



The Sycamore Islander

August, 2002

Volume 81 No. 8

Members and Wait-listers: Mark your calendar!!

See inside for details.

Fishing Derby on Saturday, August 10

Sycamore Regatta on Labor Day, September 2

August Meeting

The August meeting of the Club will be held on Wednesday, August 14th at 8:00 p.m. on the Island.

A number of matters were addressed at the July meeting. The meeting passed a formal resolution approving the employment of Joe Hage as our new caretaker. The President said he had received a letter of resignation from John Matthews as Captain and in accepting his resignation commended John in a letter of reply for his long and unstinting service to the Club in keeping the Island and its facilities ship-shape. The meeting selected Tryon Wells as Captain who is willing to serve on a temporary basis. The meeting approved the holding of a memorial service for long-time member and exemplary paddler, Richard Bridge. Jim Drew reported on the Security Committee's deliberations on suitable security arrange-

ments for the Island. Jim also announced that canoeing class will be held on August 10th. Blair Bower reported on the plan to test the Island's drinking water on a periodic basis. (See minutes for further details.)

— Carl Linden

Minutes of the July 10 Meeting

Attendees: Ann Marie Cunningham, George Loeb, Jane Winer, Nancy & Blair Bower, Frances Short, Jean Goertner, Martha Foley, Alan Gelb, Carl Linden, Harvey Resnik, Dorothy Fall, Jim Drew, Gerald Barton, Star Mitchell, John Heidemann, Dianne & John Noble, Bill Eichbaum, Larry Heilman.

Correction to June minutes: Joe Hage, Caretaker, is on the Security Committee.

The Sycamore Islander is a monthly newsletter of the Montgomery Sycamore Island Club. Articles, photographic essays, drawings, announcements, letters to the editors—any materials of interest to the membership and waiting list—are welcome and should be sent to the Editors, Jane and David Winer, 5927 Onondaga Road, Bethesda, MD 20816. Text and graphics may be sent as email attachments to davidwiner@erols.com in all common formats. **Note to submitters of announcements, articles, or letters: The deadline for inclusion in the Sept. issue is receipt at the Editors' address on Aug. 29. Earlier submissions receive priority.**

July Minutes (continued)

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Alan Gelb reported that the financial position of the Club was as expected, and a complete report will be presented in September.

Membership: Joan Kennedy and Daisy Healy have resigned. William & Jane Hill, and Elisa Free & Bill Nooter were moved up to membership.

Water Committee: Blair Bower will arrange for testing both in the well and at the faucets after completion of the modified water system.

Security Committee: Jim Drew reported that he conferred with an additional security company, which made a proposal similar to the previous firm. The equipment would last for 4 or 5 years, and would cost about \$2900 for installation plus \$95 per month. A motion was passed that the club would make a decision after the security committee investigated more alternative systems.

New Business: The memorial gathering for Dick Bridge July 25 was approved: the organizers will provide help with the ferry.

The appointment of Joe Hage as caretaker was met with approval. It was moved that he should be certified in CPR. The caretaker search committee was commended for their thorough and successful efforts.

John Mathews has resigned his position as Captain. In recognition of his excellent long service to the Club in this capacity, the Captain's Float will henceforth be known as the *Captain John Mathews Float*. In addition, a photo of John will be hung in a place of honor in the Club Room, and he was made an Honorary Member.

Doc and Phyllis were recognized for their service to the Club with an inscribed paddle and teapot.

Frank Daspit will be asked to conduct a basic canoeing session at the next orientation.

Carl Linden will take charge of the lunch at the Fishing Derby because the Entertainment Committee (George and Marcia Loeb) will be out of town at that time.

—George & Marcia Loeb,
Acting Recording Secretary



Regatta: Help, Help!

Remember the Labor Day Regatta, held around and on Sycamore Island for the last seven or so years..... water races, landlubber fun, prizes and frameable certificates! George and I will hold it again, for everyone's pleasure. ***BUT we must have a Regatta apprentice, or assistant, or whatever you'd like to call him or her, because we need to pass on the lore and divide the work.*** We are becoming old fogies, and need some help. Please volunteer, or the Regatta will fade away. Call George and Marcia Loeb at 301-652-4229, or e-mail geo.mar2@verizon.net after August 10th..

— Marcia Loeb

Hear Ye, Hear Ye...

Sycamore Regatta!

This year's Sycamore Island Regatta will kick off at 1:00 p.m. on Labor Day, Monday, September 2.

This is a family event for all members and applicants on the waiting list too. As usual, there will be water events such as the Round the Island Race, the Bag Pickup, the Drowned Rat Relay, the Sink or Swim Relay, the Jousting Tournament, and more.

For landlubbers, there will be the usual Raw Egg Toss and Three-Legged Race for starters. Then who knows, even the always exciting Balloon Stomp?.

Prizes, fun and splashes galore! And glorious FOOD!

Come one, come all !!

Gerry Barton suggests that Islanders might wish to attend a "Mushroom Fair" sponsored by the Mycological Association of Washington. The date is Sunday, August 18 in the afternoon, at Brookside Gardens in Wheaton.

More information:

www.maw.freeservers.com

Ruppert



Cartoon by Johnna Robinson

Communication: Member Memorial Services as Large Parties

This summer the Sycamore Island Club has played host to two memorial services (so far) for long-time members, and most people would probably agree that the Island is a wonderful place for such an event.

In each case, the memorial services have collided with the club's recent large party rules. Couple that with the fairly senior average age of many members (and even most club applicants on the waiting list) and the topic deserves some attention.

The Club's rules put limitations on large parties by schedule, size, duration, eligibility and participant's behavior. All of these rules intend to limit the impact of large groups on the Island's natural, and man-made facilities, on other member's use of the Island, and on the Club's safety/liability concerns. And almost all of them seem irrelevant or insensitive to the holding of memorial services. Let me trace our rule limitations on large parties to illustrate:

Schedule. A memorial service is usually quickly planned and executed, so getting prior notification in the Islander is more about luck than planning. And as often as not, a memorial service falls on a weekday so the club's large party notification requirement may be moot anyway.

Size. The size of a memorial service is very difficult to address. The bereaved host may get the word out to some people (or a lot of people) but has very little idea of the number that will finally attend.

Duration. Most memorial services last only an hour or two, far short of the Club's six-hour large party limitation.

Eligibility. Often, the deceased member and his/her spouse are advanced in years and may not have actively participated in club activities in the past year (a new requirement for hosting a large party). Should this disqualify them?

Behavior. Memorial services are generally somber affairs that involve mostly standing or sitting, listening to the service's speakers, and occasionally food. Attendees are not climbing into canoes, swimming, playing ping-pong or other active pursuits that might put them or Club property at risk.

The current rules give the Club some leeway at the monthly meetings to approve or disapprove special large parties. But sometimes the timing of a memorial service cannot be accommodated by the monthly meeting. Even when it can, I've never been to a monthly meeting yet that would turn down a request for a memorial service of a member, whatever the potential size of the gathering.

So that member memorial services no longer trip over large party rules, I recommend that memorial services for members be excepted from the large party size limitations in Standing Rule 3A, from the eligibility requirements of Standing Rule 3B and the Islander notification requirements of Standing Rule 3C.

— Tryon Wells

Captain John Matthews

— by Johnna Robinson



In the Annals of Sycamore Island, the name of our Captain is writ large. A member for the past thirty years and Captain for more than twenty-two, John's handiwork is all over the Island. He's a master canoeist who grew up on this river, who can tell tales of floods, river rescues and teenage river escapades. He has even paddled solo down from Harper's Ferry. He remembers the actual Leiter House, while the rest of us only know the "Leiter Gauge." John was here before the Parkway was built.

Island amenities that are John's doing: The oak floor in the clubhouse, waterproof and easy to care for, and the wonderful members' deck that overlooks the river. (Many meetings were spent arguing whether to trim the riverside trees to provide a better view!) Also, by John, the addition to the caretaker's quarters, with the marvelous windows; the new canoe shed, rebuilt after the 1996 floods, and The

Captain's Dock, a summer evening haven. Add to these, a new, redesigned septic system, the fun outside shower, and the warm toilet for relief caretakers in the wintertime. John can build things for a third of the cost of what other contractors charge. He's a master at re-using materials and designing with ease of construction.

The ferry cabling system, which keeps the cables out of the water in a flood, and dozens of other small engineering projects attest to John's skill at figuring out "how to make it work better." It has been a great boon to the Island to have such a skilled and knowledgeable man at the helm for all these years. Call him up and ask about some history, you'll be glad you did.

Johnna Robinson is the creator of "Ruppert."

FISHING DERBY!



**W H A T :
LAND'S FISHING DERBY**

SYCAMORE IS-

WHEN: SATURDAY, AUGUST 10

TIME: 8:30AM- 12:30PM

**WHO: ALL MEMBERS AND THEIR GUESTS, AND WAITING LIST MEMBERS
AND THEIR FAMILIES**

WHY: FUN, SOCIAL LIFE, FOOD, EXERCISE, EXCITEMENT, (MAYBE MORE)

IIII PRIZES, PRIZES, PRIZES IIII

Please join us for Sycamore's Fishing Derby. This event is sure to be a hit for the avid fisherman as well as the entire family. Fishing at Sycamore has been fantastic this season, with a lot of smallmouth bass, bluegill and angry catfish, just waiting to be caught!

Prizes will be awarded to those who catch the biggest, smallest, ugliest, most, and even the No-Fish. Bring your favorite fishing picture (of yourself) and receive an instant prize!

A BBQ lunch will follow the day's events. Please let George and Shelley Malusky know that you are coming so they can plan the comestibles. They are at 301-871-1707; they will be

Padding the Upper Klamath Canoe Trail

—by Sandi Komarow

In spring and fall the Klamath Basin region is a resting spot for birds migrating along the Pacific Flyway. Our time on the Upper Klamath Canoe Trail was in summer, scheduled around a work trip and a visit to our daughter in California, so we missed the vast numbers of birds. Nonetheless the pleasures were many.

Southeastern Oregon in July is very hot and dry, guaranteeing blue skies and very low humidity. (It may be hot but it's not Washington heat.). Jeff and I



rented a canoe at Rocky Point, an old-time resort that has an atmosphere much like Sycamore Island. We were given the usual paddles and life jackets for our canoe, and then the less usual whistle should we get lost in the marshes. On our first visit we headed south into Pelican Bay. There we saw geese and grebes and sure enough, pelicans. We followed the trail into the marshes where yellow-blooming water lilies were in full bloom. Known by their Indian



name of wocus, these lilies have foot-long leaves and large flowers whose seeds were collected by the natives of the area and used as a staple source of

food. Redwing blackbirds and dragonflies in abundance accompanied us as we paddled for hours in the marshes enjoying the scenery, the wildlife, and the surprising lack of mosquitoes. We found our way back with no need of the whistle.

Our second day on the canoe trail was July 4th and to our delight the theme for the day was eagles. Once again we rented a canoe at Rocky Point but this time we headed north between the shore and the marshes, four miles to Malone Springs. Tall cedars, pines and firs lined the shore and near the top of one tall tree we spotted our first bald eagle. Perhaps a mile later we spotted a second eagle, larger and poised for flight. We watched him take off and soar over the lake in circles until we could no longer see him. After picnicking at Malone Springs we returned, mak-



ing three more eagle sightings along the way. The day was topped off with an excellent display of fireworks in a park near the town of Klamath Falls. A fine fourth of July indeed!

Information on the canoe trails of the Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuges--complete with sound effects—can be found at:

www.klamathnwr.org/canoetrails.html

Sandi and Jeff Komarow are prominent members and frequent visitors to the Island.

A Switch to the Slow Lane

—by Drew Walsh



At the beginning of the summer I didn't have a substantial job lined up. These past couple of years of my life have been moving at a rate too fast for my liking. I was glad to be spending it at home where I could re-establish my roots and slow down. So when I received a call from John Matthews about possibly filling-in as caretaker of Sycamore Island, I couldn't think of a better opportunity.

Having grown up only two miles from here in Brookmont, I was able to visit the Island twice as a kid. Then, we swam and paddled. Years later I would pass by with my friends on the towpath, biking, swimming and swinging on the rope-swing. In those days I often wondered if the Island was any different than my memories. The looks and feel of the place hasn't changed much. Being here for this past month has allowed me to meet many of the members. I can tell how much people love this Island, and everyone loves it in their own way. Some days it was difficult to adjust to the solitude here. Your smiles and thoughtfulness were appreciated. Just when things got too quiet, George Malusky arrived with a newspaper. Then there was Ann Kipp who arrived with doughnuts one morning and the Elfstrom

family who frequently checked in. On a hot day, Gerry Barton kindly stood in so I could canoe away from the Island. Of course, Tryon kept me busy with several work projects. He rolled up his sleeves and joined me in the cleaning out of the workshed - a project that took longer than either of us expected (5 days).

Sycamore Island was a great place to reflect and relax. In the evenings I loved to venture down to water's edge and observe the motionless blue heron and have the minnows picking at my toes. Once the playful flight of another type of bird made me laugh and reminded me of a pontoon plane skimming across the surface of the water. My favorite place was the Captain's dock at sunset where I enjoyed putting my feet up and reflecting on the day. This image is one I will never forget. On my walks around the Island I took pleasure in discovering many more enjoyable spots, realizing there is always more to discover in this ever-changing environment.

I would hope one day that I can become a member of the Sycamore Island Club, that is, if I can ever get on the waiting list!



Drew demonstrates his skills at canoeing. His regular fast-pace activities also include college, mountain biking, and rock climbing.

Sunday Relief Caretakers August-September 2002

Date	Time	Name(s)	Telephone
August 4	9:00 - 3:00	Barbara Kraft & Peter Winkler	301-320-2285
	3:00-Dark	Harry Schwartz	301-229-2285
August 11	9:00 - 3:00	Peggy & Mid Tilghman	301-320-5846
	3:00 - Dark	Candy & Howard Means	301-320-5270
August 18	9:00-3:00	Nathan Means	202-234-5355
	3:00-Dark	Adrienne Allison	301-951-8007
August 25	9:00-3:00	Deborah Behr & Paul Kobernick	301-770-0044
	3:00-Dark	Sandy Robinson	301-320-4971
September 1	9:00-2:00	Whitney Pinger & Roger Pollak	202-686-5443
	2:00-Dark	Cathy & Robert Hardi	301-320-5381
September 8	9:00-2:00	Faith Earll & Pierre Welsh	301-983-2272
	2:00-Dark	Martha Burgess & Albert Brown	301-229-9577
September 15	9:00-2:00	Jean Goertner	301-871-8029
	2:00-Dark	Catherine & Ljubisa Vitkovic	301-652-3315
September 22	9:00-2:00	Susie Dillon & Roger Berliner	301-983-4208
	2:00-Dark	Susan & Peter Geiger	703-841-0021
September 29	9:00-2:00	Ellen & Norman Eule	301-320-3669
	2:00-Dark	Christine Henny	301-229-7113

***** Caretaker Volunteers *****

To volunteer for Sunday relief caretaking, call

Bill & Lucky Marmon: 301-654-7893
or

Volunteers from the waiting list are encouraged. Don't forget: Relief Caretakers sign in too!
Howard and Candy Means: 301-320-5270

Large Parties August 2002

When	Time	Who	What
27-Aug	9 - 4 p.m.	Cecily Abram	30-35, Faculty Mtng Horace Mann School

A large party application form may be printed from the club's Web page at
<http://www.sycamoreisland.org/systems.htm>

— or —

To request a form through the mail, call the Supervisor of Parties, John Noble
e-mail: janoble@erols.com, phone: 301-320-3554, fax: 301-320-4216



The Sycamore Islander

6613 80th Place
Cabin John, MD 20818

<http://www.sycamoreisland.org>

To view this month's *Sycamore Islander* on the Internet, go to:

<http://www.sycamoreisland.org/tribal/islander.htm>

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
BETHESDA, MD 20817
PERMIT NO. 1172

FIRST CLASS MAIL

FIRST CLASS MAIL

August 2002

This Issue:

- Our Captain steps down.
- Security issues still unresolved.
- A suggested policy for memorial services.
- A lotta regatta on 2 September: Help!
- Delightful Derby Day decreed.



Temporary Caretaker for the month of July, Drew Walsh, gets frisky with a canoe. We were fortunate to have such a conscientious, hard working, and cheerful young man to fill in for us. Drew tells about his experiences on the Island, page 8.

—Photo by David Winer