



# *The Sycamore Islander*

SEPTEMBER 2014 | VOLUME 93 NUMBER 9

## President's Letter

**The next regular club meeting will be on Wednesday, September 10, at 8 p.m. on the Island.** Come early for a picnic and swim while the summer lasts.

Speaking of summer, the Sycamore Island Regatta took place on Labor Day. One of the Island's signature events, the Regatta is a low-key, last hurrah for summer and one of my favorite club events. More than 50 members, wait-listers and guests, with lots of children, participated this year under the sure hand of Regatta impresario Cindy Bertaut. The round-the-Island canoe race had a large field of 14 and was won, surprise surprise, by former Olympian Davey Hearn with son Jesse and two young guests assisting. This is Davey's third straight victory here, although his first as a full member.

Canoes stayed in the water for the next event—the paper bag pickup contest. This event has special meaning for me because for the second year I have participated in “blowing” and top-twisting the several hundred bags that are scattered over the water from the back of the ferry and then scooped up competitively and counted to determine the winner. Scott Bertaut supplied a portion of his legendary water-gun collection for the

ever-popular “super-soaker” event. I was able to participate in the three-legged race with Phoebe Hamill. We were able to establish a good rhythm, but still finished toward the back of the pack, although first in “legend” class. And so it went through the afternoon, including a celestial super-soaker thunder storm followed by clear and delicious late afternoon, well before the barbecue and pot luck dinner. Thank you Cindy for another wonderful Regatta.

Upcoming events in September:

September 14: in the late afternoon a film crew will be on the Island to film Joe and his band for the documentary “Towpath Joe” about caretaker Joe Hage. Party afterwards. Members are invited to attend.

September 24: Old Timers Good Timers lunch on the Island at 11:30.

September 27: Dance! With live band, coordinated by Jane Winer and Robin Richter. Volunteers welcome.

Note that at the club meeting on September 10, the nominating committee will make a preliminary report on the officer slate for 2015.

BILL MARMON  
President

## Minutes for the August 13 Meeting

**Attendees:** John Noble, Jim Drew, G. Stanley Barton, Jody Benjamin, Bobby Benjamin, John Butler, Sherry Fizdale, Steve Newman, David Winer, Drew Walsh, Jane Winer, Tryon Wells

**Call to Order and Minutes:** Tryon Wells called the meeting to order. The minutes for July 9 were approved.

**First Order of Business:** John Noble's proposal for a change to the by-laws, which he had announced in the previous meeting and submitted for publication in the newsletter, was reviewed for the benefit of members and a motion to pass the proposal was made, seconded, and passed unanimously. To review, the by-laws had been written as follows: "Members shall be dropped from membership without advance notice" if payment is not received by April 1. John Noble's proposal was to move the date from April 1 to February 15. Readers are referred to "Minutes" in the July issue of the newsletter for details regarding the change of date under "Membership."

**Membership:** John Noble said that he had conducted 3 private orientations since the last group orientation and thought the smaller group experience was more rewarding as he was able to get to know people. He continued his report noting that there are 3 wait-listers still to go through orientation, and that 35 passes out of 60 (now 57) have been bought by waiting list members. John also announced to applause that the old waiting list is gone.

**Relief Caretaker's Report:** Received from Jody Benjamin (via email from Lucky Marmon) the following names of "intrepid ferry pullers" for the month of July: Barbara Fisher (Pill), Judy and John Lentz, Meredith Griggs, Andy Malmgren family, Connie Miner and Greg Lalley, Madeleine Carter (Graham), Phoebe Hamill, Bart Kempt, Joe McBride, Jennie Rabinowitz and Dan Jameson; "... a great mix of members and wait-listers. Thanks to them all!" says Jody, and we concur, with special thanks to Jody.

**Grounds:** Drew Walsh reported that the roof of the caretaker's quarters was redone a month ago. The gutter on the club kitchen has been changed and fitted with a downspout so that there should be less moss growing on brick walkways below.

Carpenters had replaced some rotten siding, and in a

second round of repair, the lack of proper flashing had been taken care of on caretaker's quarters.

Some supports to the club deck had been added, including a center support.

The "awesome swing" means changing the position of the horseshoe pit, Drew noted. Tryon pointed out that Gerry Barton cleaned the chimney. Thank you, Gerry!

The maple that previously shaded the deck is no more, so Gerry Barton proposed buying an awning for the deck, or umbrella, and—of course—planting a tree.

Drew remarked that Steve Newman's design for the anchor that holds the swim float has been made into a permanent mooring, which should make it easier to deal with putting out the float in summer and closing it down in fall.

**Safety:** Steve Newman proposed a system of Safety Analyses for the club. Although the Safety Committee's role is advisory, such a system would identify known hazards for members to address in meetings. He noted that the most (possibly "the most") calamitous hazards, such as fire, downed electrical lines, etc. constitute events of very high consequence and once identified by or through the committee, should become matters for discussion. Currently, he pointed out, the lights that are strung up on the path to Clara Barton parking lot for our convenience and the caretaker's are used infrequently. Steve noted that a discussion about the lights could mean improving or modifying the lights, perhaps even getting rid of them altogether.

**New Business:** Gerry Barton informed us that the caretaker had 2 people down to the Island, one of them Tom Sherwood, reporter and radio commentator. Some of us wondered why this visit had occurred without full disclosure before the fact, as we had agreed to do regarding the press in the past.

David Winer noted that this Saturday, August 16, is the Fishing Derby, a key event for the club. Dave pointed out that the event was not just for children, but for all ages. Apparently some folks have wondered! It's for big kids too, David reminded us, even adults! It begins at 8:30 a.m., and he requested that Tryon Wells send out an email to all re the event before Saturday.

The meeting was drawing to a close, but the subject of the Fall Workfest came up. It was proposed to be held on Sunday, November 16, rain date, November 23.

**Addendum to the Minutes:** Jane Winer reported on plans for the upcoming dance in the clubhouse scheduled for

September 27, from 7 to 10 pm. The band, “BG and the Mojo Hands”—Brian Gross and mates—play acoustic blues guitar and harmonica. Check them out at [www.reverbnation.com/bgandthemojohands](http://www.reverbnation.com/bgandthemojohands).

The band has played on the Island and Glen Echo and have a permanent gig at Sala Thai Restaurant in Bethesda.

We invite everyone, members, waiting list members, to come on September 27. Come early, bring a snack to share, your own pop if you like but we’ll have lemonade and a pretty good punch. We need help with decorations, and such things as bringing ice down to the Island, preparing the lemonade and setting out the food, including pizza from Vace’s. Please call Jane Winer at 301.229.8963 or Robin Richter at 202.226.1355 to help with a wonderful evening!

Respectfully submitted,  
JANE WINER

## Annual Fishing Derby

Record attendance greeted everyone for the annual Sycamore Island Fishing Derby. I was all prepared—like last year, to write about the tough conditions. We had Wednesday’s rain and of course the lack of good fortune under a half moon.

The lousy conditions were confirmed in my boat, where the only action we got were 3 bites and an undocumented, unlandable, and debatable 5" smallmouth. While the results and conditions were tabulated... debated... and even contrasted with a few fishing stories, George prepared another fantastic fishing derby lunch. The verdict from all (but the author) was tremendous success from all boats and all docks.

Tales of 14 smallmouths and numerous large catfish with the pictures to prove it, was the norm. Congratulations to all the winners and of course thanks to George and Shelly Malusky (great Macaroni salad BTW!) for organizing a really fun event.

Winning in the Smallest Fish category was Nick Cook. The biggest fish category netted a tie between James Cook and Pierson Cooper whose Catfish sizes were measured at 14". The Happiest Fish award went to brother and sister Brayden and Portia Castro. What a great day!

JOHN BUTLER

**DON'T MISS THE BEGINNING  
OF A GREAT TRADITION**

# A Saturday Night Island Social Fall Dance Concert

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27,  
7-10 P.M.**

DANCE AND LISTEN  
TO THE MUSIC OF

## **BG AND THE MOJOS**

COME EARLY • BRING SNACKS TO SHARE •  
AND BYOP (BRING YOUR OWN POP) •  
WE'LL OFFER PIZZA & DRINKS

**QUESTIONS? LIKE TO  
HELP? CONTACT:**

ROBIN RICHTER  
202.226.1355

JANE WINER  
JDWINER@VERIZON.NET 301.229.8963

### Large Parties Scheduled



September 14, Joe Hage, 20 people, 3-8 p.m.

September 24, Old Timers Potluck, 11:30

# The Sycamore Islander

6613 80th Place  
Cabin John, MD 20818

ADDRESS SERVICES REQUESTED

## FIRST CLASS MAIL

To volunteer as a substitute caretaker, please email your choice of day and shift to Jody Benjamin, [benjafamily@gmail.com](mailto:benjafamily@gmail.com).

Saturday Relief Caretakers <b>September/October 2014</b>					
SEPTEMBER	9 A.M.–2 P.M.	2 P.M.–DUSK	OCTOBER	10 A.M.–2 P.M.	2 P.M.–DUSK
SEPTEMBER 6	Avi Garbow	Jack Sanders	OCTOBER 4	Please Volunteer	Please Volunteer
SEPTEMBER 13	Meredith Griggs	Lauren Brandt	OCTOBER 11	Robin Richter	Please Volunteer
SEPTEMBER 20	Meredith Griggs	Jennifer Urquhart	OCTOBER 18	Please Volunteer	Please Volunteer
SEPTEMBER 27	Kevin Haley	Madeleine Carter (Graham)	OCTOBER 25	Please Volunteer	Please Volunteer

*The Sycamore Islander* is the monthly newsletter of the Montgomery Sycamore Island Club. Every attempt is made to publish the *Islander* before the second Wednesday of the month and in advance of the monthly meeting. Articles, photographic essays, drawings, announcements, letters to the editors—any materials of interest to the membership and waiting list—are welcome. Text and graphics may be sent as email attachments to: Carol Beehler, [cbeehler@comcast.net](mailto:cbeehler@comcast.net). The deadline for inclusion in the October issue is September 28.