

The Sycamore Islander

August 2017 | Volume 96 Number 8



Photo by Tanya Sisler

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Dates to Remember

August 9: Next Club Meeting, 8 pm at Clubhouse (Potluck before weather permitting)

August 20: Islander Deadline (send contributions to markdfriedrichs@gmail.com)

August 26: Fishing Derby

September 4: Labor Day Regatta

September 13: September Club Meeting

[Relief Caretakers' Schedule](#)

Contact Madeleine Carter at madeleinepcarter@gmail.com to volunteer

August 5

9 am – 3 pm: Phoebe Hamill
3 pm – dark: Chris Maggio & Elizabeth Karlin

August 12

9 am – 3 pm: Meredith Griggs
3 pm – dark: **Need a Volunteer**

August 19

9 am – 3 pm: Meryl Silverman
3 pm – dark: **Need a Volunteer**

August 26

9 am – 3 pm: John Cunningham
3 pm – dark: Chris Maggio & Elizabeth Karlin

September 2

9 am – 3 pm: Robert McCartney
3 pm – dark: **Need a Volunteer**

September 9

9 am – 3 pm: **Need a Volunteer**
3 pm – dark: Gary Slayen

September 16

9 am – 3 pm: **Need a Volunteer**
3 pm – dark: **Need a Volunteer**

September 23

9 am – 3 pm: **Need a Volunteer**
3 pm – dark: Tom and Barbara Lott

September 30

9 am – 3 pm: **Need a Volunteer**
3 pm – dark: **Need a Volunteer**

[October still wide open]



SYCAMORE ISLAND FISHING DERBY

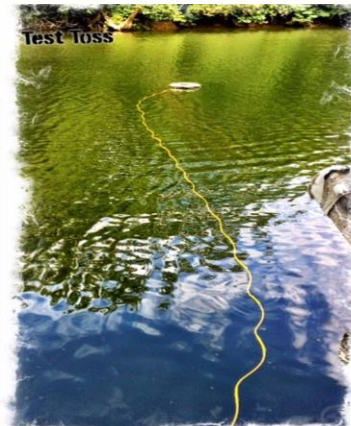
Saturday, August 26th, 2017
8:30am - 1:00pm

Club Members, Waitlisters, and Friends: Please join us for a morning of kid-friendly fishing and fun! Smallmouth Bass, Bluegill, and Catfish are within casting distance from Sycamore Island. A light lunch will be provided. *Rods and bait will be provided if needed.*

To confirm your attendance, please contact George or Shelley Malusky at (301) 871-1707 or email shelleymalusky@verizon.net.

[Water Safety Reminders](#)

by Richard Bertaut (President), John Noble (VP), Stan Fowler (Captain) and Larry Heilman



What a wonderful Club location we enjoy! Swimming, fishing and canoeing in the Potomac River from Sycamore Island can be a marvelous adventure. But BEWARE! The Potomac is also a wild and hazardous river, with constantly changing water levels, currents, temperatures, floating objects, and unseen objects beneath the surface.

Our members must always keep in mind that the River is dangerous. That danger is always there, but observing some water safety guidelines may reduce the risk of catastrophe:

ENTER THE WATER AT YOUR OWN RISK. *Diving or jumping into the water may be unsafe when you cannot see clearly what's below the surface.* Trees washed downstream, tangles of trash, and submerged rocks are among the hazards of the river.

- DO NOT swim alone!
- *DO NOT enter the water unless you can swim!*
- Children in the water must be under close adult supervision.
 - Also remember that water toys are not acceptable life preservers!
- Familiarize yourself with the use of rescue equipment.
 - Note the locations of the water safety equipment, how they are attached, and even practice **using the equipment, but please remember to return everything to its “ready position,”** and that the safety equipment is not there to be used as toys!
- Use kayaks and canoes only to the extent of your ability.

Here is the longstanding notice by the swim dock:



Larry Heilman, Swim Committee Chair (lcheilman@verizon.net), has spearheaded an effort to establish water safety stations with rescue equipment in critical areas around the club facilities. These are located in areas where the possibility of entering the water, on purpose or by accident, is the highest.

An important part of the initiative is the recording of all water related “events” in the log/journal on the table on the ground floor of the Clubhouse. **Please help the club by using the MSIC Safety Log to record any accident, unsafe behavior, or use of the Safety Equipment for emergencies so that we may support and improve the program.**

Our Water Safety Stations are located adjacent to the:

- Swim Dock
- Captain's Dock
- Ferry Landing
- Canoe Dock

Each station is stocked with a whistle, a long bamboo pole (red taped), a throw ring, and a (red) Rescue Tube. Although the Club also maintains a canoe and a rescue board at the Swim Dock, rescue training is MANDATORY for their use. Note that the ferry has two safety rings, and **US Coast Guard approved PFD's (personal floatation devices or life preservers)** are located **in the Clubhouse locker area in various sizes for all members to use with the Club's watercraft, as well as for the safety of “non-swimmers” who feel uncomfortable at the water's edge.**

All members should take the time to familiarize themselves with the island's safety equipment. Using equipment that one is unfamiliar with can make a bad situation worse! In an emergency, we all need to recognize our own abilities, and those of our loved ones.

Should a dangerous situation develop with a person in the water in distress, members (of any age) should be aware of the following procedures (drawn from the Boy Scout Manual):

1. Blow the whistle 3 hard blasts to alert Club members that there is a person in distress.
2. Use the long, red pole to reach out to the person in distress.
3. Throw a safety ring, secured to tree, the ferry, or other fixed object, by a rope, to the person in distress.
4. Properly trained members may attempt a water rescue in an emergency. Rescue manuals remind us not to swim close to the distressed person, but float the red Rescue Tube to them for safety. Those trained in lifesaving with strong swimming abilities should always take a red tube (*attached by a safety line*) to pass to the distressed person, so that both may be pulled to safety.
5. Properly trained members attempting the rescue of distressed person in a canoe, surfboard, or rowboat should **ALWAYS** take a red Rescue Tube with them.

In the near future, we will be scheduling training sessions on the proper use and function of the Safety Equipment and other safety procedures. Properly responding to an emergency situation may save a member's life. If all members are prepared to assist in an emergency, the club will benefit.

Look for more information on Safety Training sessions.

Enjoy the river, but respect it! Act with common sense, and practice good safety.

Comments from club members are requested. Please send them to lcheilman@verizon.net.



On the Island - Waitlisters and Guests are welcome!

Labor Day Regatta !

Monday, September 4
1:30 p.m. to 6:00



2 to 4 p.m. - Games and Races for all ages

5 p.m. - Dinner and Awards

Burgers/dogs & fixin's provided by the Island

Bring a salad or dessert to share if you can.



Information: Mia Holland holland.mia@gmail.com

CARETAKER'S LOG



Monday -- July 10, 2017

Water Level at Little Falls: 3.6 Water Temperature: 82

Well the Club certainly got their money's worth out of me yesterday. There was a steady flow of revelers on the ferry all day, right up until dark. We had swimmers, fishermen, a group of play readers, a group of ukulele players, Bannockburn pool board members, and their families, and lots of kids. It was great to see all of those kids out in canoes, scattered all over the river and having a good time.

I went up on the roof to clean the gutters and I found a black snake curled up in the gutter above my living room. Then I went to clean the gutters over the deck and I got stung by a wasp, right on the tip of my nose! Then I went to cut the grass and I got stung twice by the ground-nesting bees that I ran over with the mower. Holy Cow it must be summer.

Thursday -- July 13, 2017

Water Level at Little Falls: 3.2 Water Temperature: 84

We had the monthly meeting here on the Island last night. We did not have a quorum, but 9 of us all sat around the picnic table and had the meeting anyway. John Noble ran the meeting in Richard's absence and when he asked me for a caretaker's report I was sort of at a loss for words. I wasn't sure how much detail about my duties the member's wanted to hear and I certainly didn't want to bring up a subject that might have extended the meeting any more than necessary. What I didn't say then, that I want to say now is that, generally speaking, the Club buildings and facilities are in good working order and there is nothing urgent that we need to deal with. The things that are less than great, and that will need to be addressed, are the eight screen doors on the deck and the railings on the ferry.

Thanks to Larry for his nice words about the trails being clear and thanks to Meredith for being so concerned about me working too hard pulling the ferry all day.

I restocked the first-aid kit. After I was stung by the bees last week I went to reach for some benedryl and there was none to be had. I also noticed that we were low on band-aids and advil. I bought some more toilet paper too, it's important that we not run out of TP. And for the record, we have never run out of TP in my 14 years 11 months as caretaker.

The corner where we store the canoe and kayak paddles was total chaos yesterday, with paddles stuck everywhere and every which way. I decided to install a new rack for the kayak paddles. It's a horizontal rack under the window there and hopefully it will help to keep the paddles organized.

Thursday -- July 20, 2017

Water Level at Little Falls: 2.9 Water Temperature: 88

It may be hot but it's always cooler on the Island! The river is warming up too, but it's nice and low and perfect for swimming.

We're down to three working Club kayaks. One of the red ones that we tried to patch last fall is leaking again and I had to take it out of service. Maybe someone in the Club can figure out how to patch these plastic boats. We also have a Club canoe that has been broken for a few years. It has a hole that needs patching as well. On the up side, some of the older members are forfeiting their canoe racks and donating their old canoes to the Club. So, no shortage of boats by any means.

We've been attracting a lot of birds with the new humming bird feeders and the sunflower seeds. The other thing that we have that is attracting the birds is a steady source of water. It seems that the water coming from our heat pump/air conditioner has become a favorite of our resident birds. It is so cute to watch the humming birds take a little shower as the water flows from the gutter and splashes off of the bushes below. I have also witnessed the chickadees drinking water from the broken stalks of the jewel weed. It seems that after I cut the weeds, a bit of water collects in the chamber at the top and the birds can perch there and take a drink. Amazing.

Important River News!

The Coast Guard wants to close a popular section of our Potomac River for security reasons. Get the details at the link below.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/coast-guard-wants-to-kick-boats-off-potomac-river-when-trump-is-golfing/2017/07/17/8ac56828-6afd-11e7-9c15-177740635e83_story.html?utm_term=.96255c1d90a6&wpisrc=nl_buzz&wpm=1

Please visit the Canoe Cruisers website at <http://www.ccadc.org/> for information about how to submit your comments.

Thursday -- July 25, 2017

Water Level at Little Falls: 3.1 Water Temperature: 84

There is a very large tree that has fallen across the trail up by the old trolley trestle. The trail is passable but just barely. You might have to crawl or you could probably limbo your way under the tree. It's the same giant oak that fell a couple of years ago. We have been able to walk under it all this time but now it is squarely in the way. I'm going to try to clear a path around it. **[Update: A path through the giant oak has been cut.]**

Important River News Update!

Small victory for paddlers. The Coast Guard shelves plan to shut down Potomac near Trump resort. Story in NY Times.

<https://mobile.nytimes.com/2017/07/26/us/politics/coast-guard-trump-resort-potomac-security.html?referer=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F>

Informal Meeting Notes from the July 12, 2017 Meeting of the Sycamore Island Club

Since we did not have a quorum, the July meeting was an informal discussion, led by John Noble, Vice President. No votes were taken. The June minutes will be approved at the August meeting.

Attendees: John Noble, Larry Heilman, Meredith Griggs, Gerry Barton, Marianne Ross, David Winer, Mark Friedrichs, Drew Walsh.

Treasurer's report: On behalf of treasurer Ned Goddard, John Noble reported that club finances are on target. Although the insurance was lowered and real estate taxes went down, the insurance inspector asked that we have a second, maritime insurance policy. Thus, projected savings were not realized.

Captain's report: None.

Caretaker's report: Joe Hage updated members on four points:
The fire extinguisher inspector will be coming to check that all extinguishers are working properly.
A new lawn mower belt has been ordered, and Joe is getting caught up on the lawn.
A bee's nest has been removed.
One of the ladies' toilets is shut down because it is leaking. Joe is working on repairing it.

Membership: John Noble reported that membership is stable at 160 members, with 40 on the wait list. The next lottery will be held January-March 2018. Fifteen spaces are expected to be open in each category.

Archivist report: None.

Compliments, Congratulations: The following people were recognized for their good work:
Joe Hage by Larry Heilman for the good upkeep of the island paths.
Mark Friedrichs by John Noble for Mark's first edition after taking over editorship of the Islander.
Madeleine Carter by John Noble for excellent management of the relief caretakers.

The Islander: The editor would like regular contributors to write on different topics (e.g., club history). About six members have responded to this request, but Mark would welcome others, particularly photos involving youth activities on the Island. Dave Winer offered a CD of seasonal photos. Gerry Barton asked if a PDF version of the Islander could be included for the archivist. Mark responded that Tryon Wells was in charge of that version.

Upcoming Events: The Fishing Derby will be August 26. A Halloween-themed party, organized by Robin Richter, will be in late October.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 9, 8:00 pm on the Island.

Respectfully submitted,

Meredith Griggs
Co-Recording Secretary



Islander Editor: Mark Friedrichs; suggestions or contributions of content or photos welcome to mark.d.friedrichs@gmail.com