about taking a cruise, I thought, 'You're going to trap me on a boat, and I'm going to walk in circles and go crazy,' but it's awesome.

Jim High is the publisher of Upper Bay Boating, A Managing Partner of Baltimore Boating Center, and has a deep profound love of Family, Friends, Fun, Boats, Buffett, Beer, SUP, Seas, and Seasons, especially the summer times! Reach me at TheViking38@gamil.com or call 410-404-3013

Mercy me, where did the season go?

By Wendy Gilbert – Contributing Editor

I'll admit to holding my breath at the beginning, but once things got rolling, it felt like summer would never end. And, at least for me and mine, it is ending well.

Alas, here we are with just a few weeks of nice boating weather to look forward to. We've weathered the heat and the hurricane and the twisters with a bit of know-how and a bit of luck.

If you've ever been out on your boat when a wall of water with a tornado behind it (Brothers and Sisters, let me tell you I have) you will never forget it.

I'll credit captain Larry Stevenson for getting us out of that one and be forever grateful I've never been out during such conditions since.

Knowledge and Luck.

There's a combination that gets bandied about frequently these days.

In a quest to stay relevant, I've taken to listening to not only audiobooks, but Podcasts.

To be honest, I probably need to keep searching for better hosts, but so far, I'm not a fan of many of these

self-proclaimed experts. After listening to nauseatingly repetitive endorsements and commercials, they frequently begin by quoting an all-too-familiar quote to begin their chat.

After that and a plea to visit their website for oh so much more content, they dissect the quote and elaborate on each word like a preacher on Sunday morning. Somehow, they quite often forget all about the writer who originally said or wrote what they are talking about.

No preacher worth his plate money, would dare do that!

So many of these so-called inspirational/motivational podcasters urge their listeners to carry on with never-ending self-improvement. No wonder their lives becomes an exhausting trudge! They act like maturing into a productive citizen is an endless grind that requires sharp focus and willingness to forgo sleep. But not too much sleep! This is after all, the decade of sleep management.

Ah well. I'd better let this one rest or I could be the one who ends up sleep deprived.

Unlike the podcasters I've been listening to lately, I won't wrap things up in gentle spiritual paper -- something fragile, but not offensive.

Thanks for hanging with UBB this season.
God Bless You!

The advertisement features a white speedboat with "PYM MARINE" written on its side, cruising on the water. Above the boat, three logos are displayed: "cape horn" with the tagline "NOW BUILT STRONGER", "SOLACE" with "By Stephen Douglas" below it, and "Yellowfin" with "YOUR LEGACY" below it. Below the boat, the text "The Mid-Atlantic's Choice" is written. At the bottom, a red banner contains the website "www.pyymarine.com" and the address "1132 Pasadena Yacht Yard Rd. - Pasadena, MD | 410-255-1771". Social media icons for Instagram and Facebook are also present.

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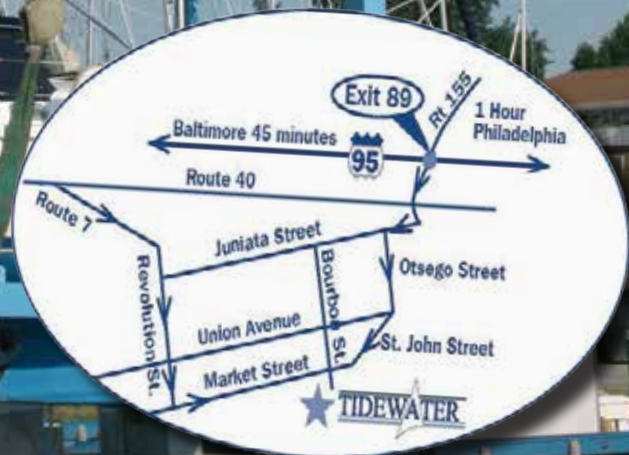
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Tell me a story, Part 2

By Wendy Gilbert *Contributing Editor*

As promised here are a few more treasures to consider. If you can't find the time to read a book in the traditional way, consider downloading an audiobook to your smartphone or tablet. It's easy, and you can listen while relaxing onboard, driving a car, or while doing almost anything anywhere. There are several providers, but Audible from Amazon is the behemoth with more than 180,000 titles. Both Audible and competitor Audiobooks.com offer a free 14-day trial, and once you join you can share titles with family members. Here's a preview of some popular titles, read by gifted narrators.

The Boys in The Boat

By Daniel James Brown,
narrated by Edward Herrmann

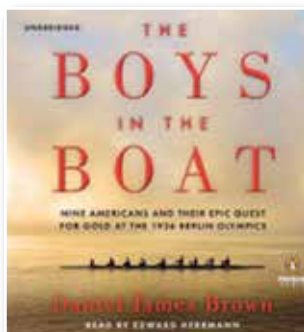
Can't get enough of WWII stories? Me either. After reading "The Dutch Wife" by Ellen Keith and watching the Netflix series "The Defeated" this summer, it was time to rest my eyes for a bit and listen.

This story, like so many others begin in Germany in 1936. Hitler is determined to showcase his new world order by hosting the Olympics in Berlin. Many of us have read about African-American track star Jesse Owens and how he electrified those Olympics by winning four gold medals. But not as many know about the nine college students who won gold for the USA in rowing that year. Here's the whole story, brilliantly narrated by veteran actor Edward Herrmann, of young Americans emerging from the Great Depression, working together toward victory. The story details the athletes, their skill at reading the water, the hydrodynamics of the boats, and the charged politics displayed on a world stage.

Sailing Alone Around the World

By Joshua Slocum, narrated by Bernard Mayes

Slocum was an expert sailor and gifted writer who set out from New England in early 1895 and returned three years later, proving it was possible sail solo around the world on a small boat — an extraordinary feat at the time. His writing style is witty, fast-paced, and an exhilarating match



to his adventures. He was chased by Moorish pirates off Gibraltar; submerged by a great wave off Patagonia; encountered Black Pedro, "the worst murderer in Tierra del Fuego;" and he foiled a nocturnal attack by natives by strewing carpet tacks on the deck of Spray. Continually in print since it was published a century ago, this is the inspirational sailing work by which all others are judged.

The Perfect Storm

By Sebastian Junger, narrated by Richard Davison

A riveting account of man against the elements, centered around the 72-foot sword fishing boat Andrea Gail, working the Atlantic's George's Bank. We may all know how the story ends, that she and her crew were lost in the mother of all storms, the so-called Halloween storm of 1991, but this does nothing to diminish the rich narrative and excitement that leads the listener to the petrifying crescendo of prolific audio book narrator Richard Davison.

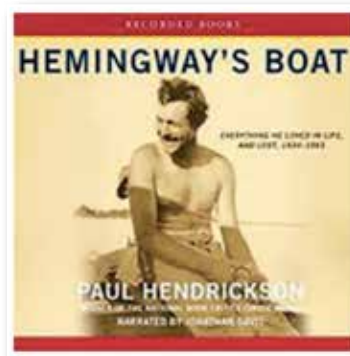
Hemingway's Boat:

Everything He Loved in Life, And Lost, 1934 – 1961
By Paul Hendrickson, narrated by Jonathan Davis

Pilar was the beloved 38-foot wooden fishing boat built in 1934 by the Wheeler Yacht Company for legendary novelist Ernest Hemingway, on which he escaped fame's spotlight to go big game fishing — the topic of some of his most famous works. This biography draws on previously unpublished material and focuses on his life in its twilight, and the seemingly singular constant joy in his life, his boat Pilar.



Wendy Gilbert



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Passing It On

by Tim Campbell

This is my last column for Upper Bay Boating magazine. My fascination with fishing started as a teenage pastime and turned into a lifelong passion. Writing articles stems from my enthusiasm for fishing. Promoting ethical fishing practices and educating new anglers about conservation and the environment is important to me. One of my greatest pleasures is passing on to others what I've learned about fishing and the outdoors.

Born and raised in Baltimore, I have enjoyed fishing for over 50 years. As a boy, one of the first trips I remember is fishing with my father for striped bass and white perch under the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. Later, as a teenager, neighborhood friends and I would rent rowboats at Dundee Creek or Loch Raven Reservoir and fish for whatever we could catch including bass, catfish, perch and sunfish. Little did I know then, but I was already hooked on fishing.

In 1986 I became involved in competitive bass fishing. My angling skills increased by fishing a lot, and by reading every book, magazine and newspaper article about fishing I could find. I attended numerous seminars and watched countless hours of fishing shows. I fished with many accomplished anglers and well-known guides. In 1988 I bought a Ranger 350 Apache bass boat. Competing on the club level for over 10 years enabled me to learn how to fish the upper reaches of the Chesapeake Bay and the Eastern Shore tidal rivers. I participated in over 100 bass tournaments including 4 State Qualifying Tournaments and 2 Mr. Bass Tournaments.

In the mid-1990's I focused on targeting striped bass and fished with some of the area's best charter boat captains. I learned trolling, live-lining, and chumming techniques but my favorite method is light tackle jigging using artificial lures. In 2003 I bought a Parker 21SE center console boat. I've fished for stripers from the Susquehanna Flats to the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

Besides exploring much of the Chesapeake Bay, I have fished in 25 states, Canada and Mexico. My travels have found me fishing from the sandy surf of Assateague Island to the

offshore canyons many miles out of Ocean City, Maryland; from Maui, Hawaii for marlin and tuna, to Homer, Alaska for salmon and halibut; and from flipping lures in the shallow bayous of Louisiana for redfish, to trolling spoons deep in Minnesota's Lake Superior for lake trout. Among my most memorable catches are a few lengthy battles with trophy tarpon of the Florida Keys, and releasing big white sturgeon caught from Oregon's Columbia River using barbless hooks. I have caught 40 freshwater species and 95 saltwater species. Adding new species to my life

list is a fun and adventurous pursuit. I hope to never tire of fishing and traveling.

Encouraged by friends, I began writing about fishing and the outdoors in 2008. My articles have appeared in many local publications. I approached writing as another way to share knowledge, but I soon discovered that I was learning a lot by doing interviews and researching topics for articles. "Fishing with Kids" was the first of 50 articles I wrote for Upper Bay Boating magazine. It appeared in the May 2015 issue. Sharing secrets of the sport with young people is gratifying, and vital to the future of recreational fishing.

If I'm not fishing, I am usually involved in some aspect

of fishing, be it organizing tackle, planning a trip, or helping a newcomer select the right rod and reel combination.

So, as I move on to pursue other fishing adventures, I thank you for reading, and hope you were entertained and informed by my articles. Respect nature, enjoy your fishing and pass it on.

Tim Campbell is retired from the Department of Juvenile Services after 35 years of faithful service to the citizens of Maryland. He is an award-winning member of the Mason-Dixon Outdoor Writers Association. Nowadays, if he's not fishing or traveling, Tim can be found hanging around local tackle shops and marinas.

Editor's Note: We are saddened to learn that this is dear Tim's last article with UBB. We have enjoyed reading and learning from him over the last few years. We wish him well in his retirement and hope that he continues to enjoy such a wonderful lifetime pursuit. Fish on, my friend, fish on!



Tim Campbell and brother Phil with Texas Slam

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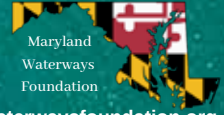
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Record-breaking Half Million American Eels Navigate Eel Ramp at Conowingo Dam To Deliver Cleaner Water for Susquehanna River and Chesapeake Bay

Maryland's Agreement with Exelon Will Bring Even Greater Results in Eel Passage and Increased Numbers of Water-filtering Mussels

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announce that more than half a million eels have passed from below the Conowingo Dam to be placed in the river above this year, bringing key clean water benefits to the Susquehanna River and the Chesapeake Bay.

American eels carry baby mussels that cleanse the water and improve ecosystem health. Building on this success, an agreement between the Maryland Department of the Environment and Exelon, owner of the dam, will require the company to make investments to further increase these numbers.

"More eels and mussels mean cleaner water as part of our holistic approach to Susquehanna River and Chesapeake Bay restoration and resiliency," said Maryland Environment Secretary Ben Grumbles. "In the years to come, we can expect even greater results, because of the state-imposed requirement on Exelon to add another eel ramp and to invest millions of dollars to increase the number of water-cleansing mussels that the eels carry with them as they go."

"The eel migration program is an important part of our Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts so we are very pleased to reach this milestone," Maryland Natural Resources Secretary Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio said. "The program also underscores Maryland's commitment to natural solutions that filter our waterways such as freshwater mussel propagation."

As of August 31, 2021, 537,182 American eels have been captured at the Conowingo Dam for transport upstream in 2021. This marks the third straight year of increasing eel numbers at the dam. The previous record of eels captured was 293,141 eels in 2013, which was surpassed in August 2021.

American eels play an important role in keeping water clean in aquatic ecosystems, including the Susquehanna River and the Chesapeake Bay. They serve as a primary host fish required



American eel. Photo by Will Parson/Chesapeake Bay Program

for freshwater mussels to reproduce.

Larval mussels attach to the gills of eels and other fish and receive a ride upstream, where they drop and burrow into the substrate to spend their lives filtering material from the water. Dispersal of the mussels is dependent on the movement of the host fish. The mussels, in turn, help improve water quality by retaining, removing, and recycling nutrients and sediment before it enters the Chesapeake Bay. Each

mussel filters more than 10 gallons of water per day. It is not known why numbers of eels have increased in recent years at the Conowingo Dam, but scientists expect the higher numbers of American eels and other fish species to increase abundance of freshwater mussels filtering the tributaries of Chesapeake Bay and improving its water quality.

Migrating, young American eels (*Anguilla rostrata*) have been captured and transported upstream annually from Conowingo Dam since 2007 under an operation made possible through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and Exelon.

As a result of the 2020 settlement agreement between MDE and Exelon, Exelon will also be adding a second ramp on the east side of the Conowingo Dam, catching even more eels for placement upstream. In addition to requiring Exelon to help restore American eels to the Bay ecosystem, the Conowingo settlement requires Exelon to provide more than \$25 million to create and sustain a large-scale mussel restoration effort in the Susquehanna River throughout the next 50 years. Plans are underway to expand the Maryland Department of Natural Resources' Joseph Manning Hatchery in Brandywine to include a large-scale freshwater mussel hatchery. That hatchery will provide baby mussels placed in the Susquehanna River to further advance the return of this species to the Bay ecosystem to help meet clean water goals.



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Sailing Souvenirs

by L Alan Keene

Have you been a souvenir junky this season, like a lot of other Chesapeake Bay sailors; out there buying anything from mugs to magnets....hats to harmonicas at prices that should make any self-respecting retailer blush? Are you the first one off the boat looking for the nearest gift shop? If so, you probably don't care how much you have to pay, as long as that little trinket, sticking like glue to the refrigerator or resting peacefully on the coffee table, reminds you of the special time you had while cruising the Tred Avon or overnighing at Inner Harbor, or broad reaching up to Havre de Grace.

Ironically, some cruising sailors spend almost as much time searching for that perfect little reminder of the good time they had, than they do in having it. They buy red plastic crabs from Baltimore, "Sailing Capital of the World" t-shirts from Annapolis, duck decoys from Havre de Grace, lighthouse models from St. Michaels, wind chimes from Oxford, crab mallets from Rock Hall and so on, and so on, and so on.

For some of us lucky ones, though, buying souvenirs is the last thing on our minds. Besides, nothing we could buy would be as close to our hearts as those free little keepsakes we take with us from our travels on the Bay. Take the one from Chestertown.... my souvenir of our visit to Chestertown is about the size of a dime and very special. It's with me all the time. The one I picked up in St. Michaels is long and thin and reminds me of a delicate sunflower. But my favorite, the one most people ask about, is the one I got in Annapolis several years back; an Australia-shaped reminder of a beautiful weekend stay on Spa Creek. All the t-shirts in the world couldn't replace that one!

But how do I get them if I don't buy them, you ask? Well, I'll tell you this much....I don't even go looking for them. They just seem to appear, some even after I get home. It's a "gift", I guess, that a select group of us old Bay sailors seem to have. Not something we think about, really. In fact, if we thought too much about it, we'd probably lose the knack.

Sadly, as with any special gift, there's an element of jealousy. While the less-fortunate older sailors don't concern me, I feel a little sorry for the younger ones. They see us old salts displaying our wide range of mementos from past cruises and they want them too. But they just don't have what it takes, or is that too much of what it doesn't.....HAIR that is.

That delicate little sunflower arrived shortly after a summer evening spent watching J-24s race in St. Michaels' harbor. Peggy,

my first mate, and I had just finished dinner and had come up on deck when one of the slower Js rounded a nearby mark and headed straight for our midships. As she drew closer, I was sure that the helmsman was either asleep or blinded by his big genoa. I leaped from my cockpit seat, hoping to fend off what appeared to be a certain collision. A collision took place, all right, but it wasn't fiberglass to fiberglass. It was flesh to aluminum. My unprotected bald head hit the boom with such force that a sunflower shaped scar was added to my vast collection of uniquely fashioned souvenirs.



Our memorable Spring weekend in Annapolis many years back will always hold a special place in our hearts (and on my head). As we prepared to shove off on that sunny Monday morning, TACKFUL's outboard motor idling quietly in preparation, Peggy cast off the bow lines and I, the stern. After taking one final longing glance at the mecca of Chesapeake Bay sailing, I sat down at the tiller and put the motor in reverse. Knowing that the eyes of the sailing world were watching every sailor brave enough to overnight at City Dock, I was careful to avoid any sloppiness.

Not careful enough, apparently, for instead of slowly backing out of our slip as planned, our outboard began to rise out of the water. I had forgotten to lock the motor's tilt/run lever in the run position! Leaping aft (leaping being an integral part of souvenir collection), with the hope of correcting the problem before anyone noticed, my cap-protected hairless scalp struck the stern rail,

knocking me momentarily senseless.

Recovering quickly, I leaned over, locked the motor in place, and began slowly backing out as the warm flow of blood soaked into my favorite sailing cap. When we were clear of the embarrassing scene, I took off my cap and allowed Peggy, my nurse for all of my souvenir acquisitions, to clean me up and bandage my still woozy head.

Three weeks later, while hard at work in the office and the Annapolis cruise just a distant memory, I was surprised to discover that my souvenir had arrived. Nature's protective shield covering my holiday wound, like wrapping paper covering a special gift, had been removed by my unconscious prodding, revealing my favorite....a light pink penny-sized scar in the shape of Australia (Tasmania included), it's location halfway up my endless forehead.

Now every morning when I look in the mirror, I spy that little pink continent-down-under and am reminded of that beautiful Spring weekend in Annapolis. THAT, my friends, is a souvenir!

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Fall is Here

By Captain Mark Galasso

For most boaters the first cold fronts of the fall signal the end of the summer boating season. Strong Northwest winds which finally bring an end to the oppressive heat and cool down the waters may not be what most recreational boaters look forward to but for us fisherman it heralds some of the best fishing of the year, especially here in the Chesapeake Bay. October and November are two of my favorite months to fish. As the water temperatures continue to drop and the periods of sunlight shrink fish tend to feel an increased urgency to feed.

In the case of our main quarry, the Rockfish, feeding habits change dramatically. Larger Rockfish which are generally stressed all summer due to low dissolved oxygen and high water temperatures conserve energy and become ambush predators cruising shorelines and oyster reefs in pursuit of an easy meal most of the summer. Crabs, Perch, Spot and any other easy target become prey. However most of these "Easy" meals don't afford Rock with the nutrients needed to fend off the cold temperatures in the winter. As the water temperatures cool down through the month of September into October most Rockfish move off the shallow structure and Oyster Bars and chase Peanut Bunker, a much more oily prey that fattens them up and puts on the pounds.

At first this shift in feeding goes largely unnoticed. Feeding frenzies may only last thirty minutes or so. If your not in the right place at the right time you missed it. And no matter what you do the fish won't feed again until they are hungry. Sometimes a day or two later. One or two Bunkers can fill up a twenty incher for a day or so. As the temperature continues to drop in late September and October the fish fatten up and their stomachs expand allowing them to eat more. The "Feeding Frenzies" last longer and are more intense.

Anything that mimics a Peanut Bunker is a target. Drone Spoons trolled at 3 to 4 knots are deadly. Jigging with Blue Blues or other metal jigs is equally effective. Soft plastics like Bustem Baits on 1/4 ounce lead heads are also effective. Topwater plugs are the most fun however. Fish attack them with reckless abandon. And the bite is visual. You can't miss it. A side note though. Most topwater plugs come with one or two treble hooks. Unless your planning on catching one fish to keep switch out the trebles to single hooks. You'll not only help to conserve the resource but possibly save yourself the agony of hooking yourself or someone else.

Rockfish aren't the only target we see in the fall. Bluefish also become more active as does Spanish Mackerel. They can be caught using the same techniques as we use for Rockfish. There are two distinct differences however. Blues and Spanish like lures moving at faster speeds. If your trolling speed thing up by one or two knots. If your casting speed up your retrieve. No need to jig or get fancy. Just rip it in! We have also seen a few Ribbon fish this year. No one knows how long they'll stay but rumor has it they are great table fare and fun to catch. Handle them with care. They have a set of choppers akin to a Barracuda.

Unlike Rockfish, Blues and Spanish leave the area when the



photo by David Sies

water drops much below 70 degrees so they won't be here long. Ribbonfish, who knows? Rockfish are always here. They just move around a lot and slowly move out into deeper water. White Perch also can be caught well into November. Jigging small metal jigs on channel edges near deep water can be quite effective on these tasty fish.


The fall also brings us a new set of challenges concerning boating. The prevailing winds change more to the Northwest as cold fronts dip in from Canada. These are usually strong and when fighting a tide can create large waves. That's what happened to us today. Fishing has been good at the mouth of the Chester River. Today the winds were 10 to 20 gusting to 25 straight into an outgoing tide. Love Point Bar was literally unfishable even for trolling. Keep a sharp eye on the weather and act accordingly.

Have a great winter. In another few short months we'll be wishing for the hot days of summer again!

Capt' Mark

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What Do You Know About Decoys?

By Kimberly Merriken

Conversations with Jimmy are always great. He can talk about all kinds of topics. But during our last conversation about the magazine he asked me, "What do you know about decoys?" The silence was palpable. I probably looked like a deer in the headlights, eyes wide, sweat forming on my forehead.

I realized then I didn't know very much about them. I've seen fake ducks and geese in people's yards before. I assumed they were some mass-produced item that hunters used to attract other ducks/geese. I had heard of the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum but did not understand the significance of it. Then I began to wonder....why? Why were decoys invented? How are they produced? What is their history? Is this just a local Chesapeake Bay thing?

All of these questions led me down the rabbit hole of decoys and I invite you to come along. My next series of articles will take us through history. We will see the evolution of the decoy. We will meet some interesting local companies that produce decoys. We will learn about some festivals in our area centered on decoys and decoy making. And by the end of the series none of us will look like deer in the headlights when someone asks, "What do you know about decoys?"

My first stop down the rabbit hole was the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum. Here I learned that decoys can be traced back to Native American hunters. The first were made crudely with



hemp strings and reeds in the shape of ducks. Why? Think back to hunting in the pre-gun era. Native Americans were using bows and arrows that did not travel a great distance (and even early guns did not shoot that far). These waterfowl flew overhead and out of reach of the hunters. They were a wasted resource because the hunters could not hunt them. This led the Native hunters to devise the decoy to lure the waterfowl to the ground in an area where their arrows would reach. Brilliant!

Let's skip up to the 1800s and travel to the upper Chesapeake Bay area.

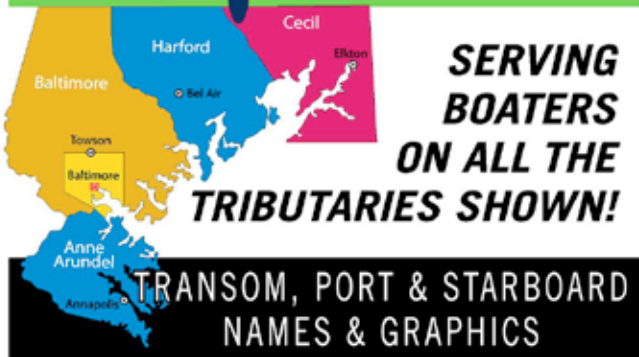
In our area decoys became popular for three reasons. The migratory birds were in great abundance and a seemingly endless food supply, there was a rising population and the railroads were expanding connecting more water areas together allowing this delicacy to be moved to different markets, and there were great improvements in firearms making hunting easier.

Here in our beautiful upper bay area waterfowl were abundant. The celery grass along the Susquehanna was a great place for the migratory canvasback ducks to come each fall. This breed was considered the superior breed and made Havre de Grace a popular stop for sportsmen and hunters.

So, now we know the why decoys were invented it is time to dive further down this rabbit hole and learn more about how these decoys are made and used, and their significance here in the upper bay area. We will take a look at the craftsmanship that has developed over the last 100+ years. We will meet some local craftsman and we'll learn about some festivals centered around decoys here in our area. But for now I leave you with this....

Fun fact #1: In 1812 it was illegal to shoot a gun in the city limits of Havre de Grace unless you were shooting at ducks or other waterfowl.





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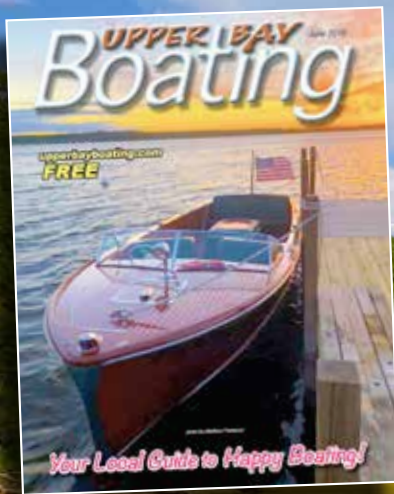


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Taking the Learning Outdoors

Summer is winding down, students returning to school where education is imperative inside and outside the classroom. Elementary, college, or beyond, there is much to learn from the world around us.

MWF values education and collaboration and was privileged to work with incredible environmental students this year, Desirae Williams, and Angel Sarabia. Working other jobs, attending CCBC, they decided to join MWF for real world experiences. With the turmoil of the world, we downsized our internship program to coordinate with more communities, scouts, and other organizations to provide a richer experience.

MWF developed experiences to last a lifetime and be shared with friends, classmates, and professors. Simply submersing them in trash would highlight the carelessness of people and the impact on waterways but we wanted to expose the students to more, the basics of a non-profit, working with local government, organizing cleanups, educational events, fundraisers and even working with elected officials.

The interns dug in to clean up trash with several communities, in parks, shorelines, and roadways. They interacted with communities and scouts, marking over 150 storm

drains, explaining the purpose of the activity to limit trash going into our waterways. They learned about floating wetlands and rain barrels and the benefits to our environment.



Completing his Maryland Boaters Safety Certificate, Angel had his first experience ever on a boat.

Additional learning experiences included a tour of Hart-Miller Island, a dredge material island and model for future projects, and the Havre de Grace Maritime Museum and Environmental Center. The interns were permitted to attend a Citizen Oversight Committee Meeting on Hart-Miller Island

interacting with Senator Salling and staff from Maryland Environmental Services, DNR and the Port Authority, learning about the project and the many desirable career possibilities available. The two were amazed at the endless possibilities of career choices in the environmental field.



President Bruce Russel offered a personal tour at the Maritime Museum and environmental center. We learned about the hundreds of species of flora

and fauna, the ongoing restoration projects and explored the museum and boat building workshop. Unfortunately, our last trip a tour to Poplar Island had to be cancelled due to weather.

We had a great summer, hoping our interns learned as much from us as we did from them. If you are a college environmental student, interested in joining us next summer, reach contact us at

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BATTER UP!!!

By Montana Grant

Battered Fish Filets can be the hit of every fish fry! The key to a good batter is to add texture, flavor, and presentation. The batter needs to stay onto the fish as well. Batters that fall off or crumble just taste oily, greasy, or wet. A tasty Battered filet needs to be crunchy, dry, good looking, and add taste to the fish.

Here are some simple tips to make you fish batter the best!

Combine 1 cup of flour and add a little cornmeal to it. This will add some flavor, firmness, and texture. Now add 1 teaspoon of Baking Powder with 1 ½ teaspoons of salt to the flour. Now mix 1 teaspoon of Baking Soda to 2 teaspoons of vinegar and add them to the flour mix. Combine the ingredients and set aside.

Now give your attention to you fish. Are they well rinsed? Have you checked for bones? Are you scaling or skinning?

If the fish comes from polluted waters/ has consumption warnings, make sure to trim away the fins, belly fat, and skin. This is where the toxins may build up. Older, bigger fish will contain more toxins than smaller, younger fish.

Dry off the fish filets with a towel. Most people do not do this. Next, dip the filets into the Batter.

If you use a dry Pancake Batter mix, spiced with Old Bay seasoning, allow the coated filets to rest on wax paper for at least 30 minutes. This allows the dry coating to combine with the fish. I mention this since this is a quick shore lunch method and a favorite.

Dredge the dry filet into the wet batter and let drip off. The fryer/ fry oil should be hot! Use a thermometer. If you drop filets into cold, or cooler oil, the filet absorbs the oil, and the fish will be greasy. If you place the battered filet into hot oil, the bond between the batter and filet will stick and keep the oil on the outside.

When dropping the filets into hot oil, submerge half of the filet then allow the rest to drop. Avoid splashing of the hot oil. Also consider what type of oil to use. Peanut oil is tasty, but Canola is healthier. Know the flashpoints of whatever oil you are using to avoid a fire.

Keep the fry area clear of kids and critters. Anticipate an accident and you will avoid it. Wear a pair of protective glasses when frying. Also keep a



fire extinguisher handy. Sadly, many Fish Frys include alcohol. Drunk people have more accidents.

Handle fish with tongs, rather than your fingers. Use one pair of tongs for the precook and a different pair for the after cook. A deep fish fryer works great and has an internal basket. You can lift the cooked filets out and allow the filets to drain and cool, while the oil has a chance to reheat to fry temperature. This will keep your fry filets consistent and perfect. The filets will just take a few minutes. When they float, they are ready!

The oil is also perfect for fried onions, French fries, or Hush puppies. I usually do the sides first, then the fish.

Place finished fish filets onto paper towels in a foil tray. Cover with foil and deliver to the table.

This Batter recipe and procedure will hit your Fish Fry Filets Out of the Park!



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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Live Aboard

by Don and Gail Elwell



So why do we do it?

The Wife and I were sitting on the back deck the other afternoon, talking about our adventures living aboard, talking about why we do it. It was rather a revelatory conversation.

Living on the river, of course, has some distinct drawbacks.

Wet is as much a state of mind as it is a lifestyle, and the weather can be a bother. In cold weather the docks can get slippery and in hot weather, they can burn your feet. Morons in go-fasts persist in ignoring the no wake rules around marinas and can create a “ride-em coyboy” moment at the worst times, usually when you’re doing something precarious with something droppable, fragile, or edible. Every action involves multiple trips up the docks to the parking lot for tools, garbage, groceries or to deal with sanitation. Boats can be stifling in summer. They can be freezing and damp in winter. With the internal humidity in cold weather, it can sometimes literally rain inside a fiberglass boat.

So Why do we do it?

We started enumerating the reasons. It’s cheaper of course, at least the way we do it. Our lives are simpler, and that’s a plus. We both love the water—we grew up on it, though in different regions—and it feels like home. We love watching wildlife and the parade of the seasons along the river banks. We both love the ego boost and uniqueness of telling people: “no, we live on our boat year round” and watching the often envious responses. All that is true, all those are plusses.

But none of those are enough. So why do we do it?

A number of years ago a friend of ours—a sociologist and former colleague—was down visiting with his wife at the marina. Everyone was laughing and eating and drinking and talking but I noticed he was completely absorbed in watching the docks, looking at people coming and going.

“What are you watching?” I asked. He smiled. “I didn’t expect this,” he said, “It’s like a small town. Each of the docks is a street,

and each one has its own character, its own residents. It’s like a little town.”

It was then that I got it: It’s the community that keeps us here.

Those of us who live on or have boats in the marina are constantly engaged with one another. You’re always helping someone come into dock or pull an engine, or someone is helping you mess with the rigging. We’ve gifted people with dinghies and pumps and dock cables. We’ve been gifted air conditioners and once even a sail boat that we lived aboard for several years. In the evenings, we often gather on the dock, share drinks and stories and food. It’s a community.

Like any community, it’s not immune to conflict and controversy. The 2020 election was hard on us here, friendships were lost, families were split, and we considered leaving. We’ve got a pretty good group here on “S” dock right now, though. We all get along, we help one another. If I fell in the water there would be eight people trying to pull me out, and that’s a comfort. It’s also a part of boating culture: the picking in, the familial feelings of friendship and responsibility and charity.

So it’s the people that keep us here. While other forces in society seem bent on driving folks apart, the livaboard life is an intentional community that the water draws us together. It’s why we stay.

Now if you’ll excuse me, I promised a slip-mate I’d check in on her cat.



“So why do we do it? Why are we all here?”



“It’s like sitting on your front porch in a small town”

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Autumn River Stripers

This is truly my favorite time of year to fish. Mornings are crisp and cool, and the fish are becoming increasingly more active. On the upper Chesapeake, you will find striped bass in the rivers that feed the bay. From the Susquehanna River, south to the Magothy and Chester Rivers, you can find an autumn striper bonanza. My favorite rivers are the Bush and Gunpowder. These rivers fit my preference for shallow water fishing to a tee. Finding striper-holding areas, and swapping hotspots with my fishing inner circle has expanded my fish catching possibilities.

The Bush River has a deep main channel where you will find anglers trolling. More to my liking, there are plenty of points, flats, and rips that hold stripers. Be advised that the river is patrolled by Aberdeen Proving Grounds military marine units and you may be asked to leave an area because of military operations. The Gunpowder is the shallower of the two rivers. Here, you are looking for points, minimal depth changes, and rock piles. You may even find stripers along the edges of grass beds.

Each of my favorite rivers has similarities and some subtle differences. Most of the spots in the Bush and Gunpowder Rivers are shallow. The Bush River is a bit wider and deeper, with more points of land. The Gunpowder features bulkheads, sunken rock piles, and renowned Maxwell Point. My main lure for both of these rivers is a rattle trap. The Bush River has great locations to fling surface lures. And while the Gunpowder sets up with similar attributes, I've rarely scored on a topwater bite.

The most obvious spot to fish on both rivers is the rail road bridge that crosses them. This is no secret. Rarely do you see shallow water anglers pass by the railroad bridge on the Bush and Gunpowder without making a cast to the platform-based pillars. The bridge on each river may look the same above the water, but things are very different below. You'll find deep water on the Baltimore County side of the bridge on the Gunpowder. Yet, "deep" is a relative

term given that you'll only find 10 feet of water at a mean high tide. On the Bush River, the depth goes from shallow to deep as you move from the banks to the center of the bridge.

Rattle traps, paddle tail jigs, naked chatter baits, and jerkbaits are all productive lures at the pilings. I find the key to getting the bites is to retrieve the lure as close to a platform as possible when working with the current. I also work the up current corners of the columns to see if stripers are positioned in those current breaks.

Tidal current is key on both rivers. It matters not if you are working the shoreline cover, or mid-river structure and points. In some cases, the current that flows past a point, hump, drop off, shoreline rip rap, or bridge piling will differ from tide to tide. Your success at these spots will be tide-specific. Other places are equally productive on either tide. Some shoreline cover may not have enough water to hold stripers on an ebbing tide. Conversely, Maxwell Point on the Gunpowder fishes well on either tide. Although, I will fish it differently depending on the flood or flush.

I have fished for river stripers long enough to be confident in lure choices from river to river. Yet, I keep an open mind. While the rattle trap is my go-to lure in the Bush and

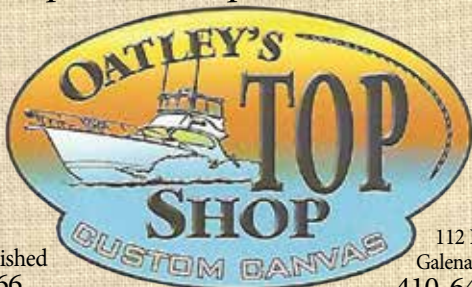
Gunpowder, I will have other lures ready to go. One rod will have a naked chatter bait with a paddle tail swimbait. Another rod will have a topwater lure. I will not hesitate to work the surface at the Maxwell Point rip, and sunken rock piles on the Gunpowder even though my success over the years has been limited. The jerkbait is a favorite of mine around bridge pilings, and I will work it on around shoreline cover. I've even been known for cast a spinnerbait around grass beds, and square bill crankbaits around rock cover. As you can see, any number of lures are productive. You just have to find the ones you have confidence in.

My favorite rivers on the upper bay provide many opportunities to catch stripers in autumn. I am looking forward to catching the shallow water bite in the Bush and Gunpowder. How about you?!



by Tim "Tacklebox" Sherman

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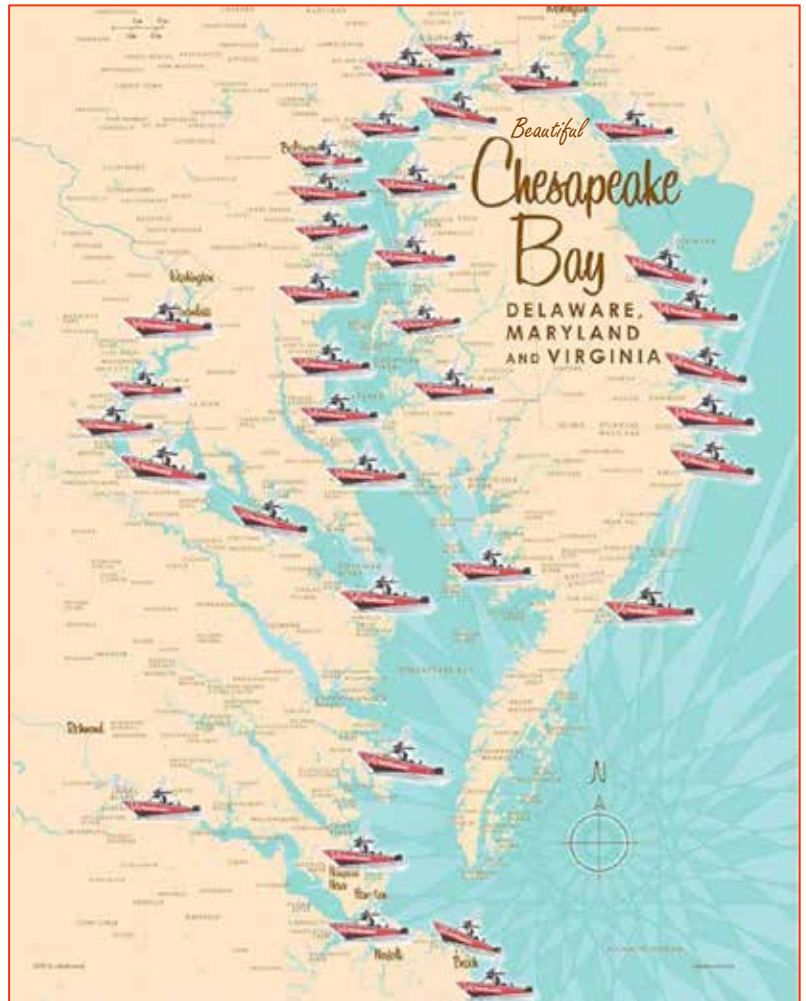
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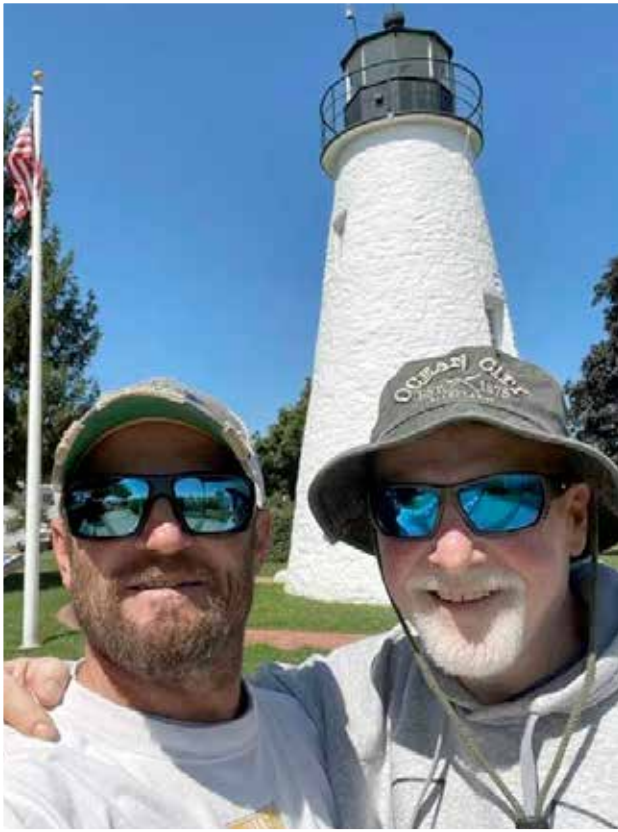

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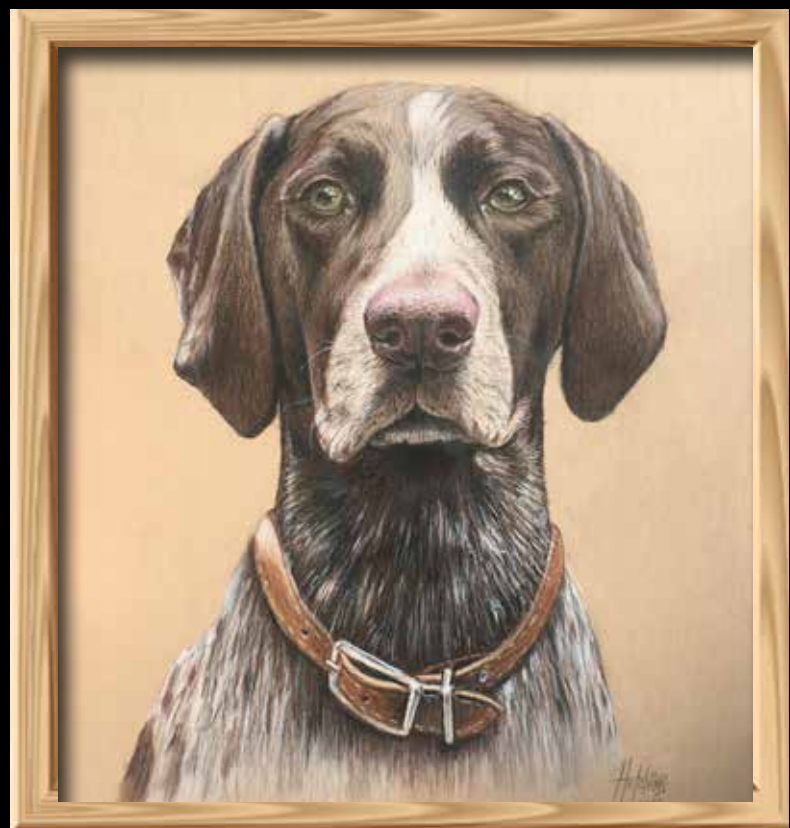
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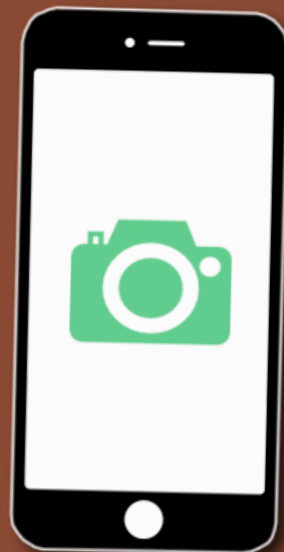
Boat Dog



This is Marvin, he's a chocolate lab, he's 5 years old, and about 90 pounds of solid love. He loves sunbathing and enjoying the view from the bow of the sailboat.



Cyber, enjoying the end of a terrific Freedom Boat Club day! Cyber is a french bull dog



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