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Marinating with Jim High

Jim High Publisher

Meeting John Shields, GERTRUDE'S AT THE BMA, AND THE BOOK CHESAPEAKE BAY COOKING

Meeting John Shields, author, and restaurant owner! I had the pleasure of visiting Gertrude's at the Baltimore Museum of Art this past February. Gertrude's has been a wonderful fixture of the BMA and Charles Village since 1998 and helped start the Farm to Table experience so many dinners seek today. The brunch we had was fabulous and even though it isn't on the water, the owner is the author of many great Chesapeake books. I checked Amazon and a few other outlets, and his books are available. I am pictured here with Chesapeake Bay Cooking and the new Chesapeake Kitchen. On a personal note: Thank you so much for signing my books, Captain John Shields!!!



15 Pints of Guinness!

Can you believe it? A boater couple dock their boat for the evening in Delaware City. The couple plan to go into the town for dinner and a beverage. They walk into an Irish Bar. Upon entering they hear that a gravely old man is giving away \$500 dollars to anyone who can drink 15 pints of Guinness in 5 minutes!!! If they fail, they owe \$250, and nobody is biting on the bet! The two boaters ask if each can do it, can they both win? The man says okay and they ask if they can come back in fifteen minutes. Fifteen minutes later the two boaters walk back in and ask if they can still try to win, and the gravely man said of course, of course!!! The boaters ponied up their money, were given fifteen pints, and started drinking! Four minutes later they had both drank all 30 pints with time to spare. Amazed the gravely man agreed to give them each \$500 but first they had to answer a question. Where did you two go? They laughed and explained they walked down the street to another bar. There they each drank 15 pints each just to make sure they could do it!!!



This summer try to show caution:

If in doubt, don't go out
If not sure, stay on shore
If it's stormin', don't be normin'
Or be like me...
Out in a hurricane with Forest Gump and Lieutenant Dan!



And here we are! At the cusp of another boating season and I hope you're ready to go! What a crazy mild winter this one was. We all saved on our electric bills this winter. Now, funny enough, every time it got cold, I found myself somewhere down in Florida. Sometimes I am just being lucky like that!!! It is almost that time to get those boats unwrapped, painted up, waxed down, and ready to SPLASH!

MY ANNUAL EARLY SEASON WARNING ABOUT NON-BOATING HUMANS:

No matter what they tell you, how much fun they promise, or however much they try to shame you, for us the story will always be the same. We are spending our weekend at the marina and rafted up with our like-minded weekend-loving boating community. You must explain that you appreciate them having a barn raising somewhere near Gettysburg. That a Gender Reveal party guaranteed to burn down a few acres of forest in West Virginia sounds fabulous! That a sixtieth wedding anniversary for

your parents at a mountain vineyard would be awesome!!! Explain that it is Springtime on the Chesapeake Bay and you have already planned all winter to be on your boat for that weekend, you have also planned all the following weekends clear through November. Also please explain that if the NBHs would please plan their events on the water you might just show up on Thursday and not leave until Sunday afternoon.

TAX DOCUMENTS ENCLOSED!

So, the other day I walked out to the mailbox. I open it up and find three pieces of mail marked TAX DOCUMENTS ENCLOSED. And it dawned on me... These aren't tax documents, these are Tax Foc Uments and I just don't like getting Tax Foc Umented! True story and I made up that new word.



By Wendy Gilbert / *Contributing Editor*

Rabbits and Turtles **TASKING BEFORE BASKING**

I want to bask.

Like a turtle on a hot flat rock on the first day above 70 degrees in April basks. He has no thoughts for what comes next or how many tasks are on the "to-do" list. I just want to bask in the sun quietly, calmly, and pretty darned close to motionless like my dream state turtles always

do. The modern world is focusing more on mental health these days and they call me Trendy Wendy for good reason. If "everyone is doing it" I will too.

As I write this, spring (God bless you season of hope) is springing all around me. Flowers are blooming, birds are twittering and the trees are shaking off the winter blues. While I romanticize inertia, the natural world is gently working.

It's not quite time to get into the heavy lifting of the boating season just yet. The cleaning and spring commissioning checklists are ready, but that pile of rags, cleaning supplies, and brushes can wait.

Just a wee bit longer.

Now is the time to plan yes, but it is also the time to breathe, to bask.

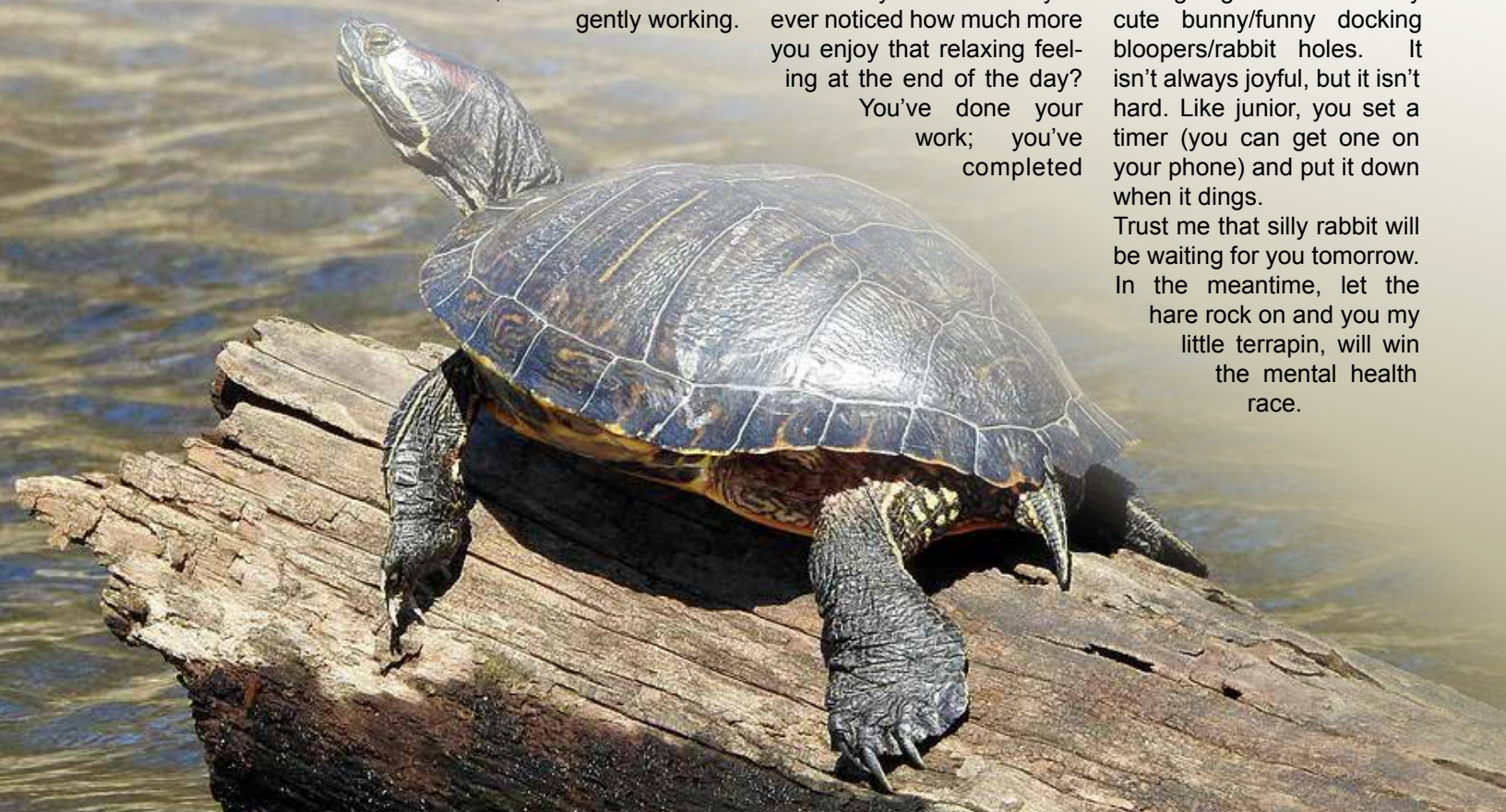
However, it can be difficult to bask until you task. Have you ever noticed how much more you enjoy that relaxing feeling at the end of the day?

You've done your work; you've completed

your list and tidied up the galley. There are no more emails to write, no more texts to send, no more chores to do, and for heaven's sake no more scrolling.

If kids need a limit on their screen time – so too, my dear friends do we. Perhaps even more. Over the last couple of months, I've worked on some plans/systems/actions to keep myself from going down too many cute bunny/funny docking bloopers/rabbit holes. It isn't always joyful, but it isn't hard. Like junior, you set a timer (you can get one on your phone) and put it down when it dings.

Trust me that silly rabbit will be waiting for you tomorrow. In the meantime, let the hare rock on and you my little terrapin, will win the mental health race.



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Welcome Nautical Newbies

By Montana Grant

Boating is a wonderful part of the Chesapeake Bay County experience. Getting your feet wet, as a new boater, can be a wonderful learning experience. Newbies will certainly have some anxiety and stress from this new adventure. The

process of buying the new boat, getting a license, training, and preparing to launch is a huge challenge. Failure to launch is just the beginning. **Consider keeping these suggestions in mind before launching!**

- **STAY SAFE** Having an experienced mentor on board is important. Have them walk you through every step. Listen to their advice and embrace it. Most accidents can be avoided if you just slow down, listen, and learn. Be a drug and alcohol-free boat. Follow the rules.

- **MAKE A BUCKET LIST** So why did you buy the new boat? Will you be fishing, skiing, anchoring up, crabbing, swimming, cruising, or... whatever your dream is, there should be a plan. Where can you go to enjoy your bucket list of ideas? Ask your crew what they like. This list will inspire and motivate you to want to learn.

- **PICK A NICE, FIRST DAY** Weekdays are less crowded. Perhaps take a day off of work to celebrate the first launch. Don't be like the SS Minnow and go out for a 3-hour cruise, until the weather started getting rough. Wind, waves, precipitation, and thunderstorms can ruin your day, not to mention endanger your life.

- **PLAN SMALL OUTINGS AT FIRST** Short trips will be perfect ways to gain experience and confidence. Overnight, long trips and big daylong trips are better to navigate when you are no longer a newbie.

- **EVERYONE WEARS A PFD!**

Boats do not have seat belts and airbags. If an accident occurs, bodies will go flying. If you end up overboard, you may be unconscious or a novice swimmer. These accidents happen when you turn too sharp, start, and stop too fast, breach big waves, or hit something unintended. Make sure the life jackets are of the best quality and that they fit properly.

- **LEARN HOW TO DRIVE THE BOAT.** Once the boat is running, go slow. Good Captains understand how to set the boat TRIM. This means adjusting the motor tilt to match the hull angle for the smoothest and most efficient ride. Once you understand how to trim the boat, you can learn to go faster and negotiate rough waves and water without beating up the crew and boat. Become familiar with all the boats' features.

- **JOIN THE CREW** Everyone on the boat is a crew member. Give them a job to do. Share the jobs so that eventually everyone can handle the boat safely. Hands-on is the best way to learn. Crewmembers are less critical when they know that their turn is coming.

- **FOCUS ON THE FLOAT!** Turn off the cell phones and games. Learn to use nautical technology instead. Locating structures, fish, and navigating are great skills to learn. Pay attention to the voyage and celebrate the fun together.

- **MAKE A CHECKLIST** When launching, leaving the dock, mooring, anchoring, and preparing for a trip, consider making a **CHECKLIST**. Have everyone double-check what needs to be stored, tied down, put away, turned on or off, and addressed. Different boats have different needs and procedures. Train your crew to know what to do.

- **DON'T FORGET TO HAVE FUN!** If you are not having FUN, you are doing it wrong. The learning curve is steep but levels out with experience and planning. Every boater was a Newbie once upon a time. Don't be afraid to ask questions and listen to advice. Discover solutions to problems and challenges.

Be a Student of The Sport so you can navigate safely and enjoy!





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MARYLAND IS CRABTASTIC

While it's still too early to think about going crabbing, it's not too early to daydream of eating them next to or in the Bay. Over the last few decades limits on recreational blue crabs have gone from nearly non-existent to very restrictive. While limits returning to recreational crabbing are annoying it's important to remember the limits are what we hope will sustain the population for generations to come.

Since the blue crab is so iconic in Maryland it's hard to believe they exist anywhere else. However, their native range is throughout the Americas. From Nova Scotia, Canada through to Argentina!

A crab starts its life as one of 750,000 to 2 plus million eggs on a single female crab. At first, those odds seem pretty good, but since everything wants to eat eggs and tiny crabs, not many of them will make it to reproduction age. In warm weather crabs will

reach maturity sooner, usually 12 months. In cooler water, like the Bay, it takes about 18 months.

Crabs of all sizes are on the menu for, fish, large birds, sea turtles, and of course humans. Making their scientific name all the more fitting - *Callinectes sapidus* - which means 'beautiful savory swimmer' in Latin.

Next to oysters and clams, crabs are one of the main filters of the Bay. Think of them as vultures - they'll eat anything. Small bivalves and crustaceans, plant and animal detritus, and even smaller soft shell blue crabs! These little scavengers help keep the Bay floor clean.

After mating the male crabs generally stay or move to fresh water, a main reason while

in the Upper Bay, we usually see males. The females prefer saltier water near the mouth of the Bay. Throughout their lives, the crabs use many of the varied habitats of Chesapeake Bay to their advantage. The shallower, safer waters of the large tributary are ideal for raising young. Especially areas with lots of underwater grasses (Sub-aquatic Vegetation or SAVs) provide hiding places for the baby crabs to go through multiple molts until they reach the final stage resembling the adult crabs.

Just think, by the time a one-in-a-million egg finally reaches your crab pot it has been through quite the journey. While I reminisce about eating crabs monthly growing up, thanks to my aunt and uncle, I know that the new limits are to make sure that we have crabs for future generations. If that means having them less and costing more, I guess that's literally the price we have to pay to keep them around.

By Anne Sandbek



*Photo by:
Underwater grasses
are critical habitat for many Bay
critters, including the blue crab.
cbf.org-Jay Fleming*

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Did you know that renowned ocean racer Warren Luhrs founded Hunter Marine in 1973? Their first boat was a Hunter 25 designed by John Cherubini. Fifty years later some of those original Hunters are still on the Bay. The Bay's two Hunter Sailing Associations are planning a massive 2023 Hunter Rendezvous, Celebrating 50 Years of Hunter Sailing in Baltimore on June 15 to 18.


This tenth Hunter Rendezvous will be the first since 2016 and one of the largest yet. It will take place at Baltimore's Harbor East Marina on June 15 thru 18. The marina is surrounded by the upscale Harbor East neighborhood and close to many Inner Harbor attractions, Fell's Point and Little Italy. The three-day program will offer unprecedented opportunities to learn more about Hunter sailboats from

industry experts and fellow Hunter owners.

The keynote luncheon features Glenn Henderson and Rob Mazza, who are responsible for designing numerous Hunter models over the past five decades. The Rendezvous will also have experts from the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, the U.S. Coast Guard, Quantum Sails, and other industry experts.

The weekend includes two evenings of live entertainment including a gourmet dinner with an open bar featuring Wheelhouse Rock Band, voted the best band on the Eastern Shore three years in a row. There will also be a cocktail and dessert reception, rum tasting, children's activities, optional tours of the National Aquarium and Fort McHenry, and much more.

It will be a heck of a party!



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East Marina

*Registration is filling up fast for the **2023 Hunter Rendezvous, Celebrating 50 Years of Hunter Sailing.** The Hunter sailing clubs that are organizing the event are expecting over 50 Hunter and Marlow-Hunter sailboats to attend the party on June 15-18 at the Baltimore East Marina. Check out the details of this epic celebration of Hunter sailing and register at www.HunterRendezvous.com.*

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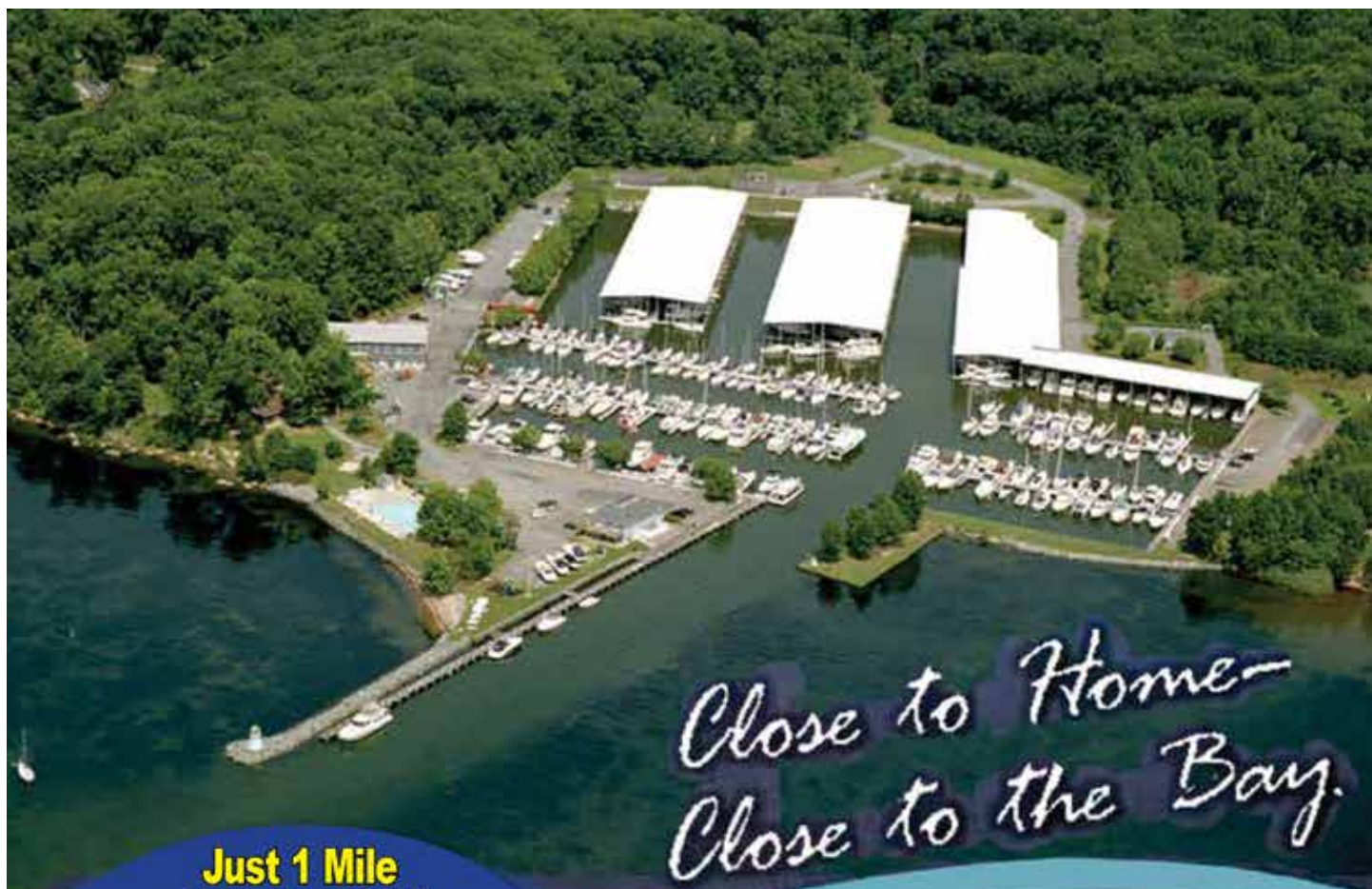
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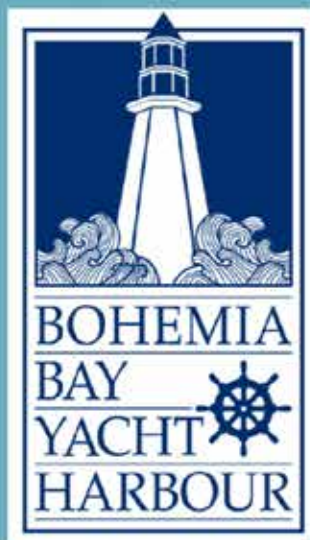


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Do Unto Others

With the summer boating season right around the corner, it won't be long before the upper Bay will come alive with recreational boats of every size and description. From the C&D Canal to Inner Harbor, there'll be fishing boats and kayaks, powerboats and day-sailors, personal watercraft and trawlers, inflatables and cruisers... all with captains who are out to enjoy this beautiful body of water in their own special way.

1) Make Room For Each Other: With hundreds of miles of open water, there's no reason for a sailboat to sail through the casting area of an anchored fishing boat or for a powerboat to cut off the nose of a sloop as it sails in open water. Snapped fishing lines and unnecessary wake don't need to happen. Be courteous. **MAKE ROOM!**

2) Use The Ramp or Fuel Dock Quickly: Nothing is more discourteous than a chit chat party at the ramp or fuel dock on a Saturday morning. Launch your boat and go. If you plan your launch properly, it shouldn't take more than sev-

eral minutes. Think of the people behind you. Be considerate. **MOVE IT!**

3) Don't Share Your Music: Anybody who has been out on the water more than once knows that sound travels much further over water than land. Chances are that your nautical neighbors, anchored in the same cove, will not enjoy your taste in music. Think about them as you crank up the volume. Be thoughtful. **HOLD IT DOWN!**

4) Watch Your Wake: Every captain should know the size of his or her wake at varying speeds. The largest wake for

most powerboats comes when "plowing", just before getting up on plane. Unfortunately, some well-intentioned powerboaters slow to plowing speed when passing sailboats and other slower boats, thinking that they're doing the right thing. In reality, they're doing just the opposite. It's often best to stay up on plane and stay clear. Be courteous. **KNOW YOUR WAKE!**

5) Keep Your Halyards from Slapping: Sailboaters owe it to overnights and permanent residents of their marina to keep their halyards from slapping against their alumi-

num mast. If you've ever tried to sleep near a boat with loose halyards on a windy night, you've experienced mental torture of the nautical variety. Be considerate, sailors. **BUNGIE THOSE HALYARDS!**

6) Keep Your Slip Area Unclogged: When loading up the boat for a weekend out on the Bay, make sure you don't create obstacles for your fellow slip holders on your pier to have to negotiate. Stay with your things until they're packed aboard. And while you're at it, take that dock cart back as soon as you're done. Be thoughtful. **KEEP IT NEAT!**

By L. Alan Keene



If we upper bay boaters spend a little more time this season considering how our actions impact the enjoyment of our fellow boaters, then it'll be a great summer for everybody! And while your at

it, acknowledge any (and all) courteous gestures with a friendly wave of the hand. It'll make you feel good and the courteous boaters even better.

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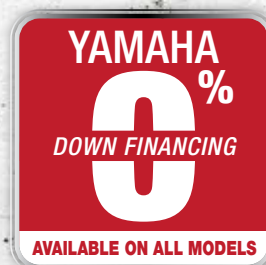
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Maryland Waterways Foundation charters BSA Troop 745, Venturing Crew 726 and Sea Scout Ship 7117 to work with youth to convey the importance of protecting our natural resources and cleaning up our waterways.



Will Snyder, a member of the Venturing Crew recently approached MWF about building an informational display as his Eagle Scout Project for his home Troop 355. He came up with a great idea on his own, submitted his plans, fundraised for supplies and gathered other scouts to complete his project on a weekend in February. Will and his helpers completed a sturdy display to house flyers and activities on one side in weather protected compartments and created an educational exhibit on the other to show how long items such as soda cans, cigarettes and diapers take to break down in the environment.



Maryland Waterways Foundation will use this valuable tool to educate volunteers at cleanups and other events. We are so lucky to be affiliated with youth that care about our world.



Be the Change our Waterways Need

Join the MWF Team!

Come out and join other volunteers for a cleanup, storm drain markings, planting trees, a rain barrel workshop and more.

Upcoming Events

- March 18 Grays Road Cleanup in Dundalk with Key Brewing
- March 19 Lutherville Cleanup
- April 1 Catonsville Community Park Cleanup
- April 15 Hawthorne Community Dumpster Day and Cleanup
- April 14-16 Bay Bridge Boat Show
- April 16 Elvis Bull & Oyster Fundraiser
- April 21 Baltimore Peninsula Cleanup
- April 22 Edgemere Rec Council Cleanup Fort Howard
- April 23 Bowleys Quarters Cleanup
- April 29 Hart Miller Island Cleanup
- May 6 Watersedge Car Show
- May 7 Dunmore Community Cleanup Catonsville
- May 25 Sandalwood Elementary School Spring Fling

If you would like more information about these or other events or if you have an area in need of a cleanup, please contact MWF

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Early Spring Snakeheads

By Tim Sherman

The popularity of fishing for snakeheads has abounded over the years. Their appeal is two-fold. They are a hard-fighting fish that is also pleasant to the palette. It was labeled Franken-fish when first found in a Crofton, Maryland pond in the 1990s. After this, a population exploded in the Potomac River and its tributaries then migrated to the lower eastern shore ecosystem. It is now fair to say that snakeheads populate every tributary that feeds the Chesapeake Bay. The upper bay rivers and creeks are no exception.

For Jerry Sersen of Reel Perfection reel repair; what started as a curiosity, is now a full-blown passion. He targets snakeheads from March to November. With snakeheads, there is a common theory that they are hibernating – go dormant – in cold weather months. Sersen believes that not all snakeheads adhere to the thought process and he has found patterns that catch them when other anglers are giving credence to the theory.

Jerry says that his pattern for catching snakeheads works from Middle River up into the Bush River and beyond. He starts looking for them when the water temperature reaches the mid-40s. You won't find him around the marshes where it is common to fish them later in the year. He is targeting deepwater marinas.

It's a perfect scenario for fishermen. During boating season, large boats make hard bottom depressions at their slip by simply docking. Snakeheads find comfort on the hard deep spots. In early spring, the majority of these boats are in dry dock, leaving ample room for casting around the decks and pilings. It's not a pinpoint process like a bass fisherman making precision casts to each piling. Moreover, it's working the slips for the depressions.

Sersen has found a formula for targeting piers. He rigs either a Zman MinnowZ or Diesel MinnowZ on a 1/8-ounce Shroomz jig head. He will occasionally work in a Zman Goat. He will upsize to a 1/4-ounce head if it's windy. However,



the lighter the better, because you will encounter bottom debris that collects on the heavier heads more easily. Jerry stresses the use of Zman products for snakeheads. They do not bite through the stretchy ElaZtech plastic nearly as easily as they do standard plastisol soft baits. The Zman jig heads are designed to hold the spongy plastic to the hook shank.

Jerry's outfit for his spring technique is simplistic. He uses a 6 1/2-foot, medium power spinning rod matched with a 3000 series reel spooled with 20-pound-test braided line. He ties on a 20-pound-test fluorocarbon leader, two feet in length.

This early in the year, snakeheads do have to eat, but they are willing to chase their meal. Jerry finds that the bites are much more subtle than the mid-summer wrist-jarring attacks. He describes it as merely feeling a little extra resistance to the end of the line. This is when he adds light pressure to the rod tip, allowing the snakehead to swim off. He then sets the hook and the battle is on.

When water temperatures reach the mid-50s, Jerry expands his playing field to coves and flats adjacent to the marinas. Snakeheads are becoming more active, so his presentations become more horizontal. He retrieves a chatter bait adorned with either of the MinnowZ. He'll also rig a Diesel MinnowZ on a SnakeLockz head and cast it around the coves.

As much as snakeheads are fun to catch, dealing with them once on board can be precarious. They thrash and have a mouth full of sharp teeth. Jerry urges that you should roll them in your net to keep them from thrashing. Once they are controlled, a strike between the eyes with a fish bat or pipe will subdue the fish. This may sound brutal, but it is necessary. At this point, you should use a lip spreader or gripper while safely removing the hook.

You don't have to wait for warm, late spring days to enjoy snakehead fishing. Jerry Sersen is sure to be catching them already. Try his tactics and you can score on early-season action, too.

SIX CLEAN WAYS TO PROTECT THE BAY

By TowBoatUS Captain Dale Plummer

Protecting marine resources for all of us to enjoy doesn't have to be expensive or complicated. Follow these simple steps, so you can save money and the planet!

- Keep your engine well-tuned, maintained, and inspected. Minimize any maintenance in the water and use products that are safe for the environment.
- Always dispose of trash and hazardous waste properly. Use pump-out stations responsibly and never discharge treated or untreated sewage in no-discharge zones.
- Prevent fuel spills by filling fuel tanks slowly and use absorbent pads or rags to catch any drips. Do not top off or overflow your fuel tank and always leave it ten percent empty to allow fuel to expand as it warms.
- Use an oil change pump to transfer oil to a spill-proof container and take it to a recycling facility. When you remove the oil filter, wrap a plastic bag or absorbent pad around it to prevent oil from spilling.
- Take special care when deploying your anchor. Pay attention to what is on the bottom and do your best to minimize any damage to our fragile Chesapeake Bay eco-system.
- Patronize businesses and marinas who have established clean practices. You may need to do your homework to find them but most states have websites that make it easy to identify those that qualify.

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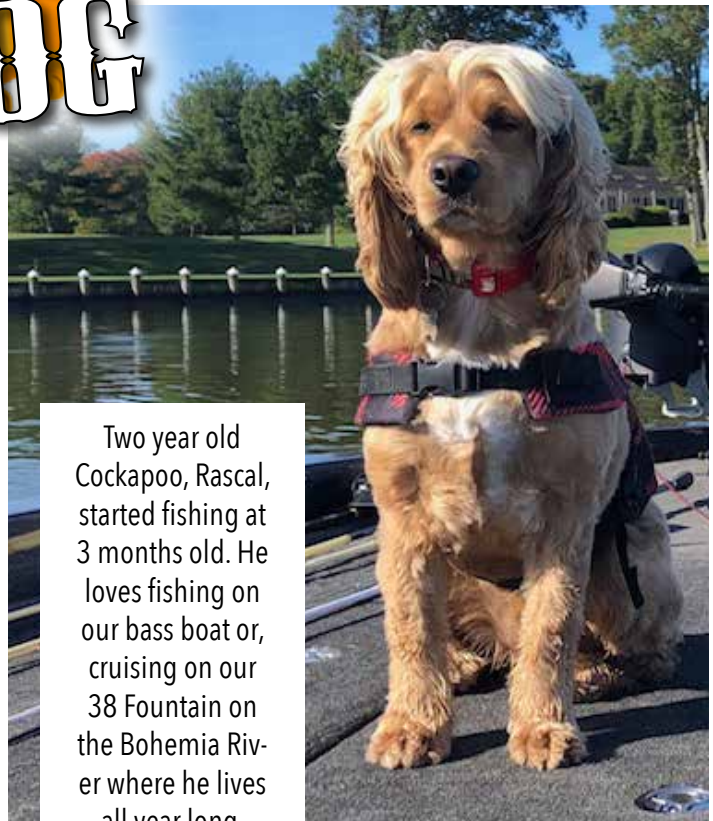
5 Month old JoJo, already a rockstar!



Luna enjoying our 44 Searay, On The Hook, on the Bohemia River.



Millie, 3 year old puggle, loves boating and paddle boarding on the Elk and Bohemia rivers.



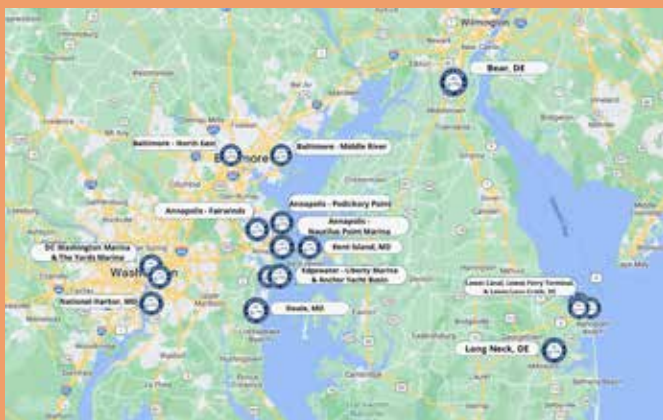
Two year old Cockapoo, Rascal, started fishing at 3 months old. He loves fishing on our bass boat or, cruising on our 38 Fountain on the Bohemia River where he lives all year long.



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FISHING RODS 101

Form vs Function

By Captain Mark Galasso

I recently had the opportunity to attend a major rod builders show in Winston-Salem, NC. It wasn't for the general public and was geared more toward actual rod builders and component manufacturers and distributors. Though it was well attended I was a little disappointed by the absence of some of the most prominent names in manufacturers and suppliers. For rod builders, the show is special because it offers us the opportunity to touch and feel new products as well as see them used by other builders and manufacturers. A series of seminars were designed to teach rod builders new techniques as well as the implementation of these techniques with new products and ideas.

I learned the rod builders fall into three categories. Large manufacturers like Shimano, Penn, and St. Croix. They literally produce thousands of rods in facilities both in the United States and overseas. They are not considered custom rods. They create product lines that service certain fishing applications, though most have products that fill most fishing needs.

Next down the scale are the midsized custom rod builders. They are usually regional builders that build rods specifically for use in their geographical area. Most of these build rods custom for specific clients and usually have local shops that produce under five hundred units a year. These rods are truly custom rods and are designed for specific applications and customer needs.

Third, there are the custom rod builders. These shops might only build a couple dozen rods a year but they are usually for demonstration purposes or one-offs for specific customers or the builder's own use. These rods run the gamut for looks and functionality. In some cases, these builders have created a decorative art form, much like decoy carvers whose ducks range from the working birds that can almost be mass-produced to the intri-

cate art birds that sometimes take years to make.

The show was a mixing pot of the latter two types of rod builders. Most of the large rod manufacturers produce their own blanks and use limited types of components; guides, grips, tips, butt, and fore-grip materials. However, the smaller operations are dependent on the suppliers and manufacturers to supply our components. Companies like Mud Hole, American Tackle, and Batson supply rod blanks and components. Other companies manufacture rod blanks and various components. Companies like Alps, Fuji, and Winthrop supply butts and guides.

Let's take a look at how all rods are manufactured regardless of the number. The basic rod is a blank. It is usually graphite or carbon fiber or fiberglass and is manufactured to a very specific length, weight, and thickness. These properties give the rod a specific action like sensitivity and overall strength. Next, a reel seat is needed. These come in various styles and sizes depending on the reel that will be used. On either side of the rear seat is a butt section and a fore section. These can be made up of different materials like cork, EVA, rubber, or Woven Graphite. At the base of the rod is a butt cap. Rods, like trolling rods, that tend to spend time in a rod holder usually are gimbaled small spinning rods are not. At the tip of a rod is a tip. These come in a myriad of styles and sizes and are measured by the tube size and the ring size. These can be critical if a fisherman is using wind on leaders like the offshore guys. Last but not least are the guides. There are hundreds of sizes and styles depending on the type of fishing the angler is doing. The guides are all measured on the blank and wrapped with thread. This is then protected with one or more coats of a two-part epoxy.

Most midsized shops like ours at Shore Tackle and Custom Rods build for func-

tion. A fisherman comes into the shop and first off gives us an idea of how the rod is to be used. Is it a tuna stick or a spinning rod for Coastal Strippers? What reel will be used? What line is to be used? Are you going to cast large surface plugs or vertical jigging from a boat? How long are your arms? (Believe it or not, it makes a difference!) Then we dive into what blank to start on and how it will be built. One great thing about the rod builders show is we actually got to touch and feel hundreds of blanks from different manufacturers. That's just not something you can get from a catalog.

So the smaller shops can create the functionality a fisherman needs. In the larger shops, you have to hope that the functionality they have already created fits your needs. Part of a rod builder's work is fixing and rebuilding rods, so we get to see how other manufacturers both large and small build a rod. At the show, there were rods entered in the world rod-building championship. Functionally they were very rudimentary. Some were so over the top there was literally no function. But they were works of art. The thread work would make you dizzy. The threads were laid down so precisely that there wasn't even a gap you could lay a hair in. The patterns would take months just to figure out and you would need a microscope to find any imperfections.

So like decoys fishing rods are a balance of form and function. You wouldn't want to shoot over a decoy that took a year to build. Just like you wouldn't want to scratch a thread pattern that took a week to lay in. But you also wouldn't want to hunt over a decoy that laid on its side when you put it in the water. It needs to look good and float true. Just like your custom rod needs to look good and help you catch more fish.

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DOLPHIN MARINE AT THE COVE ANNOUNCES GRAND OPENING

By Wendy
Gilbert



A year ago, when Zak Mirjavadi started creating, cleaning, and refurbishing what is now Dolphin Marine Center at the Cove, he had no idea what a Herculean effort it would take to reach spring of 2023.

But now that the lion's share of the work is complete, Mirjavadi looks back with pride and forward with hope. "One day I feel like I'm blessed. One day I feel like I am cursed," he said recently.

Mirjavadi is the owner/operator of Dolphin Marine, 11 Mainsail Dr., Elkton, and has 42 years of experience in the marina business. He's owned marine businesses in Connecticut, Florida, and New York.

His team includes his wife Nasim and son, a naval architect, and friends Norbert Sluzewski, Tom, Sean, Glen, and Chuck. After spending several months hauling out and cleaning up this site, Zak's crew was ready to replace and refurbish the docks. Mirjavadi had a hard time finding a piling business available in time for the spring opening, so the team had to come up with a new plan.

"We ended up buying our own piling machine," he said. Tackling a major renovation can be frustrating at times and Mirjavadi said he's been very grateful to his team and his neighbors. "A neighbor, Ron Taylor, came in and started helping me out. We turned it around. It still has a ways to go!"

The season grand opening is something they have all been looking forward to. In addition to an active online community on Facebook, information on the site can be found at dolphinmarinaatcove.com

Dolphin Marine at the Cove features 89 slips. Costs vary slightly based on boat length and are available from April 15 to Oct. 15.

Also available this season -- trailer parking and boat ramp access.

Longer-range plans include creating and refurbishing more floating docks, upgrading the bathhouse, building a clubhouse, and soon a swimming pool.

Why Dolphin Marine for a name? Does it harken back to Zak's time in Florida? Not exactly. "It goes back to the first marina where I started. It was called Dolphin. In the Gulf of Persia." When he arrived in Connecticut in 1985, he started Dolphin Services, LLC. A name and a business that is swimming in success.



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Fairwinds Marina

By Kimberly Merriken

This month, I spoke with Larry and JoAnna Goldberg, of Fairwinds Marina, and then had the pleasure of touring the Fairwinds Marina with Larry.

First impressions are everything, the pictures don't do it justice, and location, location, location are three timeless sayings that came to mind when I visited Fairwinds Marina.

The first impression I got just from speaking to Larry and JoAnna on the phone really sums up their mission. They are a family-owned private marina that strives to bring the best possible experience to their slip holders, Freedom Boat Club members, and anyone else who might stop by.

The father/daughter team purchased the marina in 2013. Over the years they have continued to make improvements and are very proud to showcase the extensive upgrades they have made during the off-season. The marina is full service, offering land and water slips, fuel, repair, and a store, online and on-premise.

Speaking of first impressions....The first thing you notice when you enter the marina is how orderly the yard is. **AND THE VIEW!**

After parking, I made my way to the marina store and office. Remember first impressions are everything. The first thing you notice upon entering the store is how organized the shelves are and the size of the store. It is huge. I've been in many marina stores that are more about selling their logo sweatshirts and snacks than parts and accessories that you might actually need for your boat. This was definitely not my experience here. The staff was very welcoming. I was promptly greeted, and a conversation quickly ensued with the gen-

tleman at the counter, who was extremely knowledgeable about all things boating and happy to share his expertise with me.

The marina is excited to announce it will be opening an online store this season. The projected live date is late April. The store will have everything you can get at the marina but with delivery. Head over to the website to check it out: www.fairwinds-marina.com

After meeting Larry, we headed over to the service area that holds a 3-bay shop. Again, with first impressions being everything, the space was organized and clean. There is a wall filled with the certifications the technicians hold. Two of the technicians are master-level certified in both Yamaha and Evinrude engines. They also each have 40-plus years of experience working on all types of boats. They are also certified in Mercury engines. You can check out some more of their credentials on the website too. They are by far the best outboard shop in the mid-Atlantic; offering high-quality service and excellent customer service.

Are you catching on to the theme here? Family values and the best customer experience on the Chesapeake Bay area.

In keeping with this theme as you walk down the boat ramp and look to your left you can see the all-new upgraded boat slips. All the wood was replaced this off-season and the electric and water were upgraded too. The area was even reconfigured to make navigating to your slip easier. The slips will fit 18' to 32' boats and there are 20 new boat lifts. This area has historically had issues with NE and NW storms and the day I visited was quite windy. Looking out at the Magothy River you could see white caps and the water was quite rough. I could

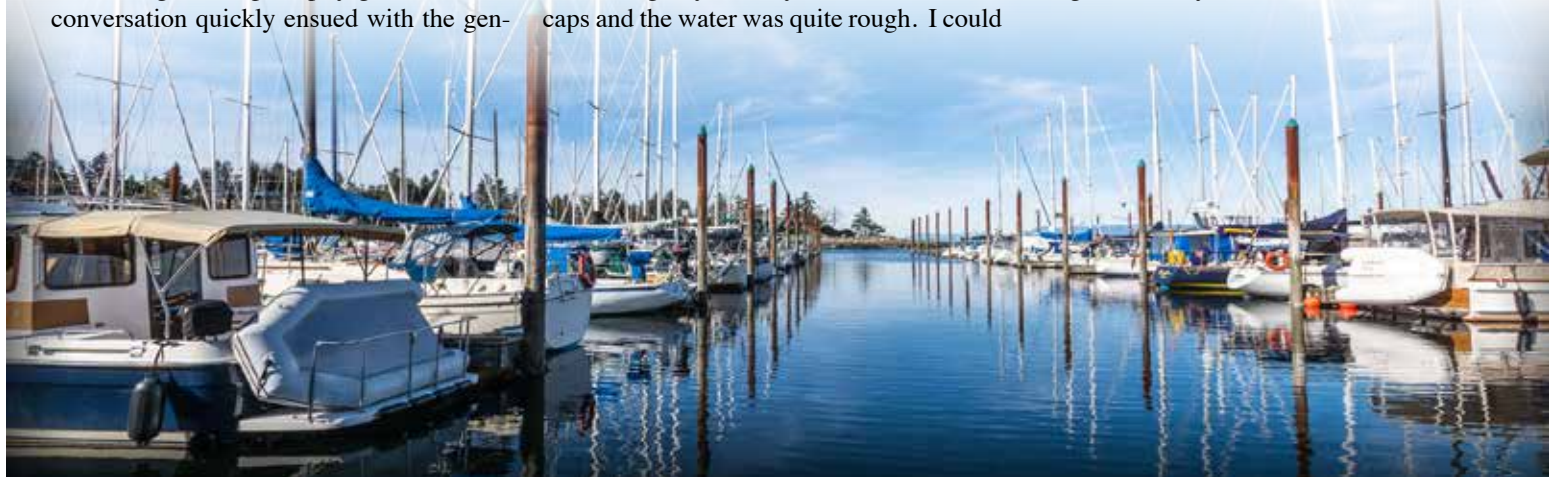
see other boats in the surrounding area really bouncing around. However, with the new breakwaters that were installed, the water was very calm in the Fairwinds area. These breakwaters will help keep boats in the slips safer all year round by reducing wave energy from the exposed side to the protected side of the dock area.

Another upgrade at the marina this season will be the offering of ethanol-free fuel. This is an advantage for boaters because ethanol tends to clog up carburetors landing small engines in the shop. This will help not just those with slips but also boaters who need to stop to fuel up and stay on the water.

The snack shack on wheels will be opening again this season. You can grab ice, soft drinks, and snacks before you go out or if you run out.


Remember a picture does not do it justice and location, location, location? The view was breathtaking. From the top of the hill to the boat ramp to the outer docks, I was blown away. The location of Fairwinds is simply incredible. Located on the Magothy River with Dobbins Island and Gibson Island directly across and the bay just 2-1/2 miles to the east, you can easily reach Kent Island, Baltimore, Annapolis, and St. Michaels from Fairwinds. This prime location lends itself to some great fishing, as well. There are two oyster beds located just to the west of the marina and I am told the fish are always biting.

So, if you are in the area stop by and see the great improvements that Larry and JoAnna have made, and don't forget to tell them your friends from Upper Bay Boating Magazine sent you.



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