



The Sycamore Islander

SEPTEMBER 2016 | VOLUME 95 NUMBER 9

Minutes for the August 10th Meeting

Attendees: Lucky Marmon, Bill Marmon, Star Mitchell, Elizabeth Thomas, Geoff Holdridge, Jim Drew, Gerry Barton, Mike Petrilli, Dick Schleicher, Carol Schleicher, Mark Devito, Drew Walsh, Rololfo Castro, Lisa Catalone Castro, Tryon Wells, Peter Friedmann, Debbie Friedmann

Minutes: The minutes of the June meeting which had not been approved to due lack of quorum at the July meeting were unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report: None

Membership Chairman's Report: None. Attendees voted unanimously in favor of admitting Tom Umhau to membership in the club.

Captain's Report: Captain Drew Walsh reported that the

safety cable to the ferry, which was taken out by a falling tree branch, was repaired by Joe Hage with the help of Gerry Barton. They will discuss replacing the cable and pulley system once the leaves fall off the trees.

Assistant Captain Rudolfo Castro reported that he, along with David Winer and Steve Newman, installed a pole on the canoe dock that will assist paddlers getting in and out of canoes.

Drew said there are several improvements they hope to make to the dock, such as bolting on ledge cubes and a bumper so that kayakers can get in and out more easily. Jim Drew suggested having something at the end of the ramp to facilitate putting canoes on the canoe carrier.

Gerry Barton expressed safety concerns over both the rope swing and the zip line, noting that he had witnessed accidents on both. Drew noted that the inspector for the club's insurance company did not mention any concerns. He also thought that a safe webbing structure could be added to the branch that supports the swing.

Relief Caretaker Report: Madeleine Carter thanks the following for their caretaking service during August: Phoebe Hamill, Norman and Nancy Metzger, Eric Aaserud, Mark Wales, Meredith Griggs, Stephen Scholz, John Beck, Luca Anderlini. She is still looking for volunteers for September 17th and 24th from 2 to dusk and October 15th from 2 to dusk. The rest of the Saturdays in October and November are wide open. Please contact Madeleine at madeleinepcarter@gmail.com to volunteer

New Business: Star Mitchell expressed her appreciation of the mention in *The Islander* that the Canoe Cruisers Association had dedicated its 2016 Roster and Handbook to her in honor of her many years of organizing the CCA Race.

Members requested an update on the Labor Day Regatta.

The Oldtimers/Goodtimers event is usually held in late September/early October. Lucky Marmon has organized this potluck lunch on the Island for the last three years but will be out of town this fall. Anyone willing to take over should contact Lucky (301 654 7893 or lucretiamarmon@gmail.com). It is very easily organized and she has an instruction sheet to guide the organizer.

Gerry Barton reported that the granddaughter of former Sycamore Island Caretaker Frank Davis (dec. 1973) recently visited the Island. She and her family congregated around the old fireplace, which is dedicated to Frank.

Peter Friedmann praised the quality of the recent *Islander* and expressed his appreciation of Caretaker Joe Hage. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 14th at 8:00 on the Island.

Respectfully submitted,
LUCKY MARMON
Co-Recording Secretary.

VOTE ON 3 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

At the monthly meeting Wednesday, September 14, at 8:00 p.m., we expect to propose three wait list applications for membership. They are 1. Tom Umhau, 2. John Lord, and 3. Ben Robinson and Debra Rosenbluth.

Notes from the Island

Wednesday, August 3, 2016

Water Level at Little Falls: 3.4 Water Temperature: 86
So far August has been pretty quiet down here. Gerry came down on Monday and we had a fun group of kids here as well, but that's it.

Thursday, August 4, 2016

Water Level at Little Falls: 3.3 Water Temperature: 84
The river is dropping and clearing up. I predict that the fishing will be much better by this weekend.

Exciting news! The grand daughter of legendary caretaker, Frank Davis, is going to visit the Island on Saturday! Candace Thornton, Frank Davis' granddaughter, recently contacted the club and has arranged for herself and 11 family members, including Frank Davis' great grandchildren and great-great grandchildren, to visit the Island. Frank Davis was a retired trolley conductor and lived on the Island from 1956–1972. I'm not sure he ever served as caretaker after the 1972 flood, but there are memories of Frank having a little shanty on the Island post Hurricane Agnes. Sadly he died one year later, in June of 1973.

I sincerely hope that Candace has some photos she can share. It would be great to have a picture of Frank Davis pulling the ferry back in the 50s or 60s.

Thursday, August 18, 2016

Water Level at Little Falls: 3.3 Water Temperature: 84
August seems to be sailing by and we haven't even rigged up Mary's sailing canoe yet this year. I also haven't had a chance to write about our visit from the family of past caretaker Frank Davis.

They were here on August 6th and I think all nine of them had a great time. They brought a picture of Frank Davis standing on the ferry back in the early 1960s. He was well dressed and the ferry was very different. It was low to the water and made entirely of wood, with orange-painted railings. I hope to get a copy of the picture and get it hung up somewhere in the clubhouse.

I saw a paw-paw fruit lying on the trail yesterday, which is a sign that even though it may be super hot and muggy now, cooler weather is on the way. I also noticed that the spice bushes are starting to bear fruit and their pretty green berries are now turning a splendid shade of red. This is also the time of year to come and see all of the wonderful late-summer wildflowers.



Cardinal flower

Unlike the low-growing wildflowers of the spring, these flowers are as tall as a person and are barely able to support themselves as they stretch towards the sun. Cardinal flowers, New York ironweed, and two or three types of sunflowers. There is not a lot of wildlife activity right now and I haven't seen the great egret for a while. The osprey are very busy however and are entertaining us with their kamakazi-type plunges into the river. They do whatever it takes to get a fish.

Wednesday, August 24, 2016

Water Level at Little Falls: 2.94 Water Temperature: 81

The air must have been cooler than the water yesterday morning for there was a cloudy mist on the surface of the river when I got up. That morning fog is so pretty in the early light and is always so inviting for us romantic paddlers. No fog this morning though, which makes sense since the river temperature has dropped to 81 degrees.

Sunday, August 28, 2016

Water Level at Little Falls: 2.82 Water Temperature: 86

The river is low. Very low. The rocks are growing out of the river like weeds in a flower bed. This is the lowest that it has been since last September, which means I'll be doing some more dredging at the ferry landing. Too bad—no rain in the forecast until Thursday.

I was lucky enough to go fishing with some old-timer Sycamore Islanders yesterday. Luther Carter, a long-time member that has since resigned, was there



Wolf spider babies

and we had a great talk about the past caretakers that he has known. Luther is in his mid-eighties so he has known a few caretakers in his time. He fondly remembered Peter Day and his dog, Hard Times, and he spoke highly of one of our most revered caretakers, Ken Fasler. He asked me, with a curious grin on his face, how long I had been doing the caretaker job. After I told him that I had been here for 14 years, he added that all of the caretakers he had known in his time were genuine oddballs. I decided to take that as a compliment. Thanks Luther.

So, everyone knows that there are a lot of spiders on the Island. You can see their webs spun on the bridge on your way down the hill, and if you walk on the trails of the Island you are bound to walk into a web or two. I encounter webs and spiders daily; spiders are simply everywhere, so it wasn't a real surprise for me to see a very large wolf spider perched on the back of the clubhouse by the back door. The thing that did give me a start, and a horrified shudder, was the sight of the wolf spider's offspring gathered on the side of the house. What at first looked like little balls of lint stuck to the siding turned out to be groups of hundreds of microscopic little baby spiders all balled up together.

JOE HAGE
Caretaker

LARGE PARTIES



September 17,
Geoffrey Cook, 21–34
guests, 3–7 p.m.

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 Madeline Carter, madeleinecpcarter@gmail.com.

Saturday Relief Caretakers September/October 2016					
SEPTEMBER	9 A.M.–2 P.M.	2 P.M.–DUSK	OCTOBER	10 A.M.–2 P.M.	2 P.M.–DUSK
SEPTEMBER 3	Lauren Brandt, Leslie & Casey Johnson	Madeline Carter	OCTOBER 1	Kevin Haley	Topaz Terry
SEPTEMBER 10	Barbara Fisher	Miguel Browne & Silvija Strikis	OCTOBER 8	Meredith Griggs	Topaz Terry
SEPTEMBER 17	Meredith Griggs	Please Volunteer	OCTOBER 15	Jared Farber	Please Volunteer
SEPTEMBER 24	Gus Anderson	Please Volunteer	OCTOBER 22	Please Volunteer	Please Volunteer
			OCTOBER 29	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. The deadline for inclusion in the October issue is September 30.