

# The Sycamore Islander

JUNE 2015 | VOLUME 94 NUMBER 6



## Minutes for the May 13th Meeting

**Attendees:** Lucky Marmon, Jane Winer, Tryon Wells, John Cunningham, Ann Marie Cunnngham, Peter Jones, David Winer, Jim Fulmer, Linda Phillips, Gordon Phillips, Marianne Ross, Meredith Griggs, Star Mitchell, Sherry Fitzdale, Karen Possner, Jody, Benjamin, Robert Benjamin

Prior to the meeting, Judy Welles, a board member of the Canal Trust, spoke about the organization's programs which range from clean-ups to corporate events. In 2014, Canal Trust volunteers worked at some 40 different Canal events. Through Canal Quarters, she told us, individuals can rent accommodation in various lock houses up and down the C&O Canal. Available online through Canal Discoveries are 45 audio clips by park

rangers with photos of towns along some 184 miles of the Canal that are amenable to hosting tourists. The Canal Trust's accomplishments include Canal repairs, Canal classrooms, the use of a matching grant which paid for replacing the Marsden Tract bridge, and utilizing over 1,200 volunteer to help improve the park. The Trust has serious financial needs. Since 2010, the number of visitors to the park has increased 25%, while the park's budget has been reduced by 10% and the staffing has been reduced by 20%. Visitor centers have been closed. The Georgetown canal boat no longer operates, and the towpath needs repair in many places.

Ms. Welles encouraged Sycamore Island member to get involved, suggesting we put September 19th on our calendars and attend the "Park After Dark"—the Trust's annual fundraiser to be held at the historic Great Falls Tavern. For those feeling particularly flush, she recom-

mended that they join the William O. Douglas Society for \$1,000/year.

**Minutes:** The meeting was called to order and the April Minutes were approved unanimously.

**Communications:** None

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Ned Goddard was not present, but reported that the club finances are in good shape, and tax filing would be completed by May 15th. The Capital Improvement and Repair budget has been spent, primarily on the new dock.

**Captain's Report:** Captain Drew Walsh extended thanks to Peter Jones and Rodolfo Castro for removing the decking screws from the swim float.

There was a discussion about the very popular pole that, thanks to Dave Winer, was attached to the old canoe dock and helped many members get in and out of canoes more easily. It was not easy to install even back then. Dave Winer says that he has "taken this on," and will strive to reinstall a pole. His idea, so far, might require some metal work. John Stapko will assist. The bottom line: This will be complicated.

The swim dock, Drew reported, would be in by the weekend, May 22nd. He is still contemplating how the club might use the dock that floated down the river and landed at Sycamore Island last year.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** Star Mitchell asked for volunteers to help with the Canoe Cruisers' Down River Race on May 16th.

David Winer brought to the club the new, very attractive black mugs that bear crossed paddles and a Sycamore leaf. He purchased 144 of them. Many attendees took home mugs with the promise of paying for them as soon as the cost is determined

**Relief Caretakers' Report:** Jody Benjamin reported that there is a dire need for relief caretakers on Saturday mornings. She planned to send out an email alert to members and said she would include as well a request for safety monitors for the race.

It appears that many members are coming up with excuses for why they cannot fulfill their relief caretaker

responsibilities. Members need to be reminded that unless one is unable physically to perform the task, it is part of a member's obligation to the club. Those who can't do it on Saturday can substitute on Sundays.

The following have served as relief caretakers since publication of the last Islander: Lisa Hemmer, Linda Greer, Susan Dunham and Dan Schember, Peter and Debra Friedman, Lynda and Gary Slayen, Kathy Kelley, Vicki Judson, Sue and Greg Super, Avi Garbow (Anderson).

Jane Winer, once again, brought a huge batch of scrumptious cookies. They disappeared quickly.

The next meeting will be on the Island on Wednesday, June 10th, at 8:00. The meeting was adjourned

Respectfully submitted,  
LUCKY MARMON  
Co-Recording Secretary

## Sycamore Island Swimming Dangers

In order of danger from swimming accidents:

1. Unsupervised teenagers who haven't yet figured out that they aren't immortal.
2. Fatigue. Usually unsupervised adults who haven't yet confronted the Potomac current. To avoid becoming a statistic ALWAYS SWIM upstream and let the current bring you home to Sycamore Island.
3. Panic. Often because a hand or foot touches a submerged rock in the water. No they aren't octopuses.
4. Gulping river water. Not as tasty as Pierre, but not to worry. I've swallowed many mouthfuls and never gotten sick.
5. Artificial floating devices. A bad dependency. If you need to use a float or styrofoam snake to stay afloat—beware. Stay close to the swimming dock for help if your device accidentally slips away.
6. Potomac sharks. Relax. They prefer the Virginia shore to avoid heavy taxes in Maryland.

See you in the water!

Roger Herst  
SWIMMING SUPERVISOR



JOE HAGE  
JOE HAGE

Watching the Flyover in honor of the 70th Anniversary of VE Day

## Notes from the Island

**Friday, May 8, 2015**

**Water Level at Little Falls: 4.2 Water Temperature: 56**  
Today we are celebrating the end of WWII, 70 years ago, and there is a big fly-over planned for DC. The restored old warplanes are schedule to fly over Sycamore Island at around 12:00 noon. I've already heard from a few club members that say they plan to come to the Island to watch the airshow. The weather is about perfect so maybe I can get some pictures.

**Monday, May 25, 2015**

**Water Level at Little Falls: 3.5 Water Temperature: 72**  
Happy Memorial Day! First real day of summer on the Island.

I just got back from my river trip and the river has change a lot since I left two weeks ago. Instead of being over four feet, the river has gone down to 3.5 feet, and instead of being 55 degrees, it is now a tolerable 72 degrees. Good news for us swimmers.

It was a busy day that started early and even though most people were gone by 7 o'clock, we still had to pull the ferry 29 times today. Welcome back, right?

**Friday, May 29, 2015**

**Water Level at Little Falls: 3.3 Water Temperature: 80**  
The river is still going down and the temperature is still going up. It's so nice not to have to worry about flooding this year. Last year's sudden flood in May is still etched in my memory.



JOE HAGE

Top and above: WWII era war planes

There has been a steady wind from down river and even though the river is low it's not been easy to pull the ferry in the wind. We had some storms and I got some dramatic pictures of the clouds. In between cloud bursts I was able to do a little trail-clearing and grass-cutting this week, for the club and also as part of The Canal Steward Program.

Be aware there are a few large parties and sleepovers planned for June. The Memorial Service for John Lentz will be here on the Island on Saturday, June 6, 4-9 PM.

I was away most of the month so it's a short log this month. If you want more you can go to [canalbycanoe.com](http://canalbycanoe.com) and see all the pictures of the upstream part of the river and canal.

JOE HAGE  
Caretaker

# The Sycamore Islander

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ADDRESS SERVICES REQUESTED

## FIRST CLASS MAIL

Saturday Relief Caretakers <b>June/July 2015</b>					
JUNE	9 A.M.–3 P.M.	3 P.M.–DUSK	JULY	10 A.M.–3 P.M.	3 P.M.–DUSK
JUNE 6	Meryl Silverman and Mark Carlin	Leslie and Casey Johnson	JULY 4	Please Volunteer	Meredith Griggs
JUNE 13	Abigail Wiebenson	Sherry Pettie Fizdale	JULY 11	Bart Kempf	Elizabeth Taylor (Debruin)
JUNE 20	Avi Garbow (Anderson)	Stan Fowler	JULY 18	John Butler	Story and Josiah Jones
JUNE 27	John Cunningham	Rebecca Benyon (Borek)	JULY 25	Please Volunteer	Vicki Judson

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

### Large Parties Scheduled



June 21, 1–4 pm,  
Robin Richter, 20 guests

*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 in advance of the monthly meeting. 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 July issue is June 28.

Masthead photo of Coco Tran, granddaughter of David and Jane Winer, by David Winer.