



The Sycamore Islander

August 2008

Volume 87 No 8

President's Letter, August 2008

The big news for August is that there is not much news. This will be a short letter.

The August Meeting is CANCELLED!!!! After not getting a quorum for the August 2005 meeting, I cancelled the August 2006 meeting. Last August, I went forward with the meeting as scheduled, and we did not get a quorum. Since we had a meeting in July (with the minimum required for a quorum), and I am not aware of any pressing new business, I am canceling the August meeting. Save your time and energy for September.

October meeting date tentatively changed to October 15. The regular date for the October meeting is October 8, which also is the beginning at sundown of the significant Jewish Holiday of Yom Kippur. In deference to the Club's officers and members who are Jewish, I believe we should move the meeting to the following Wednesday, October 15. A final decision will be announced in the September *Islander*.

Construction Update: Unfortunately, the County wants more engineering drawings. The County's request went to the wrong address, so we only found out about this a few days ago. It is very frustrating, but we hope these drawings will be the final hurdle for the building permit.

I hope that everyone is having an enjoyable summer. It is hard to believe that Fall is just around the corner.

Please remember that there will not be an August meeting. See you in September. (Bonus points if you know the name of at least two singing group that recorded the song without looking up the answer on the internet)

-Jeff Komarow

The Sycamore Islander is a monthly newsletter of the Montgomery Sycamore Island Club. Any materials of interest to the membership and waiting list are welcome and should be sent to the Editor, Amanda Cannell, 5901 Cranston Rd, Bethesda, Md. 20816. 301-229-8658. Text and graphics may be sent as email attachments to ahcannell@gmail.com

The deadline for the September issue is Wednesday, August 27th.

In Touch with Joe....Notes from his Island Journal

Thursday-- July 31, 2008

Water Level at Little Falls: 3.0 Water Temperature: 84

Well, it is the end of July and the end of another year for me on Sycamore Island. I can't believe that it's been six years since I first drove down the towpath with my children and all my belongings. It's funny to think about how much has change in my life during that time yet Sycamore Island seems relatively the same.

I love my life here. I like living in this area, I've made many new friends (easy when you live on an island) and I'm playing more music now then I ever have. The only down side is that I am forced to take on a second job, I wish I could just work at the Island and get by.

The other great thing about living here is that now I know how to catch fish. Thanks to my instructor and awesome fishing guide George Malusky, I now actually enjoy fishing. George took me and a couple of other newbies out on the river, way up by Penefield lock, and we had a blast. Not only did I catch the biggest fish I've ever caught, (19" and over four lbs.!) but I caught the most fish I've ever caught as well. It was so beautiful up there and George is the perfect river host. Thanks George for an incredible day.

Thursday-- July 24, 2008

Water Level at Little Falls: 3.0 Water Temperature: 84

There was an owl above the deck the other night. I didn't see it or hear it but the next morning there was a large white stain of droppings on the porch.

More evidence of otters: I found a big pile of empty clamshells sitting on a shallow rock.

I'm not sure if it's a breeding pair, but I mentioned the Great Egrets before and now I think that the two smaller egrets we see must be immature Great Egrets. It would be pretty cool to have nesting egrets up here in Maryland, but I thought they nested in colonies.

Island usage is still on the up. We filled five sign-in sheets in one week!

The latest on the construction project is that the county permit office has sent the plans back to the architect. Apparently the enlarged clubroom on the plans is too big and is in violation of some fire code. Now the question is, how do we revise the plans and who decides on the revisions?

I have to thank Trip Reid; he was just down here doing some yard work. He even brought down a joe-pie weed to plant at the bottom of the Island. He took a look at the devastation at the head of the Island and realized that we are going to need a large work party with a couple of chain saws if we ever want to have a trail around the Island again.

I'm going away this weekend, but Drew Walsh will be watching the Island in my absence.

Please help him and pitch in if you can. I think with all these new members we need to help each other and not be afraid to ask for help if we're not sure of something.

Wednesday-- July 16, 2008

Water Level at Little Falls: 3.1 Water Temperature: 85

Tuesday-- July 8, 2008

Water Level at Little Falls: 3.2 Water Temperature: 86

All you birders out there are going to think I'm crazy, but I'm almost positive that we saw an Anhinga fishing off the captains float. I knew immediately when I saw this bird on Sunday morning that it was something unusual. My first thought was, a loon, but this is the middle of summer and I don't think I'm going to see a loon or any other diving ducks. So that left the question, if it wasn't a cormorant, what was diving and coming to the surface and looking all snake-like. Answer, an Anhinga. It turns out that their range has been increasing over the years. My bird book from 1980 shows Anhingas venturing no further north than North Carolina, but my 2002 bird book shows them moving into the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay in Virginia.

Maybe I shouldn't be shocked to see an Anhinga since we seem to have other birds here that I thought I'd only see in Florida. We have a pair of Great White Egrets and this morning a completely white, immature Little Blue Heron flew over me on the ferry.

The squirrels really did a lot of damage before I trapped and released them over in Virginia. Once they found out that there might be food in the club kitchen they would stop at nothing to get at it. First they destroyed my new door, and then they proceed to ruin every screen in the clubhouse in a desperate attempt to get inside. I admit, it was satisfying to catch those little varmints, but I felt guilty about taking them away from their island home. I'm sorry, but something drastic had to be done.

It was another record-breaking weekend on the Island. Just like the metro rail, we're getting more riders than ever. One sign-in sheet can hold 32 signatures; both Saturday and Sunday we filled over two sign-in sheets.

-Joe Hage

Summer Fish Tales



Joe Hage with a big catch.!



Andrew Kramer with a little catch!

Meeting Minutes, Sycamore Island July 9, 2008

Location—Sycamore Island Club House

The meeting was called to order by President Jeff Komarow at approximately 8:15 p.m. when a quorum was obtained. The following members were present:

Gerry Barton, Jim Drew, Larry Heilman, Jeff Komarow, John Membrino, Star Mitchell, Hilary Thomson, Drew Walsh, Tryon Wells, David Winer, and Jane Winer. Jeff Komarow agreed to take the minutes in the absence of a Recording Secretary.

Minutes of the June meeting were approved by unanimous vote. Since Alan Gelb, Treasurer, could not be at the meeting, Jeff Komarow reported that the Club continued to be in good financial shape.

President's Report: Jeff Komarow reported that, as mentioned in his July letter, Alison Burns has agreed to become the Relief Caretaking Supervisor. Jeff thanked Alison for volunteering and Maxine Hattery, the outgoing Relief Caretaking Supervisor for her service to the Club. Jeff emphasized that the Club needs more members to take on management and operation of the Club.

Captain's Report—Tryon Wells reported that the new swimming float had been constructed and was in place. Jeff thanked Tryon for his and Joe Hage's efforts in building new swim float.

Construction of new clubhouse and manager's quarters—Ann Marie Cunningham and Tryon reported that the Fire Marshall had raised an issue about the expansion of the Clubhouse. He wants a wall about where the current wall is at the north end of the Clubhouse to reduce the overall public space. They reported that the Club's architect had submitted revised drawings to the County.

Discussion and New Business —Following up on discussions at the June meeting, Tryon Wells reported on whether there are restrictions on the use of club canoes. Tryon reported that the Standing Rules continue to provide that club canoes cannot be used when the river level is five feet or higher or if the water temperature is below 55degrees Fahrenheit. A vote had been taken several years ago to rescind this rule, but the vote was not effective because the proposal had not been published in the *Islander*. A lively discussion followed concerning what restrictions, if any, the Club should have on the use of Club canoes. Several possible resolutions were drafted for publication in the *Islander*. The consensus resolution, which will be published in the August or September *Islander* is as follows: AMEND RULE 6(c) of the STANDING RULES with the underlined changes: "Club canoes or boats cannot be used by club guests unless accompanied by a member if the river level is 5 feet or higher, or if the water temperature is below 55 degrees Fahrenheit."

Meeting was adjourned around 9:15 P.M.

Saturday Relief Caretakers- August

Please sign up as soon as possible

Date	Hours	Caretaker	Number
July			
5	9-3	Charlotte Brewer	
	3-dark	Meryl Silverman & Mark Carlin	
12	9-3	Mac Thornton & Molly Carr	
	3-dark	Julia Smith	
19	9-3	David & Kathleen Holdridge	
	3-dark	Carole Trippe & Kit Bigler	
26	9-3	Ellen & Norman Eule	
	3-dark	Penelope & Robert McNulty	
August			
2	9-3	Paul Hagan Christine Jahnke	202-966-9764
	3-dark	Eric Simpson	703-821-7556
9	9-3	Richard & Alison Burns	202-362-6654
	3-dark	Paul Lang	301-657-2812
16	9-3	Andrew and Stacy Malgren	301-263-0146
	3-dark	Braden Murphy	703-358-9207
23	9-3	Louis Boorstin Alissa Stern	301-229-4573
	3-dark	Dave, Patty Whitnah	301-717-6400
30	9-3	Greg Hitz	301-229-2998
	3-dark	Mike Kirk Patrick Cora Tekach	202-234-4086

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

**To volunteer, contact Alison Burns at 202-362-6654
or riburns@att.net**

Sycamore Bulletin Board:

New Relief Caretaking Supervisor– Alison Burns

202–362-6654 riburns@att.net

Large Parties:

No large parties were reported for August

A large party application form may be printed from the Club's web site at

<http://www.sycamoreisland.org/systems.htm>

Or contact Supervisor of parties, John Noble, 301-448-8562

johnnoble@comcast.net

August Meeting: Cancelled

Island Chores need doing:

Joe has made a list of chores that need doing on the island. Please volunteer to do one or some when you next visit the island. Let's all share some of the work!!

A Reminder: All members bringing more than 10 guests must make a request ahead of time for a Large Party.

Please Note: Use new Email for Sending contributions to the newsletter: ahcannell@gmail.com



The Sycamore Islander
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To view this month's Sycamore Islander in color on the
Internet, go to:
<http://www.sycamoreisland.org/boondoggle/islander.htm>

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Sycamore Events

August Meeting : **Cancelled**

September Meeting : Wednesday,
September 10th at 8:00 PM. on the
island.