

# The Sycamore Islander

December 2017 | Volume 96 Number 12



Photos by Mark Friedrichs

## Newsletter Contents

[Annual Meeting and Holiday Potluck Dinner](#)  
[Nominating Committee Recommendations for 2018 Club Officers and Supervisors](#)  
[Caretaker's Log](#)  
[Informal Meeting Notes](#)

## Dates to Remember

**December 13: Annual Meeting and Holiday Party**, 7:15 pm at home of Vicki Judson, brief meeting to include election of club officers, followed by a potluck holiday dinner!!

**December 26: Islander Deadline** (send contributions to [markdfriedrichs@gmail.com](mailto:markdfriedrichs@gmail.com))

**January 10: Club Meeting** (host still needed)

## Relief Caretakers' Schedule

Contact Madeleine Carter at [madeleinepcarter@gmail.com](mailto:madeleinepcarter@gmail.com) to volunteer

### December 2

11:00 to dark: Eric Aaserud

### December 9

11:00 to dark: Cora Shaw & Bernard Veuthey

### December 16

11:00 to dark: Tom & Betty Gibbon

### December 23

11:00 to dark: **Need a Volunteer**

### December 30

11:00 to dark: **Need a Volunteer**

### January 7

11:00 to dark: **Need a Volunteer**

### January 14

11:00 to dark: **Need a Volunteer**

### January 21

11:00 to dark: **Need a Volunteer**

### January 28

11:00 to dark: **Need a Volunteer**

**Also Need Volunteers for all February Saturdays**

**Thank you to the November Relief Caretakers!!** Peter and Mary Ellen Levine, Eric Aaserud, Joseph Palmore, Eric Simpson, Russell Sturm, Anya Schoolman, Lyle Blanchard and Joe Belden

## Annual Meeting and Holiday Party: December 13, 7:15 pm at the Home of Vicki Judson

**Directions:** Vicki's home is at [6203 Dahlonga Rd](#), just south of Massachusetts Ave, and a little west of Sangamore Rd. The address (above) is a link to Google Maps. The easiest way to get to Vicki's home from Massachusetts is by turning onto Onondaga Rd (south/west off Mass Ave). At Wiscasset, Onondaga jogs to the right and then becomes Dahlonga Rd. Vicki's home is the first house on the right (or north side) of Dahlonga Rd. You can also access Dahlonga by following Mohican Rd north from MacArthur Blvd, although Mohican Rd takes a couple of turns before eventually turning into Dahlonga.

**Potluck Dinner:** Vicki is planning to provide poached salmon, a big salad, and possibly some other small bites. She is hoping others will bring sides, appetizers, desserts or wine – but all will be welcome (even if they can't bring anything).

### Nominating Committee Recommendations for 2018 Club Officers and Supervisors

The Nominating Committee, comprising John Noble and Madeleine Carter, submit the following recommendations for Officers and Supervisors for 2018. This slate will be presented for a vote at the December 13, 2017 Meeting.

#### Officers

<b>President:</b>	Richard Bertaut
<b>Vice President:</b>	John Noble
<b>Co-Recording Secretaries:</b>	Lucretia Marmon Meredith Griggs
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Ned Goddard
<b>Financial Secretary:</b>	Sherry Fizdale
<b>Membership Secretary:</b>	Anne Waidmann
<b>Islander Editor:</b>	Mark Friedrichs
<b>Archivist:</b>	Karen Possner
<b>Captain:</b>	Stan Fowler
<b>Deputy Captain:</b>	<i>Recruiting</i>

#### Supervisors

<b>Finance:</b>	Ann Marie Cunningham
<b>Law:</b>	Rebecca Beynon
<b>Clubhouse:</b>	Jody and Bobby Benjamin
<b>Grounds:</b>	Alice Bullard
<b>Painting/Carpentry:</b>	Karl Kosok
<b>Website:</b>	Tryon Wells
<b>Entertainment:</b>	George & Shelley Malusky
<b>Camping/Parties:</b>	Molly Newberry
<b>Canoeing:</b>	Joe Cecil
<b>Swimming:</b>	Larry Heilman
<b>Relief Caretaker Scheduling:</b>	Madeleine Carter

## CARETAKER'S LOG



**Thursday -- November 2, 2017**

**Water Level at Little Falls: 4.4    Water Temperature: 54**

The ferry is open again but the river is still really cloudy and brown.

I took advantage of the high water and I pulled the docks in as far as I could drag them. Might help come workfest day. I pulled the docks in the best I could using my bare hands but the real story is how Stan was able to use his grip hoist to pull the captain's float out of the river in one piece, all by himself! It took Stan a couple of day to have everything set up but once everything was in place he was able to hoist the dock up the bank one inch at a time until he had it safely up on high ground. Truly miraculous and it's going to make the workfest day so much easier. Thanks Stan!

So I was getting everything tied down for the approaching high water on Tuesday and I wanted to go down to the fish camp and secure my solar lights and stuff. I started to trot down there when I noticed in the path ahead of me was a deer. We were running single file down the path until it bolted to the right toward the Virginia side of the Island. That's when I noticed that there was another deer still on the path ahead of me. I decided to give chase and maybe scare that deer off of the Island. I was about 100 feet from the clearing at the bottom of the Island when that deer stopped running and turned to face me. It was a large buck with a 10-point rack of antlers and it did not seem afraid of me at all. In fact it looked a little mad. I think I may have come between him and his mate and he was looking to see where she went. I tried to shoo it off by waving some branches but that seemed to have the opposite effect and the buck started taking steps toward me. I decided that I did not need to retrieve my solar lights right at that moment and I started to back away feeling very nervous about turning my back on this unpredictable, rutting buck. I made it back to the canoe shed when all of the sudden another deer, a female, came charging through the trees, racing to the top of the Island. Soon afterwards, that big buck was crossing the boardwalk by the ferry, slowly walking and sniffing the air where the doe had just passed. I tried shouting at it but it was useless, this buck was oblivious to it's surroundings, only focused on that doe. I figured that it was safe now to go back down to the bottom of the Island and as I headed down there a third deer ran by me and dashed into the river. Must be rutting season.

**Monday -- November 6, 2017**

**Water Level at Little Falls: 3.4    Water Temperature: 57**

The Old-timer's picnic that was planned for today has been postponed again. They decided that the weather was too iffy to have a successful picnic so it has been pushed back until next Spring sometime. Such a bummer, I was all ready with my snare drum and cymbal to do the punch-line crashes for all of the jokes that the old-timers were planning to share.

These deer seem happy here and they don't seem to want to leave. We saw them again last evening but could not convince them to swim away, they just ran around us to the other end of the Island.

Speaking of postponing, it looks like it might be a bit cold and rainy on Sunday for the workfest but I say we plan to carry on as planned. See you here on Sunday!

**Tuesday -- November 7, 2017**

**Water Level at Little Falls: 3.4    Water Temperature: 57**

The Old-timer's picnic was canceled yesterday, but sadly the word did not get out and there were a few people that showed up at the Island hoping to get fed. It seems that dissemination of information continues to be a problem for this Club.

I tried to visit the bottom of the Island yesterday but those two mating deer were still there staring me down. They didn't seem afraid of me at all and I was getting tired of them keeping me from making my rounds. Since my shouting and waving wasn't scaring them off, I decided to up my game. I went in the house and got the firecrackers that I had leftover from July 4th. Once the banging started, they started to move and I followed them to the top of the Island lighting firecrackers all the way. Soon they were swimming in the river and the last sight I had of them was them bounding into the brush on Ruppert's island. Good riddance.

**Friday -- November 10, 2017**

**Water Level at Little Falls: 3.8    Water Temperature: 54**

The workfest is this Sunday!! It might be a little cold but at least it won't be raining and the river won't be too high.

We could also call it a raking fest but this year there will be fewer leaves to rake. It seems like there are so many leaves that are still on the trees. The Mulberry leaves and most of the silver maples are actually still green. Not to worry, there will be many other tasks that we can tackle.

By the way, you might not receive an email alert about the workfest, it seems that something is wrong with the Club's server and Tryon may not be able to send out the alert.

The monthly Club meeting was last Wednesday, and once again there were not enough members present to have a quorum. I can't remember the last time that we had a quorum, it's been months. Luckily there is no one waiting to get voted into the Club. The next meeting will be on December 13 at Vicky Judson's house. Please try to attend.

One last note. Since the weather has turned chilly and the river is now below 55, it is against Club policy to take out a Club canoe or kayak.

**Tuesday -- November 14, 2017**

**Water Level at Little Falls: 3.7    Water Temperature: 46**

We had a fun and successful workfest here on Sunday, even though less than 35 people showed up. We guessed that the low turnout was due to the cold weather or maybe people really depend on that reminder-email that did not go out this time. If you missed the work day, not to worry, there are still a lot of leaves to rake and if raking isn't your thing, I have many other little fix-it jobs that still need to be taken care of. Just send me an email at [joehagemusic@gmail.com](mailto:joehagemusic@gmail.com)

**Sunday -- November 19, 2017**

**Water Level at Little Falls: 3.5    Water Temperature: 45**

Mary and I got home late last night and it was still 60 degrees outside! We thought about maybe setting up the tent but we knew that a cold front was expected and that there was a good chance of rain overnight. We decided to compromise so we turned off the heat pump and opened all the windows and doors. Sleeping inside but close to the elements. It was so nice listening to the rain as I drifted off to sleep. Then, sometime in the predawn hours, a strong and violent wind came rushing down on the Island. The temperature dropped and the cold wind was pushing all of the trees around. I tried to bury myself under the covers when suddenly I was woken up by the loud sound of a large branch crashing into the screen door next to my bed. Luckily the branch missed the screen itself but the branch seriously dented the door and bent the rain cap. By the time the sun came up the sky was mostly blue and we watched from bed as the clouds flew by. The temperature in the room was a frigid 49 degrees. I jumped up and closed all the windows and doors, brrrr.

### **Tuesday -- November 21, 2017**

**Water Level at Little Falls: 3.5    Water Temperature: 45**

I forgot to mention that during the workfest I had sent some folks up the hill to help carry some supplies down. When they got back they said that they had seen a fox chasing what they described as a hairless hyena. I thought it was strange and I couldn't imagine what they had seen. I couldn't imagine that is until the next day when I was driving down MacArthur Blvd. and a hairless rabid red fox ran in front of my van. I'm pretty sure it was the same animal.

### **Wednesday -- November 22, 2017**

**Water Level at Little Falls: 3.5    Water Temperature: 45**

Happy Thanksgiving everyone! I hope you all have a relaxing holiday.

I'm usually not around for most of the day on Thanksgiving but it seems that some members do decide to visit the Island that day. I'm expecting more folks on Friday since the kids will be out of school. I'm guessing that most of the members will not be at the mall on Black Friday.

I've been busy cleaning the gutters and raking up leaves but there are still a ton of leaves to rake, if you want to get some volunteer hours.

The river level jumped up a little and I didn't understand why. We hadn't had any rain so I guessed that there was a dam release upstream somewhere. Then someone reminded me that once the leaves are off of the trees, the trees stop pulling water from the soil. Once the trees stop drinking it all up (a large tree can consume 100 gallons of water a day) there is more water for the river. No wonder the river is always higher in the Fall.

### **Monday -- November 27, 2017**

**Water Level at Little Falls: 3.1    Water Temperature: 45**

It wasn't as busy as I thought it would be this past weekend. There were a few kids home from school here on Saturday. On Friday we had Dave Winer's bike group here, which made it feel like a festive holiday. Dave even served yummy hot chocolate. Sadly, Jane was not here, we will miss her greatly.

Yesterday, nobody. I was so hoping that someone would show up and help me rake up the rest of the leaves.

The big buck was back on the Island yesterday and I was able to get a decent picture.

## Notes for the November 8, 2017 Informal Meeting of the Sycamore Island Club

Richard Bertaut, Gerry Barton, Jeff Komarow, Ned Goddard, John Noble, Jim Drew, Sherry Fizdale, Joe Hage, and Ann Marie Cunningham gathered on the Island, but did not constitute a quorum. Therefore, no official business was conducted. However, we all enjoyed the warm cookies that Richard pulled from the oven immediately before he convened the meeting.

**Communications:** Gerry Barton reported that Vicky Judson will host the Annual Meeting/Holiday Party on December 13. The Annual Meeting is usually a short meeting where new officers are elected and the budget for the next year is passed. It is immediately followed by a pot luck Holiday Party where we all have a rare winter chance to mingle with our Island friends. Check the Islander for directions to her home. The meeting will commence at 7:15pm on Dec. 13.

Our webmaster, Tryon Wells, has had difficulty sending emails to all members lately, so apologies to those who did not know that the Good Timers lunch was canceled due to bad weather. Tryon is working with the web host to resolve the issue. It was suggested that he look into MailChimp, which can be used to send emails at no cost, although this may require double entering of member's email addresses into the club database plus the MailChimp system.

**Treasurer's Report:** Ned Goddard presented the projected budget outcome for 2017, with actual income and expenditures through September, and projected expenses through the end of the year. Sherry Fizdale's accounting of club income included a rebate from FEMA for flood insurance, and the results of a successful claim against an IRS penalty. Total income for the year was \$117,312.

The bottom line looks good for the year, assuming there are no major expenditures before year end. Major accomplishments for this year include coming in under budget and the retirement of the construction debt. Variable costs, such as employee expenses, insurance, taxes, and utilities, and fixed costs, including capital improvements, repairs, entertainment, and grounds, all came in under budget, and it is expected that the reserve will build up a bit, bringing us closer to achieving the goal of having one year's budget in reserve.

Ned also presented the proposed budget for 2018. The good news is that he is not recommending an increase in dues, and that 2018 is a year where the new member lottery will be held so there will be additional income from new applicants. The budget responsibly addresses annual expenses, at a rate similar to last year. However, there is the concern that flood, health care, and casualty insurance costs will continue to rise faster than other expenses, perhaps more than usual, considering the hurricanes in 2017. The proposed budget is \$94,000, 2.06% higher than the 2017 budget of \$92,100. The estimated expenses for 2017 are \$84,269. The 2018 budget allows some flexibility to cover increased or unexpected expenses.

If you have any questions or comments on the budget, please send them to Ned Goddard at [MSICTreasurer@yahoo.com](mailto:MSICTreasurer@yahoo.com). We hope to have questions and issues resolved prior to the Annual Meeting in order to pass the budget quickly and have more time for the Holiday Party.

**Caretaker's Report:** Joe Hage and Jim Drew reported on behalf of Stan Fowler that Stan had brought in the captain's float by himself, without taking it apart at all. Jim said that it took him two days of planning, but that once he began the job, it was done in just a couple of hours. Joe said that Stan used a come-along cabling system attached to a tree. Stan believes that he can reverse the process to return the float to the river in the spring.

Joe has been working on plans for the workfest scheduled for Sunday, November 12. There are no big projects planned for this year, just the usual cleaning of the clubhouse, raking, and

bringing in the other floats. Sherry Fizedale offered to buy paper goods for the potluck meal. Nominating Committee Report: John Noble presented a slate of officers for 2018. Most of the incumbents are willing to serve again. Jody and Bobby Benjamin have offered to replace Mary Ann Ross as Supervisor of the Clubhouse. Rodolfo Castro has found that he is unable to serve as Deputy Captain at this time. Please contact John Noble if your are interested in serving in this capacity. The election of officers will occur at the Annual Meeting.

**New Business:** John Noble presented the Club with a beautiful, large, framed photo of the Island as it was iced in during February 2015. Those of us who were present at the meeting were taken with the photo, and, especially, the idea of walking to the Island. A memorial service for Jane Winer will be held on November 18 at the Episcopal Church in Glen Echo. She will be greatly missed.

The next meeting is the Annual Meeting and Holiday Party which will be held at the home of Vicky Judson at 7:15 on Wednesday, December 13, 2017. Please come, and please bring something to share.

Also, please consider hosting the monthly meeting on January 10, February 14, or March 14. Please contact Richard Bertaut or John Noble if you are willing to host.

The meeting was adjourned so we could enjoy the remaining cookies.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Ann Marie Cunningham  
Acting Recording Secretary



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