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Winter 2023

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Photo by J.P. Henry

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RECHARGING THE BOAT LOVIN' BATTERIES WITH JIM HIGH



Thank You Guy Harvey for showing us what it looks like! Re-charging at the Miami Boat Show

This winter you can catch Upper Bay Boating Magazine at the 2nd Annual Chesapeake Bay Boat Show and we will be at the Greater Philly Boat show also. Both Events give us boaters a great chance to recharge those Boat Lovin' Batteries! To start recharging those batteries, I'm heading to Key West right after Christmas for a few nights on the Fun Dumpster. And for this New Year's Eve, I will be on the Royal Caribbeans' Symphony of the Seas steaming toward Mexico and Honduras for seven nights.



The Endless Summer is a 1966 American surf documentary film directed, produced, edited, and narrated by Bruce Brown. It is a beautiful movie, incredibly iconic, and has a way of making the wintertime just a little warmer. The theme song created by the Sandals captures the feel and feeling of the summertime vibe and the feeling of the surf. If you have a chance, it is worth the visit. It is another way to recharge those batteries!

OF NEW YEAR'S EVE! THE CURIOUS CASE OF THE USS WARRIMOO AND THE MILLENNIUM



So, the USS Warrimoo found itself in a very curious place. The date was Dec. 31, 1899, and the ship was approaching not only the Equator but also the International Dateline at almost midnight. The captain was informed by the Navigator of a monumental possible achievement. By steering a slightly different course and by moving at the right time the ship would find itself in a very unusual situation.

The Bow of the ship in the Summer of Jan. 1, 1900, and the stern of the ship in the Winter of 1899. That means the ship would therefore have been simultaneously in two different seasons (winter and summer), in two different hemispheres, on two different days, in two different months, in two differ-

ent years, in two different decades, and two different centuries.

Now whether the Navigator got it absolutely correct, whether the captain's timing was perfect... no one will ever know, but I prefer to think they NAILED it!

This story makes the common claim that the new century started in the year 1900, though some believe it was one year out and the beginning of the next century was 1 January 1901 (a matter of debate). It reminds me of when everybody celebrated the Millennium a year early. I felt as though 2001 was the new Millennium, but that's not how it went down. At least the Y2K bug didn't affect us all and shut down the world!

A Conversation at the Yacht Club

Several men are in the locker room of the yacht club.

A cell phone on a bench rings and a man engages the hands-free speaker function and begins to talk. Everyone else in the room stops to listen.

MAN: "Hello"

WOMAN: "Honey, it's me. Are you at the club?"

MAN: "Yes"

WOMAN: "I am at the mall now and found this beautiful leather coat. It was only \$3,000. Is it OK if I buy it?"

MAN: "Sure, go ahead if you like it that much."

WOMAN: "I also stopped by the Mercedes dealership and saw the new 2023 models. I saw one I really liked."

MAN: "How much?"

WOMAN: "\$150,000"

MAN: "OK, but for that price, I want it with all the options."

WOMAN: "Great! Oh, and one more thing...the house I wanted last year is back on the market. They're asking \$900,000" for it.

MAN: "Well, then go ahead and give them an offer of \$800,000. They will probably take it. If not, we can go the extra \$50,000 if it's really a pretty good price."

WOMAN: "OK. I'll see you later!... I love you so much!"

MAN: "Bye! I love you, too." The man hangs up.

The other men in the locker room are staring at him in astonishment, mouths wide open. He turns and asks: "Hey... Does anyone know whom this phone belongs to?"

CATCHING UP WITH JAKE THE WATERPERSON!

I'm excited, Jake and his family are headed across the Chesapeake Bay Bridge this January and heading to the Chesapeake Bay Boat Show. I can't wait to see him again. Now Jake only likes to cross the bridge for one reason and one reason only! Crabs! Bringing crabs, oysters, and fish to the Jessup Seafood Market and NAF-CO. He also sells to a few crab houses off of route 50 like South River Mikes or Jimmy Cantlers. When the day is done, you know about 2 in the afternoon Jake hauls it back across that bridge before the traffic gets started!



By Wendy Gilbert / Contributing Editor

Cooling Down Only To Heat Back Up

Wintertime brings out the poet in me.

I see hoarfrost in the morning and my mind starts searching my brain's data banks for things that rhyme with hoarfrost. I'll consider the possibilities on a walk, while I sweep the front porch and as I peel the potatoes. And sadly, if nothing comes to mind, the preoccupation with it will quite possibly keep this writer from sleeping soundly. I'll wake at 4 a.m. thinking "holocaust" or "fuel exhaust". And as neither will do, I might grumpily return to the pillow with visions of hoarfrost diamonds spinning in my head.

ning in my head.

And that's if I can keep the word "whore" out of my thoughts!

In a flash, I'm back in my junior year in high school on the set of "Man of La-Mancha" watching Aldonza belt out her solo. And that moment will carry me to "Sister Act" which I saw last Friday night at Milburn Stone Theater.

It's all poems and lyrics in the hoarfrost times. And these cold days too shall pass when the (not fat at all) ladies sing.

A friend of mine, when weighing the pros and cons of living on the Elk Neck

Peninsula versus Lake-wood, PA, made a list. Sadly a list without hoarfrost or actors, but a good list nonetheless.

Cons.

Living 3 hours south of most of the relatives

Having to make new friends

Hauling the boat all the way to Maryland

Pros.

Better paying job

Quiet neighborhood near a boat ramp

Living 3 hours south of most of the relatives

Acquiring better weather.

This last one didn't sound like a good reason to move

to the relatives but think about it. Every spring here is 3 weeks longer, as is every fall. Over the year that's 6 more weeks! Over the child-rearing years, a family here could easily add up to a year or more.

The travel time to the Rogues Harbor boat ramp in the new place vs some cold, storm-tossed lake in the Poconos and back could save at least a few days.

Does hoarfrost rhyme with storm-tossed?

I believe it does. If I wasn't already living in the Upper Bay Paradise I call home, I'd move there too.

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SNAKEHEADS

Catch 'Em, Kill 'Em, Eat 'Em

By Wendy Gilbert

The northern snakehead is a voracious, invasive, nasty fish that continues to thrive in the Chesapeake Bay.

What can you do?

If you catch a northern snakehead, harvest it. If the snakehead has a tag, measure the length, make note of the exact location of capture, and call the toll-free number printed on the tag. The information that you provide is important in determining control and management strategies.

Tagging Study

In an effort to monitor invasive northern snakeheads in the Chesapeake Bay and Blackwater River, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reminds anglers of the current tagging program in conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service (USFWS).

Both agencies have placed yellow or blue tags on approximately 500 northern snakeheads. Each tagged northern snakehead caught and harvested from now until 2024 could be rewarded with a gift card of \$10 or \$200 depending on the tag.

In order to qualify, the harvester must report the tag number to USFWS at 800-448-8322 and is asked to take a picture of their harvested and tagged northern snakehead. Only harvested northern snakeheads with reported tags will qualify for gift cards.

By measuring the amount of northern snakehead harvested, the agencies will learn if population benchmarks are being reached and help control the spread of the species.

The population of snakeheads has been increasing in the upper Chesapeake Bay and is likely the top fish species that eat other

fish in the Blackwater River. Harvesting snakeheads helps reduce predation pressure on the state's natural resources, and the fish is also considered a flavorful and nutritious food source.

Transporting a live northern snakehead in Maryland and surrounding states is illegal. More information on snakeheads is available on the DNR website.

Anyone fishing in Maryland waters who is 16 years of age or older must have a valid Maryland fishing license. The DNR website also provides more information on licenses and how to obtain them.

Rob Trenary of Elkton shot this huge 19.4-pound northern snakehead in the Elk River with a bow recently and it fell just short of the existing record of 19.9 pounds set by Andrew Fox in 2018.

Photo courtesy of Rob Trenary

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USED AND ABUSED



By Montana Grant

Buying a used boat requires the buyer to beware. Not every boater is a properly trained, experienced, and responsible Captain. Make sure that you make a close inspection before making a big purchase.

There will be a huge fleet of used boats available this season. When the Pandemic landed, people that were not working were playing. Our parks, campsites, and waterways were crowded with self-quarantined recreationists. Boat sales soared as folks looked for ways to entertain themselves.

Now that the Pandemic has passed, these folks must go back to work and no longer need the expense or responsibility of owning a boat. Many of the boat toys have just sat in the yard or marina.

Before buying a used boat, figure out what you want, need, or can afford. Canoes, kayaks, and rowboats offer little expense and can be easy to find. This is an area where you can get fairer value or a bargain. Consider all the potential costs. This includes fuel, marina, or storage fees, technology upgrades, and available time to enjoy the boat.

If you are after a larger boat, there are more things to consider. Having some experienced boat mentors is a good idea. Inspect the boat together and use your cell phone to catalog issues that are of concern.

Once you decide on making an offer, wait. Don't be in too much of a rush. Sleep on the deal and make an offer later. When you present your offer, support your bid with your pictures. The owner probably has no idea that these inspection issues exist.

When you get closer to a deal, ask for the Maintenance history. Based on this, you can get a better fair market value and accurately assess the boats' condition. Big boats mean more expenses so be sure you can do more than dock the boat.

WHEN LOOKING AT THE BOAT CONSIDER 3 PRIMARY FACTORS.

THE ENGINE(S) Have a mechanic do an inspection. It may cost you up to \$500 but they can identify problems before you need to pay for them. They will also need to look at the driveshafts and propeller, along with all/any mounts and connections.

CONDITION OF THE HULL OR FIBERGLASS Focus on cracks and gouges. Superficial marks are just cosmetic but deeper, larger cracks are a problem. If the boat is newer and showing cracks, this is a problem. Any issues need to be addressed or discounted in the deal.

ACCESSORIES AND THE TRAILER If you need to trailer the boat, take a close look. Most trailer tires are worn out after 3 years. Make sure that there are no cracks in the frame and the brakes are up to spec.

If the boat you are looking to buy is in the seller's yard, look at the house, and area that is, or is not maintained. This can say a lot about how the boat was cared for. Take the trailer for a spin.

Many buyers focus too much on electronics, stereo, and technology. The truth is that most of this is already outdated and will probably need to be upgraded anyway. Most of the warranties are not transferrable. Cosmetic issues can be fixed.

Focus on safety first. If you are not prepared to invest time and money into your boat, maybe find another hobby. As with all RVs, and other toys, something is always breaking and needs attention.

Find a boating value that fits your lifestyle, wants, and needs.

COMPLETE CHECKLIST FOR BUYING USED BOATS:

- ☐ The Hull
- ☐ The Deck
- ☐ The Deck Hardware
- ☐ The Engine
- ☐ The Batteries
- ☐ The Rigging and Sails
- ☐ The Rudder
- ☐ The Steering Control
- ☐ The Bilge
- ☐ The Propeller
- ☐ The Upholstery
- ☐ The Bimini Top
- ☐ The Lights
- ☐ The Appliances
- ☐ The Plumbing
- ☐ The Trailer
- ☐ The Maintenance and Storage History
- ☐ The Fair Market Price

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Argo Navigation releases a new premium app version



Navigation and Social boating app users can upgrade for offline charts, weather, wind, tides, and more

Argo Navigation announces the release of a new premium app version of its popular boating app that gives free app users the ability to upgrade for expanded features.

Over 90,000 boaters across the U.S. and Canada rely on Argo's robust, easy-to-use free app for navigation and social boating to improve their experience on the water. Boaters will continue to enjoy all of Argo's free features or have the option to upgrade to the Argo Premium app version for even more features like:

- Offline Charts – download charts anywhere in North America to use offline if connectivity is lost while on the water
- Weather, Wind & Tides – see an extended 7-day marine weather forecast with daily and hourly conditions

Additional advanced features such as GPX import/export, AIS traffic, and more will be added to the Premium ver-

sion in the months ahead. Argo Premium is available at an introductory rate of only \$19.99 per year, making it one of the most affordable boating apps on the market.

"Argo's new Premium version takes our robust free navigation app to the next level by eliminating any connectivity concerns boaters may have using a mobile app on the water," says Jeff Foulk, founder of Argo Navigation. "Our autorouting functionality using NOAA/USACE depth layers, combined with new offline charts and extended in-app weather forecast capability, makes Argo the go-to boating app for safe voyage planning and navigation."

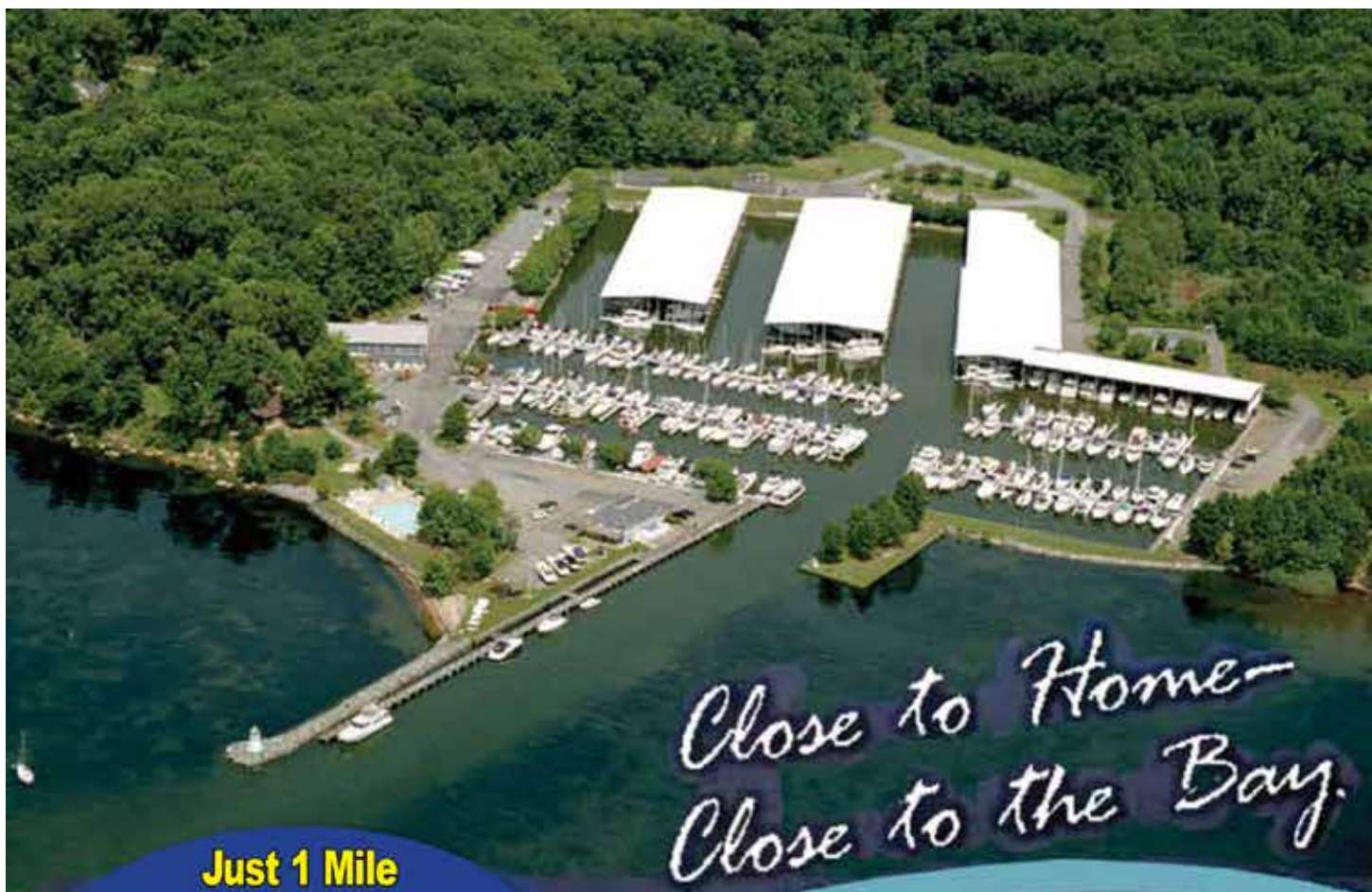
Argo has experienced tremendous growth in popularity since its launch in 2019, more than tripling its user base from 25,000 to over 90,000 in the last year. User growth is attributed to the app's ease of use, positive user ratings & reviews, and word of mouth from loy-

al app users.

Boaters use Argo to plan and take trips with routing based on a boat's draft and depth data, making navigation safer and easier. Social and community features allow boaters to connect with friends on the water and tap into crowd-sourced local boating knowledge, navigation advice, destination reviews, and more.

Frequent updates will be released for both the free and premium app versions, as Argo continually enhances navigation and social features for boaters.

Argo is available as a free download for phones or tablets on the App Store or Google Play. New or existing users can choose to upgrade to the Premium version at any time. To learn more about Argo and view app tutorials, visit www.argonav.io.



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TOW, TOW, TOW YOUR BOAT

By Montana Grant

Putting the truck before the boat is often an after-thought. Buyers tend to see the pretty boat without knowing if their potential tow car or truck can do the job efficiently and safely. There are several things to consider before buying that boat.

At some point, most boat owners may need to tow their craft. Large marina-bound boats are one thing, but the average Bay boat owner tows their boat to a ramp or seasonally moves the boat in or out of the water. You need a truck that can handle the weight. You next need a trailer that matches the boat and your tow rig.

Diesel Trucks are strong and tough towers. These rides have low torque and are better on steep grades, like launching ramps. They also tend to be more fuel efficient. Since they have a higher compression ratio, along with better cylinder pressure, towing capacity can be maintained. Diesel does require more maintenance than gas engines. Their exhaust systems are more complex, but a diesel truck can tow nearly twice



the weight of a gas-engine truck.

Gas engine trucks may be perfect for the average Hobby Boater's needs. You need to do the math.

First look at the Payload Capacity of your truck. Keep in mind that most advertised information does not consider passenger and gear weight. Their numbers will look better than they are.

Towing Capacity is the total weight that your truck can tow without overworking it.

The next thing to consider is stopping the tow rig. Consider the type of brakes on your truck and trailer. They must work together to stop smoothly. Surge Brakes

are a popular system that connects the trailer coupling. A piston engages hydraulic lines that decelerate softer and smoother than other brakes.

The brakes on the truck and trailer wheels can be damaged by salt water, so periodically inspect, and rinse these features. Hydraulic disc brakes work well in the water and take higher pressures. They also require proper adjustment and maintenance.

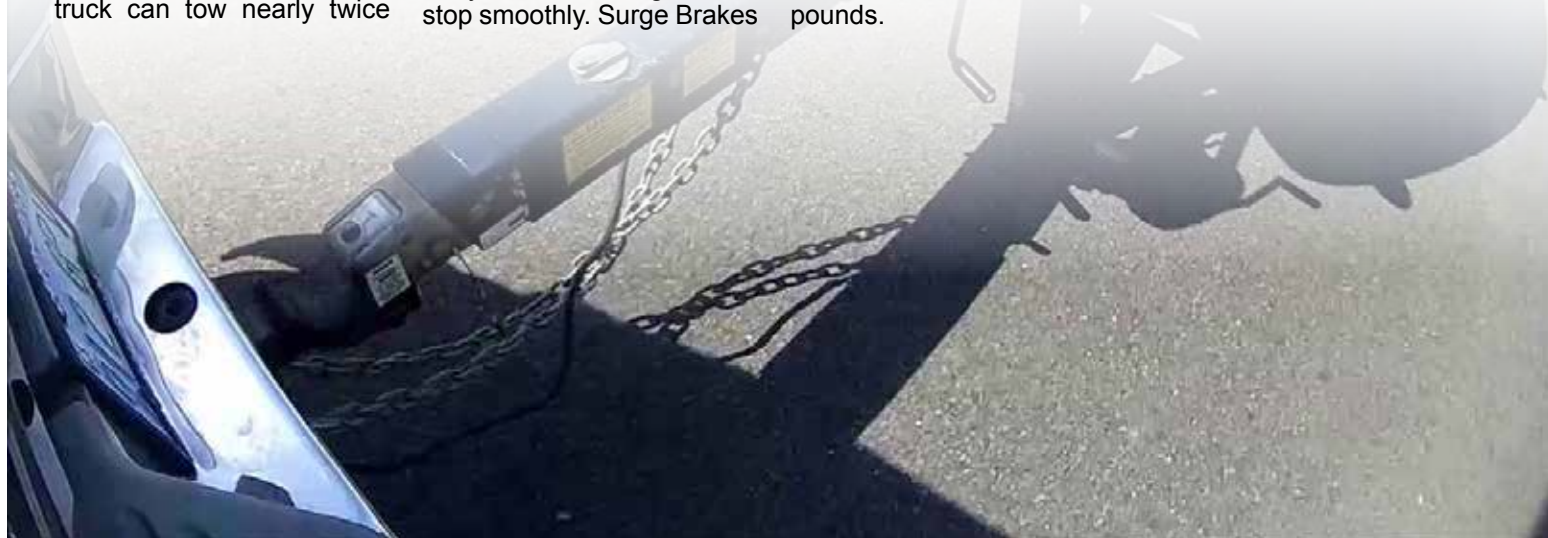
Different states have different laws and towing requirements. Generally, the tow trailer may not need brakes until it is over 3,000 pounds.

Debating what truck is "best" is a personal choice. If your boat is big and heavy, look at a diesel truck. These are also better for long hauls and more rural drives. Make sure that your tow rig has AWD or 4WD. These are helpful when conditions become slippery, and you need traction. Whatever tow rig you pick, maintain the tires. Trailer tires are often degraded after 3 or fewer years. Sun, salt, and travel degrade them faster than truck tires.

Ford trucks have a wonderful selection of towing options. One favorite is a backup assist system. We have all seen the terrible boat backer uppers at the launch ramp. The backup system controls the steering wheel while the driver simply turns a knob to navigate the trailer. You still need to look at your mirrors and the back-up camera.

Once you know what your tow rig can do, you can match it with the boat you can tow.

Anchors aweigh!



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GREEN WITH ENVY

By L. Alan Keene

**Chesapeake Bay boaters have a front-row seat for one of nature's most exclusive light shows.
Sit back in the cockpit and enjoy it... if you're LUCKY.**

One late summer evening in 1997, just as the upper orange

The rim of the sun slipped slowly beneath the watery horizon of the Caribbean Sea, I caught a glimpse of what sailors have been seeking for almost 200 years..... the elusive Green Flash!

We were vacationing on the island of Aruba that September and, on a whim, decided to take advantage of the crystal clear evening by sitting at the water's edge, drink in hand (maybe that's the key), and searching for that evasive touch of green. Not that we expected to see it, mind you... only a select few can make that claim... but the fun was in the search. Or so I thought.

For those unfamiliar with the phenomenon, let me share what I knew or thought I knew, back in '97. On very clear evenings in the tropics, if you watch the sunset very closely, you might just see a flash of green the instant the sun dips below the horizon. It can also be seen at sunrise, I had heard, just before the sun rises, but since I'm rarely up at that hour...

While only a few are chosen, the legend goes, those who spy it are blessed with good fortune for the remainder of their days! (While my luck has been OK since '97, I'm not convinced that I've been fully compensated. But who do I complain to?)

Now, what does this have to do with Chesapeake Bay boating, you ask? Well, after renewed interest in the phenomenon, experts in the field have discovered that green flashes can be seen almost anywhere in the world. You don't have to be sailing in the South Pacific or relaxing on an Aruban beach to join our exclusive fraternity. You just have to be in that proverbial right place at the right time." While the right place can be the Chesapeake, the right time can be a tad more difficult to arrange. You'll need nature's full cooperation to get it right.

Andrew T. Young, adjunct professor of astronomy at San Diego State University and accepted authority in the field cite several conditions that need to be met before

there's a reasonable chance for success. First, you need to have a low, sharply defined horizon. While an open ocean is ideal, the waters of a large lake or bay will do just fine.

Next, the air needs to be clear, not hazy, and relatively pollution-free. While not easy conditions to find on the industrialized east coast, Young points out that the hours following the passage of a cold front often provide air that's clean enough to meet conditions.

Lastly, to see the "classic" Green Flash, the surface of the water needs to be significantly warmer than the surrounding air, creating perfect conditions for the special light refraction that's required for us to see that emerald-colored burst.

To further enhance our chances of seeing the Green Flash, Young suggests using binoculars since some flashes are hard to see with the naked eye. He also recommends that you not look away immediately after the sun has disappeared. Waves on the water or

in the air can give a false sunset, causing the sun to reappear, maybe with a green flash attached.

OK, let's see. The lower Chesapeake is wide enough to give us a sharp, clear, watery horizon... the number 1 requirement met.

And as we move down the Bay from Baltimore, the air should gradually become cleaner, with fewer pollutants. After a cold front, the air should be even cleaner... number 2 requirement met. And on a cold Fall evening, the water should be warmer than the surrounding air. Now, if we use binoculars and wait a few seconds after the sun has disappeared, we can't miss it. Right?

Wrong. You've got to be a little lucky, too... or more accurately; a lot lucky. That's what makes it so special; so sought after. If the Green Flash was easy to see, I wouldn't be able to sit back and brag about it the way I have and you, along with most of the boating world, wouldn't be so green with envy!

SIDEBAR: LOOK CAREFULLY!

I'd be remiss if I didn't remind you of the dangers of looking directly at the sun. Don't start looking until the bottom edge has touched the horizon, and even then, if it's uncomfortable to look at, DON'T. Andrew Young offers this Rule of Thumb: "if your thumb, extended horizontally at arm's length, can cover up the Sun while touching the horizon, the sun is low enough to look at safely."





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Experience Remarkable!

What is “CuSTom”

By Tim Sherman

Fishing lures come in endless sizes, shapes, and color combinations. You would think that there is something that satisfies every fisherman. Try as major lure makers might, anglers are still going to complain that they can't get exactly what they want. Truth be told, mass producers can't appease everyone. If you reach out to the big manufacturers, they may make a special run of lures for you. However, the number of baits you have to buy is astonishing. It's understandable because they are set up to do mass quantities. Still, some may not take custom requests at all. This is where the custom lure trade comes in.

The trends in the sport of fishing, and the advanced knowledge of today's fishermen are helping the push for custom baits. There's no secret I took up building and painting custom lures in 2017 as a hobby. It has been a learning experience in how to, with what, and what do people want. Fishermen may want a lure blank painted in a major manufacturer's pattern, or a mass-produced bait painted to look like forage found where they fish. They may want a jig skirt that more closely matches the crawfish on their favorite bass waters or a spinnerbait skirt that resembles a white perch or bay anchovy, which cannot be readily found on tackle shop shelves.

There are easy tweaks with lures and complex ones. The easy ones can be done by most anglers. One of the biggest complaints about the mainstream lures is the low-quality hooks. They can easily be swapped out with better hooks found at tackle shops. Fishermen can add details with a marker. A false eye, the black dot found on the upper body of most shad species. A little line of red along the gill plate is also a popular addition.

When it comes to custom paint jobs, several things can be added or subtracted ... hence, the term custom. Painters can add scale patterns or bone structures. There are masks and stencils available to create lifelike

crawfish and baitfish patterns. Old-school patterns that are now unavailable can be recreated

The eye color, itself, is also an option. Let's say you want a replica of a lure from “Brand X”, and that lure has a red eye. You wish they would have made it with a silver eye. With a custom lure, you have that option. You also wish that “Brand X” would have gone one size larger or smaller with the hook. That is also a choice with custom work, right done to your brand of choice.

Let's say you have some old, beat-up, lures in your tackle box that used to be your favorites. You can either let them rot in the bottom of the tackle box for eternity or get them to the custom lure guy for a new paint job. Custom work can be done to match the same pattern the lures had, or they can be modified to fit your preferences.

In the accompanying picture, you see two versions of Tennessee shad. The version on top is an old Strike King 6XD that has yellow eyes, a false eye, and a faint splash of orange on the throat area. The bottom lure is a replica of an angler's favorite lure with gill plate makings, a silver eye, a red throat area, and a false eye set father back.

Skirted lures, such as jigs and spinnerbaits, come in many color patterns. Still, anglers might want some modifications. What manufacturers see as a baitfish or crawfish imitator may not be specific to the strain in your fishery. Working with the custom lure makers can get you dialed into those in your environment.

Silicon and rubber skirt material comes in a seemingly endless array of colors. You have the ability to mimic the crawfish and baitfish found here in the Chesapeake tributaries right down to the number of strands of a specific color within the skirt. Skirts can be made for your existing jig or provided by the custom company. They may have a jig or spinnerbait head that more



closely matches the skirt they are making for you.

There is also a market for customization in soft plastic lures. C.J. Espey is a co-owner of Bust 'Em Baits which specializes in soft jerkbaits for saltwater fishing. While the local company now uses a commercial producer to meet demands, they still get calls for special colors that are not in their catalog. C.J. says there is still a legion of guys that clamors for old-school colors like black back/chartreuse and blue back/pearl. Bust 'Em Baits still has the capacity to make smaller, special run colors as time permits.

Wes Barnes is a hobby-based soft lure maker who specialized in bass lures. He gets loads of requests to modify his lures to look and perform differently from the mainstream. His biggest request is for laminated – two color – lures that more readily match crawfish and baitfish on which bass feed. Some anglers will ask for a different size and/or color of the flake added to the plastic bait to stand out from the mass-produced baits. We can also work with how the bait moves in the water. He adds salt to plastisol to make the lure sink faster than those without. He also has a plastisol formula for fishermen who want floating lures.

Many fishing lures on the market today have a great following. Anglers have their favorites across the different types, and they catch plenty of fish with them. Yet, if you want baits that are slightly different, or distinctly stand out from the rest, then custom lures are for you.

The USS Constellation

-Kimberly Merriken

I don't know what I was thinking when asked if I wanted to go see the USS Constellation in dry dock, but I can tell you I was not prepared at all for the sights I was about to see.

I met up with Sam Weaver and Karen Wynn of Weaver's Marine and the Maryland Waterways Foundation on a very chilly Tuesday morning and headed down to the Tradepoint Atlantic dry dock. As we pulled up you could just see the top of the Constellation and her masts protruding from the dry dock. The rest of the ship was "underground". To say I was blown away by the size of the ship compared to people and the size of the dry dock compared to the ship is an understatement.

Let's start with the dry dock. It measures 1,200 feet in length, 199 feet in width, and has a depth of at least 32 feet, according to my photos. The dock construction began in 1969 and finished in 1971. It

was originally built to build boats but when the market in Baltimore for ship construction dried up it began being used for repairs and maintenance. Before Tradepoint Atlantic put the dry dock back in service in 2020 it had not been used since 2017. Residents of the area were glad to see the industry coming back because of the long history of shipbuilding and repair in Sparrows Point. In fact, there were roughly 600-700 ships built onsite with the last being the USS Tanner built in 1989.

In comparison, the USS Constellation measures 200 feet in length, the beam length is 43 feet, and a draught of 21 feet. The ship construction began in 1853 with the keel and she was finally out to sea in 1854. The Constellation was commissioned in 1855 for formal service in the USN. The USS Constellation was active until 1940 when she was decommissioned. However, during World War II she

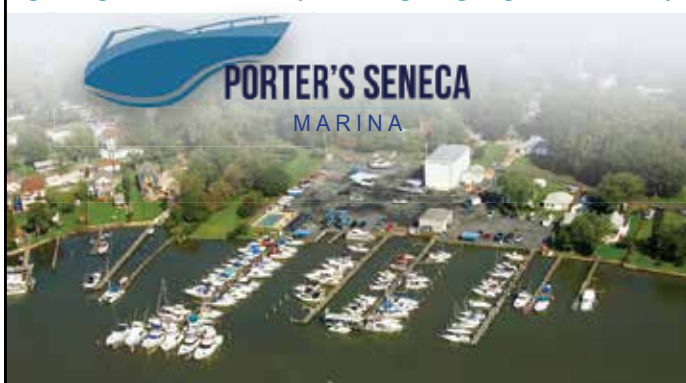


was recommissioned and used in non-combat roles. In 1945 she was moved to Boston next to the USS Constitution. In 1955 she was decommissioned for the final time and relocated to Baltimore. Landmark status was granted in 1963. One of her claims to fame is the fact that she was the last all-sail-powered warship constructed for the service. Another is the fact

that she is the only complete American Civil War-era warship still in existence.

Baltimore is an area with so much maritime history! I was honored to witness this majestic ship in dry dock and research the dock and the ship for this article. I cannot thank my hosts enough for providing me with this experience.

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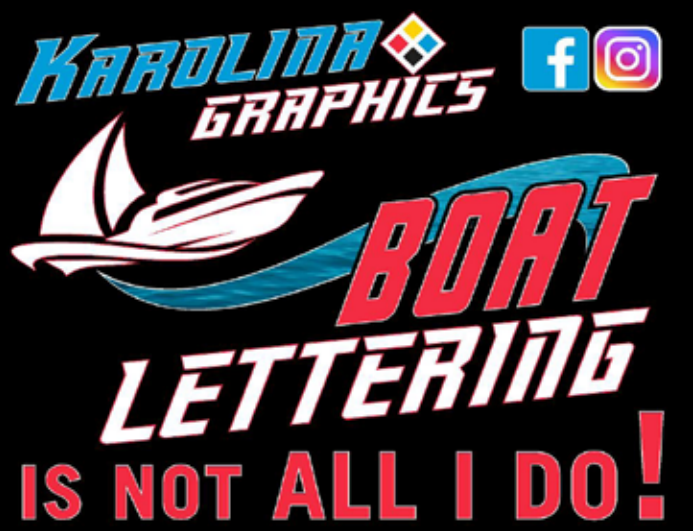
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GAME ON

Honing Skills During The Off-Season

By Montana Grant



Boating is a learned skill. To become a captain or excellent watercraft sailor, you need to practice and learn the skills needed to navigate and stay safe on the water. These games can be played on land, at the dock, or on the water. Invite, invest, and share ownership of your watercraft.

There are plenty of things to learn about boating. Maybe start with the names of the gear and parts of a boat. Make some flashcards to start. After you are practiced learning the names, make a game up that is like Pin the Tail on the Donkey, except you will be sticking the names of the boat parts on the part.

Games are available using the computer for learning in the off-season. Everyone must learn how to use and enjoy your watercraft safely and correctly.

If you are using a kayak or canoe, shallow water games are great fun. You can certainly race. Maybe do a jump-in and out of the boat activity. Race the canoe when it's full of water. Use your pants and clothes to make floatation devices. Make a race that includes a portage or make you switch positions.

Try setting up challenges and a map. Boaters must locate a spot and complete a task. The event could be timed. Station 1 would be a launch and then travel to the second station. Maybe this station requires them to set the anchor and demonstrate a

rescue. The next station could be at the boat ramp where a trailer flat tire needs changed. Themes would vary based on needs and what is available. Catching a fish, gathering firewood, picking up trash, retrieving a flag, or... come up with your own ideas.

Boat knots are a great contest. Nautical Knots would be the theme. Use the knots when mooring and working on the boat. Maybe award a captain's hat that the winners get to wear until the next challenge.

Powerboating means navigation, laws, regulations, and rules. Have the gamesters plot a route to a place, drop anchor, and complete a safety check. Maybe plan a scavenger hunt where the boater needs to locate and find several items or places while safely and efficiently navigating the boat.

Of course, the parents and mentors need to be on hand to keep things safe. Anticipate any problems and be prepared to step in and save the day.

Kids learn best when they make a mistake. This is the moment when they can pay attention and you can teach them a skill. This is not the moment when you yell at them. A participation award will not help them to master a skill.

Every boat needs a crew that can help operate and celebrate the boat with the family. Once you teach them the ropes, they can become a reliable member of the crew.

AVOIDING THE WINTER BLUES: CHECK ON YOUR BOAT!

By TowBoatUS Captain Dale Plummer

Winter weather can be rough on boats, so please take extra precautions when keeping your vessel in the water for the season. Accumulation of snow and ice on a moored or docked vessel increases the potential for sinking, property damage, and fuel pollution to occur. Piled up ice and snow on deck can clog deck drains and add weight that can push the waterline over the scuppers and thru-hulls.

Another cold weather danger to boats stored in the water is cracked and failed thru-hull fittings and bursting hoses and strainers. If water remains in a hose, strainer, or thru-hull, it will freeze when the temperature drops. You never know when that intake hose is going to freeze solid and pop.

To ensure the safety of your boat during the winter months, be sure to perform regular vessel checks and remove any snow and ice build-up. Never rely on electric heaters to prevent freezing because electricity may not be reliable during and after storms when you can not access your boat.



Be sure to winterize promptly, close all the seacocks and plug exhaust ports before the freezing temperatures set in. The next thaw will quickly show who winterized correctly and who has been ignoring their boat. For more expert advice on winter storage and hundreds of other topics, visit www.boatus.com/expert-advice. As always, happy to help!

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THE SHELLER

A Gadget Must Have

By Kimberly Merriken

Who in Maryland does not like crabs? Not too many people. Who in Maryland has about three different gadgets on the table to help them pick their crabs? Just about everyone! There was a time when I opened my utensil drawer to get ready for picking crabs and was greeted with a mess of mallets, knives, and various bottle openers.

However, this product The Sheller has saved me from that mess and the inevitable, "Hey hon can you crab the - mallet/ knife/bottle opener - while your hands are clean? I totally forgot."

The Sheller was created by Shelby Blondell, who is a singer and songwriter. In 2017, the idea came to her that there must be a better way to eat crabs and open a beer. With her creative spirit and entrepreneurial thinking there were many drawings and a few prototypes before the product was patented, trademarked, and available to the masses. Shelby and The Sheller won a \$30,000 grand prize at Salisbury University's

semi-annual Ratcliffe Foundation Shore Hatchery entrepreneurship competition in 2021. But for me, the best part is the product is not only made in the USA but right here in the crab capital, Maryland.

I needed to try this product out so when I recently had some friends from South Carolina up for a visit we got some crabs and settled in with The Sheller and a few Bohs. The first thing you notice is The Sheller is beautifully crafted from stainless steel and is all one piece. No more mallet heads falling off the stick. It is also flat which stops you from smashing the crab to pieces. The Sheller allows you to easily open your crab with just one smack. The knife end makes scraping and picking so easy. Even my southern friends looked like pros with it.

Oh, did I mention this gadget is flat?! What a difference in my utensil drawer. This space-saving design created order in the chaos of my utensil drawer. It really is an amazing product all around.

Where can you purchase this

amazing

gadget you ask?

Well, it is available

at Shelby's Etsy

store, her website:

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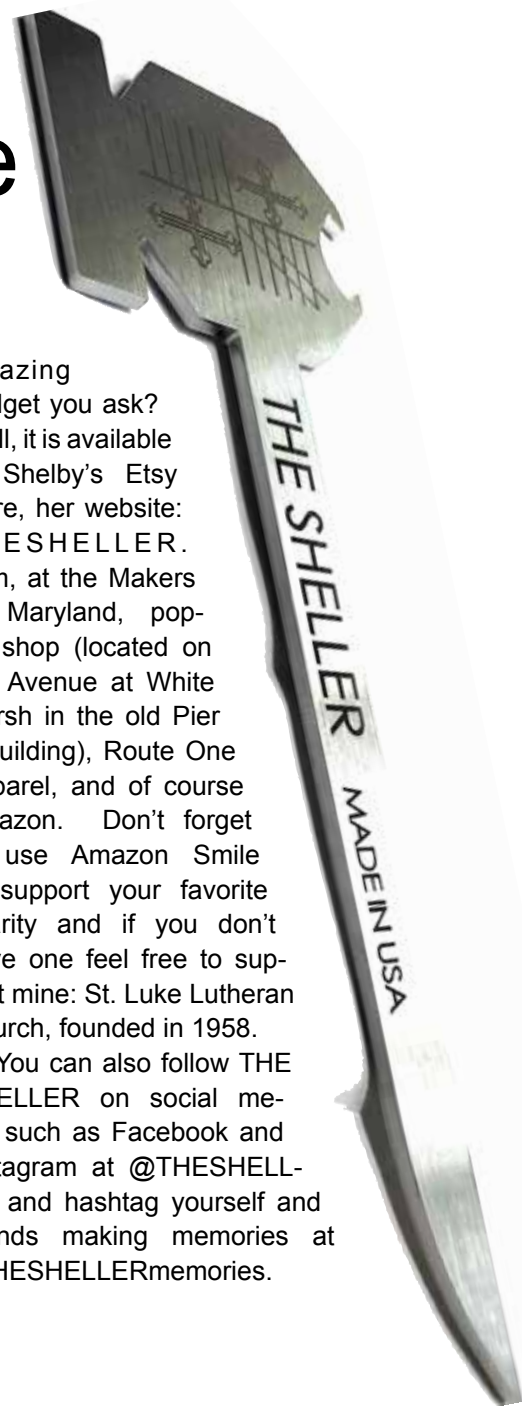
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One focus is taking on college environmental students as interns over the summer months. We are always looking for enthusiastic students who want a valuable, hands-on life experience. We always appreciate any donations to help support this invaluable, educational experience. The internship involves down and dirty work, leadership experiences, and a multitude of connections and field trips.

Our internship is an opportunity for students to apply the knowledge they have gained by books and lectures and apply it to real world situations and people. The great part is that we learn as much from our students as the learn from our experiences.

This summer we had interns from Susquehanna University and CCBC, an outstanding partner for students. The students were great, as always, and MWF will support them in all future endeavors. It was awesome receiving feedback from the interns' and knowing that we were succeeding in our goals for them.

Pariya Ahmadi wrote, "The past 5 months have been the most instructive, illuminating, and exciting period of time for me...the breadth of exposure I received at this

internship to different sectors of environmental science from the non-profit, to research, to public, and education is incredible thanks to the sheer diversity of endeavors MWF is involved in." Also noting, ..."the good that can happen when the economy and the environment join forces, a duo I thought unlikely in the real world."

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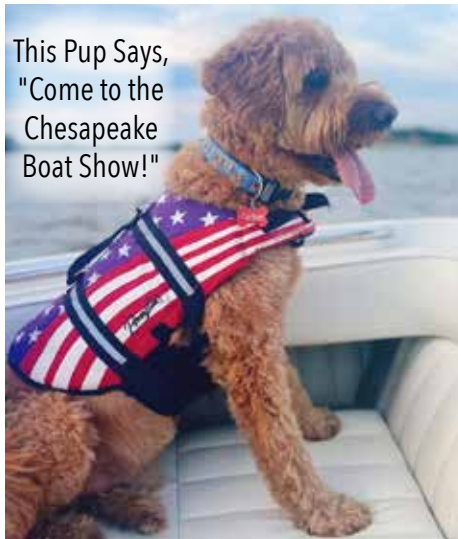


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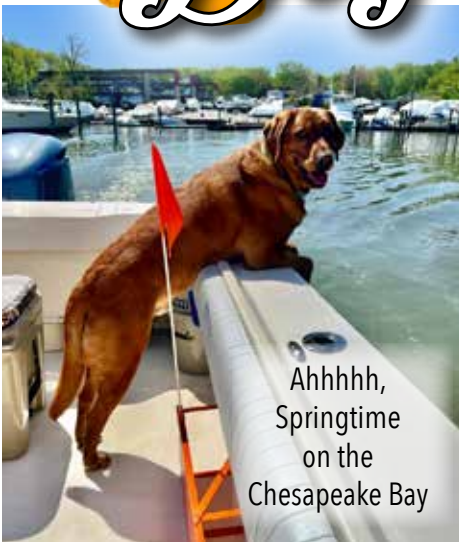
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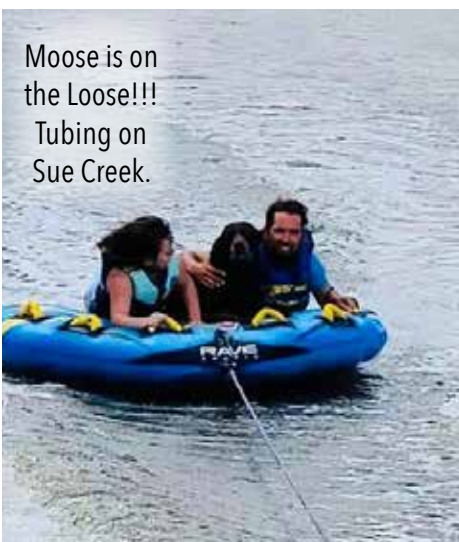
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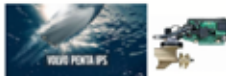
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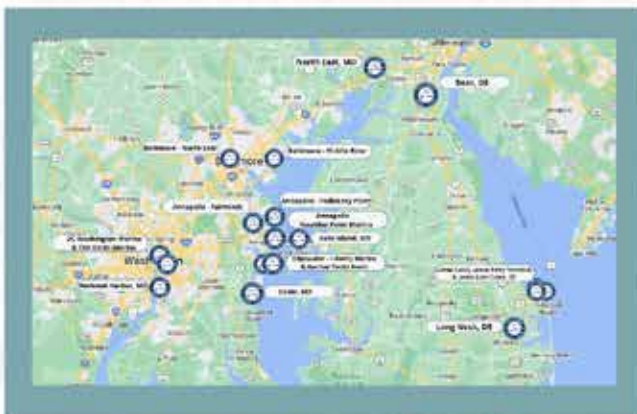


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Water - Loving Boaters

By Montana Grant



The Chesapeake Bay is full of boats. Most boats remain in the marinas, trailers, and storage. Wouldn't it be great to see every Bay Region boat afloat at the same time? Everyone, at some point in their lives, wants a boat. WHY?

Maybe it is because humans are just big bags of water. Most of our mass is made up of water. We could die from dehydration faster than other ailments. Every cell of our bodies is filled with water! Being on the water, hearing water, smelling water, and swimming in the water, all inspire us to love water. For 9 months, we floated in our mother's wombs, in water. Why wouldn't we want to be near water?

Many boaters can't swim! What is with that? Thank goodness life preservers come in many colors, styles, and sizes. Everyone on or near water needs to know how to swim. If you can't, learn how to swim. It could save your life. So, boaters that can't swim, buy boats? May-

be there should be a law. I hope that they practice safety drills.

Big expensive boats are another way for wealthy people to show off. The more expensive, the better. Size matters to people with big egos.

Boats are not cheap, but you can enjoy boating on the cheap. Make friends with someone that buys a boat. Make sure that, when you are invited, you bring lunch, snacks, and beer, and treat the owners well. It's cheaper than buying your own boat. Hand-me-down boats are also abundant. Uncle Joe's old boat ends up in your yard. Now it has become a project.

One boat is never enough. Boat owners have many needs. The needs of a fisherman are way different from the needs of their wives that just want to cruise and sunbathe. Boaters seldom settle for just one boat. They may also enjoy small watercraft like canoes, kayaks, duck boats, rafts, party boats, and row boats. Sailboats are also a more nautical choice.

Speed and ski boats offer a variety of choices. Boaters find a way to expand and change their fleets.

Boats are empowering. Pressing a throttle forward is the same as flooring the gas pedal. Navigating, locating fish, plotting a course, docking, launching, and all things boating make sailors feel skilled and competent.

Boaters have different wants. Some boaters want to paddle or row. Others want to engage the Tennessee Go Fasters and roar across the bay. Each style has its thrills. Feeling the wind in your hair and hats blowing off is an adrenaline rush. So is stealthfully gliding up a creek and watching unsuspecting deer, waterfowl, and birds in their ecosystems.

Boats are a ton of work! There was a reason that the early galleys of Rome and other nations were powered by slaves. Most people do not want to do the work. For every hour of boating, there are several hours of maintenance, bills, care, and organization.

Something always is broken. The batteries won't charge, the motor won't start, the trailer has a flat, and the seagulls crashed all over your boat, ... It's always something. Boat ramps can be crowded. Good weather and holidays bring out the flotillas of seasonal wannabe boaters. Plan, prepare, and avoid the problems to avoid landing on Gilligan's Island.

When things are working, boating is magic! The sounds, smells, feel, and power enthralls us all. It is all worthwhile when we see the smiles of the guests and crew. Consider boating when others don't. The Fall and early Spring offer wonderful weather and less crowded waters.

We boat because we like water. The boat allows us to travel, enjoy sports, and maybe catch a big one. We can boat with family and friends. Boats represent Freedom!

Hoist up the anchor, launch, and sail off into the sunset!

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Chill Out

By Anne Sandbek

Is it just me, or did winter blow in hard and fast this year? While it may be controversial in the Boating World, I LOVE winter. If I'm being honest, it's more like I love snow. If it's below 30 there better be snow on the ground. However, I live in northern Maryland and we all know that's unlikely to be a normal occurrence (if it happens at all).

So, as I'm being more specific I enjoy being snowed in, preferably with a fire going and a dog cuddled up next to me. It's a peaceful feeling when the world is blanketed in white, quieter with few cars on the road. That is the time I look forward to, it's a reset. Coincidentally, it usually happens with the New Year, a traditional time of reflection and the promise of a better year. We can use the quiet time to be better when it warms up. And if not better, at least we can be on the water again.

As the rivers and Bay freeze on top, life continues in the ever-flowing current underneath. Although the activity slows dramati-

cally. Some Rockfish tough it out in the Bay throughout the winter, but many individuals flee south to Virginia and the Carolina coasts for the colder season. Meanwhile, Blue Crabs head to deeper waters where they go dormant snuggled in the mud. They don't technically hibernate, but they remain inactive until water temps hit 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

Like animals, many plants need to adjust to the winter season. While animals wait or migrate to warmer weather to reproduce, plants don't have that convenience. Many plants have evolved to require long periods of cold in order to reproduce. When a seed needs to go through a period of cold before it will sprout it is known as stratification. Stratification helps when a seed has a tough outer shell. The freezing and thawing of early spring after a long cold period create the ideal conditions for the inside of the seed to be exposed and germination can occur. This also happens with many spring-blooming

bulbs like daffodils and tulips. This is why Spring flowering bulbs are planted in the Fall. They will only bloom after a long period of cold.

Stratification also needs to take place in order for River Birch seeds to germinate. They need six weeks or more of deep cold in order to sprout. These, usually multi-stem, trees are extremely common near the water and in housing developments. Their peeling bark and wispy leaves make them "four-season interest" trees. In nature they are usually found near water, hence their name. That is also helpful because the seeds cannot dry out during their stratification period.

As I drive over the creeks and streams this winter I'm going to remember this lesson from the plants - take a chill pill. Slow down, rest, and come back swinging! So even though I can't be on the boat right now I'm ready to take advantage of all four, beautiful Maryland seasons.



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EYE ON KENT NARROWS

By Captain Mark Galasso

I get to see a lot of sunsets and sunrises in my line of work. Like most people who make their living on the water, our day begins well before the sun comes up and ends well after the sun goes to bed. Some people might think that the long hours are a curse but after the spectacular sunset the other evening I consider it a true blessing. I was actually leaving our custom rod shop, Shore Tackle, in Kent Narrows heading the short five miles home to Grasonville. When I left our shop in the Fisherman's Inn parking lot I could see in my rear-view mirror the sun setting over Kent Narrows behind the New Hyatt Hotel. I pulled over in front of a low spot on Marshy Creek to watch the sun disappear out by Parson's Island. The grey clouds outlined by purple turning to a fiery red just as the sun disappeared. It was like there was a nuclear explosion on the western shore that lit up the sky. Only it was peaceful. Beautiful.

I wondered how many times people in our area have missed an event like this just because they didn't make the effort to put their busy day on pause for just a few minutes. Like the millions of people that head to the beach ev-

ery year Friday afternoon as they cross the Kent Narrows Bridge. Did you know over 30 million vehicles a year come across the Bay bridge onto Kent Island? Many of them as soon as they hit Kent Island are more worried about alternate routes to avoid the traffic at Kent Narrows. And come Saturday and Sunday they'll do it again in the other direction. At this point, I'll dispel the myth. Unless you are in a boat there is no way to avoid the Kent Narrows Bridges!

Many people have learned that Kent Narrows is more than just a place to sit in traffic. It is just as much a destination as Ocean City or the Delaware Beaches with lots to offer the weekend traveler, whether you are traveling by boat or car. Queen Anne's County has taken advantage of this and literally made Kent Narrows the Center of the County tourism focus. In fact, the County Tourism Office itself is in Chester on the Northwest side of the Narrows right next to the DNR.

A Kent Narrows Foundation was formed in 1990 to help promote businesses within the 1,000 or so acres of Narrows waterfront that separates Grasonville to the east and the Chester River to the west. The group was tasked with increasing exposure to

what the area has to offer while preserving the area's rich history as a waterman's port and seafood processing icon within the Chesapeake Bay community. Though this balancing act isn't isolated to Kent Narrows this area has perhaps the greatest exposure to outside influences being at the crossroads of the interstate as well as intrastate travel.

First off Kent Island in General and Kent Narrows specifically have a long history. The south end of Kent Island, Fort Kent was the second oldest English settlement in the United States. It was a trading post set up by the Jamestown settlers to trade with the northern Chesapeake Indian tribes. It wasn't long after that trading as well as seafood harvesting came to Kent Narrows. In fact, Queen Anne's County has hung on to its rural roots and still has one of the smallest county populations in the state even though it was officially founded in 1706.

Kent Narrows itself in colonial times was just a creek surrounded by marsh, the Chester River to the North, and the Eastern Bay to the south. A small causeway built out of local materials went across the creek. Waterman worked the local waters for fish, crabs, clams, and

crabs. The bounty of the area seemed endless. Boats on the north side of the Narrows worked the Chester and the boats south worked the Eastern Bay. In the late 1800s the causeway was removed, the creek dredged and a wooden bridge was built. This opened up both areas to all the watermen and the overall harvest increased. In fact to the point where in the early 1900s a railroad spur came to Kent Narrows. Box cars of Oysters were shipped to Philadelphia for processing though oyster shucking and crab picking houses were springing up all around the Kent Narrows waterfront.

By the 1930s the old wooden bridge was replaced and in 1952 a new draw bridge was erected. Just 38 years later the draw bridge became insufficient to handle the increased traffic and in 1990 the new Kent Narrows high-rise bridge was erected with a 62-foot clearance over the water. The old draw bridge was dedicated as "The Waterman's Memorial Bridge", and a statue honoring the local waterman both past and present was designed and created by Tighlman Helmsley a local waterman /artist, and was erected in front of The Fisherman's Inn on the southeast side of the Narrows.

Present-day Kent Narrows

Jump to p. 35



Kent Narrows jump from p. 34

looks nothing like what it did even 50 years ago though it's not hard to find glimpses of its history. The once prevalent picking houses and wharves have been replaced by restaurants, bars, hotels, and marinas. It's a mecca for tourists coming from land or water. Red Eyes Dock Bar, as well as The Jetty, are popular stops on the go fast boats poker runs. The Big Owls Tiki Bar with its daily entertainment and a small fleet of charter and cruise boats offers frustrated travelers a place to unwind until the traffic abates which they can see from a bar stool instead of a car. Restaurants like the Fisherman's Inn and Crab Deck, The Narrows, Bridges the Dock House, and Harris's are all within walking distance of hotels like The Garden Hilton, Best Western, Holiday Inn Ex-

press, and the brand new Hyatt.

The area's roots in the Seafood Industry are still very much on display. Harris's Restaurant has a massive display of the old gallon Oyster cans local companies sent around the country full of fat local Oysters. And right next door Harris's Seafood still processes truckloads of oysters every day. And most of the empty shells are recycled out on local Oyster Bars by the Oyster Recovery Partnership, ORP. Spat tanks for seed oysters can still be seen along the water's edge on the south side of the Narrows. Fisherman's Inn boasts having one of the premier collections of Oyster Plates in the region. Many of which are on display in their restaurant. Crabbers, Clammers, fishermen, and Oysterman still drop off their catches at Kent Nar-



Photo Credit: sunrise.maplogs.com

rows docks every day and small distribution operators with their refrigerated trucks start their days in Kent Narrows well before dawn. Over fifty years ago The Ipswich Shellfish Group founded by George Pappas in the mid-thirties out of New England recognized Kent Narrows as a seafood hub and started United Shellfish in Grasonville and many of the soft clams New Englanders enjoyed came from our local waters. Their distinct blue and yellow trucks have been part of the area's landscape ever since.

In December the Queen Anne's County Waterman's Association has a Blessing of the Fleet. One in the Spring and one in the Fall. This year three Christmas Trees made from hundreds of decorative bushel baskets were the centerpiece of the festival and erected next to the Waterman's monument. Local writers and craftsmen displayed their wares. All for the benefit of the local waterman.

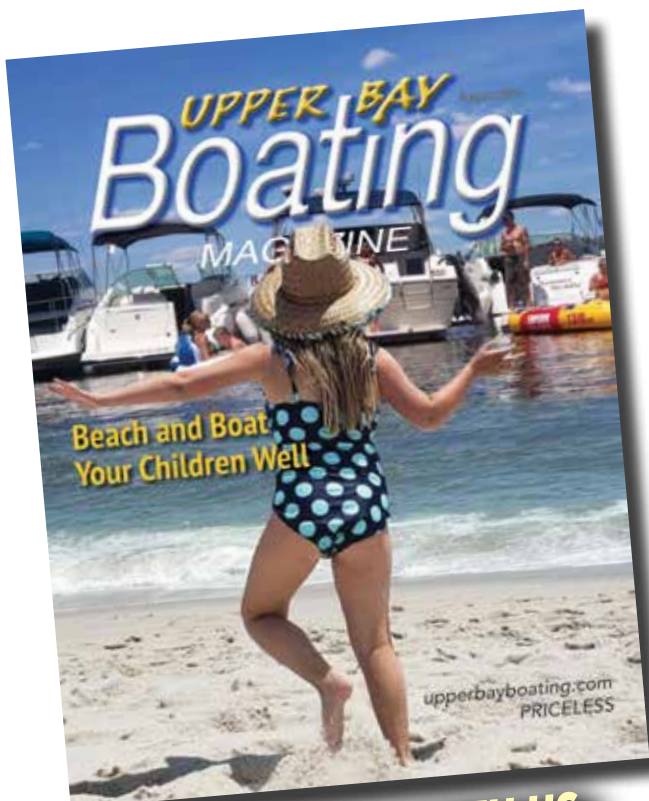
As sailors and other boaters slowly traverse the narrows you can't help but notice the Kent Island Yacht Club on the southwest side of the Narrows. It is a sister club to the Miles River Yacht Club just a short ride down the Eastern Bay in Saint Michaels. Between the old Kent Narrows, Bridge and the Yacht Club sits the Waterman's Marina. A quick glance at all the workboats reminds you, people, still work the local waters. Boats giggle with trot

line pullers, clam dredges, pater tong rigs, and boxes of nets bob gently in their slips. Most are named after someone's girlfriend, mother, or sister. Sprinkled among them are a few charter fishing boats as well as the bigger head boats so named for the practice of charging "By the Head". Spot, perch, rockfish, and bluefish among other quarries are readily available in the area, and weather permitting boats are always available.

The next time you have a few days to kill remember Kent Narrows. All the amenities you could want are within walking distance of one another. And you can come by car or boat. Sunrises and sunsets abound and the only question is where you want to see them from. A hotel balcony, a bar stool, your boat. Perhaps at a picnic table cracking a few local Blue Crabs or sampling some rockfish tenders or even slurping down a few fat oysters. My favorite spot is out on Prospect Bay just south of Kent Narrows. I like to drift off Talisman Farm or the environmental center at CBEC and watch the sunset over Parson's Island. It doesn't get any better. My least favorite sunrise is in the rearview mirror as I'm stuck in Bridge traffic heading east. Though come to think of it. Even that's pretty nice.

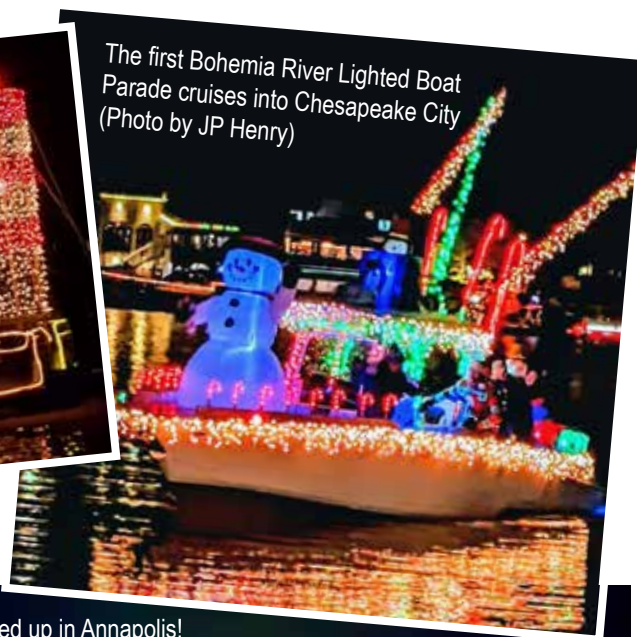
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