

The Sycamore Islander

September 2009

Volume 88 No 9

President's letter:

We are now transitioning from summer into fall. Children are back in school. The days are getting shorter (and hopefully cooler). The river frequently becomes very clear – wonderful for canoeing and fishing.

Upcoming Events: There are two great events coming up in December – **The Regatta on Labor Day**, September 7th (from 2 PM until dark) and a new event on Saturday, September 26, an **early morning bird paddle**. I can't wait to see what kind of birds paddle early in the morning. Details on the Regatta were in last month's *Islander*. The real deal about the bird paddle is a few pages into this month's *Islander*, so read on.

Looking to the Future: Fall will also be a time of transition for the Club. David Winer has agreed to serve as President and Jim Drew as Vice President starting in January, and I want to make sure that the Club is in good physical, organizational and financial shape for them. Here are the major items that club members need to work on over the next few months:

Capital and maintenance projects. The Island needs a new water purification system to protect the quality of the drinking water. Now that the construction is done, this should be installed during the next 60 days. We also need to get an evaluation done of the big trees around the clubhouse to see whether limbs need to be removed (or trees taken down) before they fall on the clubhouse or the caretaker's quarters.

Special Workday – October 4th (Sunday) The renovation of the clubhouse and caretaker's quarters is complete, but the parts of the project that were planned to be done by club members are still in progress – including, clean up, painting, and laying the brick floor on the ground level where the womens' and mens' bathrooms are now located. The Club is scheduling another special workday on Sunday October 4, starting at 9:30 AM. Lunch will be served. We need to have at least 10-12 members to come out and make a dent in the unfinished items.

Fall Workfest November 15th and Dedication (Sunday) The Fall Workfest is scheduled for Sunday, November 15th with a rain date of November 22nd. There will be a long list of tasks to be completed, so bring your tools and enthusiasm. The club will provide a barbecue lunch, which is always a great feast. Please bring a side dish or dessert. We will also take a few minutes to dedicate the renovated clubhouse.

Locker Survey: As mentioned previously, the plans to survey the members on what kind of lock-

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-Boone, as email attachments to ahcannell@gmail.com

The deadline for the October issue is Wednesday, September 30th.

Locker Survey: As mentioned previously, the plans to survey the members on what kind of lockers to install and whether they should be paid for as part of overall dues or through a separate charge (or perhaps donations). We don't have all the information yet on types of lockers. The survey should be in the October or November Islanders and can be returned by email, regular mail or at the Fall Workfest. Stay tuned.

Financial Report: I will be working with the club's Treasurer, Alan Gelb, and David Winer over the next two months to get a final accounting of the cost of the construction, evaluate the club's cash resources and plan develop a budget for 2010.

2010 Officer and Supervisor Positions: The club is always looking for volunteers who are willing to take on one of the many positions required to make the club run. No experience necessary. Call (202.492.2003) or send me an email (jkomarow@gmail.com) if you are interested.

HOSTS NEEDED FOR THE DECEMBER MEETING

The club is looking for a member who is willing to host the December meeting and holiday party, which will be held on Wednesday, December 9, 2009. Please contact me about hosting this meeting.

September Meeting: The September 2009 meeting will be held on the Island on Wednesday, September 9th at 8:00 PM. Weather permitting, a barbecue grill will be set up for people who want to picnic beforehand. Bring your own food.

We were one or two members short of a quorum for the August meeting, so there are no minutes. The people who came down to the Island can report that we had a very nice barbecue dinner.

See you on September 9, 2009 at 8:00PM.

Jeff Komarow
President



Saturday Relief Caretakers- September 2009

Please sign up as soon as possible

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

<u>Sep-</u> <u>tember</u> <u>2009</u>		
SATURDAY	MORNING 9 A.M – 2 P.M	AFTERNOON 2 P.M. – DARK
Septem- ber 5th	Kathy Kelley kkelley@aarp.com 202.492.5507	Howard and Susan Weiss howweiss@aol.com 301.320.3766
Septem- ber 12 th	Richard and Alison Burns riburns@att.net 202.362.6654	Star Mitchell Starmitchell@verizon.net 301.530.3252 Phoebe Hamill phobek1@cox.net 571-259-7640
Septem- ber 19th	Linda and Robert Blair Lindabblair@aol.com 202.364.8747	Peter Gillon & Melinda Wolf petergillon@pilsburylaw.com 301.641.4020
Septem- ber 26th	Victoria Judson JudsonVA@aol.com 301.320.5787	Maria Stenzel Mariastenzel@mac.com 202.364.0578
	3	

In Touch with Joe:

The summer may be winding down but we have at least another month left in Sycamore Season. The air may have been cool this morning and the kids may be back in school but there are still many days of good paddling left. I just hope that those pesky hurricanes continue to stay far off to the east.

The summer wild flowers are another reason to visit the Island now. Their bright yellows, whites, purples and reds are an intoxicating contrast to the lush green that blankets the Island. It is impossible not to be awed by their intricate structure and variety. I could try to identify and name all the different species of flowers but maybe its better to appreciate them for how they fit into the landscape instead of how they fit into a scientific category.

This is not a big time for birds but we do see plenty. Eagles have been seen catching fish near the Island and there are more great blue herons than we can count. There is a solitary great white egret hanging around on Ruppert's Island. (Last year there were three egrets there.) Unfortunately the peregrine falcons that nested last year at the beltway bridge did not return this year.

The fishing has picked up this month and we did another float trip in canoes from Penefield lock down to Swain's lock. It's only about three miles from lock 22 down to 21 but we still got in six hours of fishing. This is a wonderfully scenic trip and I always find it hard to believe that no one else is out there, well almost no one. The trip starts by putting in at the new boat ramp at Penefield. The ramp doesn't go into the river instead it puts you into Muddy Branch Creek so that you must paddle through a tunnel, under the canal, and down the creek to reach the river. The best part is when you're leaving the mouth of the creek; it's like emerging from a cave, as the canopy of trees gives way to a big sunny sky and a big open river. The fishing was great too.

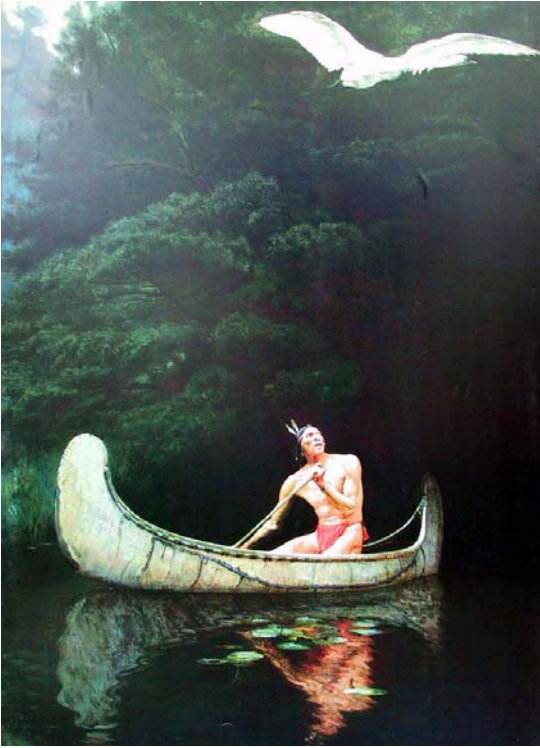
I bought the Club a copy of the book about the history of the Brookmont neighborhood. I found it very interesting with many references to Sycamore Island. It seems that Brookmont and Sycamore have much history in common. One thing I found especially interesting was that Montgomery County instituted a prohibition law in the mid-1880's that made it illegal to serve alcohol anywhere but in a club. The book talks about how many "clubs" opened up along, a then very rural, Conduit Rd. (Macarthur Blvd.) I wonder if this was the catalyst for our founding fathers to open this Club. The original name of the club after all was The Sycamore Island Pleasure Club, no mention of canoeing at all.

We're making progress but there is still much painting and other work yet to be done down here. We will be planning another workday before the annual fall clean up, probably October 4. Please come and pitch in.

Joe Hage

Sycamore Island Bird Paddle

Saturday, September 26th,
7AM at the Ferry— Please be on time



Join with other birders in the club for an early morning “birdwalk” via canoes. No birding expertise skills required—experienced birders will help identify early fall migrants and other species. Your guests and youngsters are welcome. 7:00 a.m. start at this season should provide a gorgeous setting with mists on the river. Dress for the weather, and bring binoculars and field guides if you have them. Morning refreshments in the clubhouse when we get back.

Paul Hagen and Dave Winer are the organizers this year. Please let them know ahead of time so they may know who and how many to expect.

davidwiner@verizon.net
301-229-8963





Please Join Us For the

**Sycamore Island Regatta
and Barbecue Dinner
Monday, September 7, 2009
2:00 PM till dark**

September just wouldn't be the same without the umpteenth annual Sycamore Island Regatta! Mark your calendars for this Labor Day celebration open to all Sycamore Islanders and families – including folks on the waiting list. Everyone is welcome, especially kids, teens, their families and the young at heart. There will be cheering and prizes! Even if you opt not to join in the games, come join us for dinner, and enjoy summer on the river for one more weekend.

Events include:

The famous canoe dash around Sycamore Island
Lance-a-lot jousting tournament
Balloon stomp
Egg toss
Swamped canoe race
Canoe tug of war
and more.....

Games followed by a pot-luck starting at 5-ish. Club will barbecue main course and you folks bring side dishes, desserts or drinks to share. Come any time and join us for all or part of the fun. To volunteer (especially for grill meister) contact glogau@verizon.net.



Sycamore Bulletin Board:

Relief Caretakers wanted:

Thanks goes out to the many people who volunteered for relief caretaking. We are currently looking for relief caretakers for weekends in October and November.

Call Alison Burns to volunteer- 202-362-6654

Large Parties:

Sept 12, 4 to dark, V. Star Mitchell, Canoe Crusiers Assoc. Friends and any island member who wishes to come, 35 guests (even numbered date approved)

Sept 5th, 12-6pm, Bonnie Roberts & George Holdridge, birthday party, 35 guests.

October 3rd,: 3 to dusk Mac Thornton, 35 Cub Scouts, Pack 1320,

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

To request a form through the mail, call the Supervisor of Parties, John Noble
e-mail johnnoble@mac.com phone: 301-448-8562



The Sycamore Islander
6613 80th Place
Cabin John, MD 20818
ADDRESS SERVICES REQUESTED

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

FIRST CLASS MAIL

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

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Sycamore Events

September Meeting: September 9th,
8PM on the island.

October Meeting: October 14th,
8PM on the island

Special Workday: Oct 4th. 9:30
See president's letter for de-
tails.



Black Snake, Photo by Joe Hage