

# The Sycamore Islander

August 2018 | Volume 97 Number 7



Photos by Joe Hage

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- Augusts 8: Monthly Club Meeting**, 8 pm on the Island
- September 3: Labor Day Regatta**
- September 12: Monthly Meeting** (second Wednesdays), 8 pm

## Relief Caretakers' Schedule and Online Sign-Up System

To sign-up to be a Relief Caretaker (any Saturday), you can access the "Sign-Up Genius" app from the [SycamoreIsland.org scheduling webpage](http://SycamoreIsland.org/scheduling) (or by clicking the Relief Caretaker Schedule and Instructions icon on the Club's home page). Click on the link to the app. There are simple instructions and the app will send you reminders. [You can also sign-up by contacting the Relief Caretaker Coordinator, Madeleine Carter, at [madeleinecpcarter@gmail.com](mailto:madeleinecpcarter@gmail.com)] The app provides a calendar that indicates ALL of the Relief Caretakers that have signed up (through August, but September will be added soon). Relief Caretakers signed up for the coming month are:

**August 4**  
9 am to 3 pm: Kevin Haley  
3 to 9 pm: John Sager & Catherine Commander

**August 11**  
9 am to 3 pm: John Butler  
3 to 9 pm: **Need Volunteer**

**August 18**  
9 am to 3 pm: Hayley Holdridge  
3 to 9 pm: Chris Maggio

**August 25**  
9 am to 3 pm: Emily McClinton  
3 to 9 pm: **Need Volunteer**

**Still Need volunteers for September**

**Thank You to all those who served as relief caretakers during July: Vanessa Von Bernuth, Lauren Brandt, Alissa Stern, Louis Boorstin, Fred Pinkney, Eric Aaserud, Chris Maggio**



On the Island - Waitlisters and Guest are welcome !

# Labor Day Regatta !

Monday, September 3  
1:00 to 5:00



- 1:30 to 3:30 Games and Races for all ages
- 4:00 p.m. - Dinner and Awards
- Burgers/dogs & fixin's provided by the Island.
- Bring a salad or desert to share if you can.



**Information: Mia Holland**    [holland.mia@gmail.com](mailto:holland.mia@gmail.com)



## Proposed Change to By-law Provision Specifying Second Wednesdays for Monthly Meetings

The proposed change is to be voted on at the August 8, 2018, Monthly Meeting.

Current by-law:

*23. Regular Meetings: Regular meetings of the members shall be held on the second Wednesday of each month, the December meeting being combined with the Annual Meeting.*

Discussion:

For three monthly meetings (May, June and July, 2018) we have discussed a proposed by-laws change to make the meeting day (currently the second Wednesday) more accessible to members and thus increase member participation. In the July meeting, the change was decisively defeated. Nonetheless, there was a sense of the meeting that the objectives were good and that Island leadership should have the by-laws flexibility to schedule alternative meeting dates. Thus the following change is proposed.

Proposed Change:

Add the following sentence to the current by-law 23:

*The President at his discretion and with advance notice in the Islander and a blast e-mail to all members may schedule an alternate day for a specific monthly meeting.*

## Reassessing Passes to the Island

The Club's officers and supervisors have recognized that guest pass procedures need reassessing.

The practice of giving Island passes to non-members for good deeds began well before the Club's current lottery system for full membership and wait-lister status. The current lottery system has solved the labor-shortage problem that engendered the pass reward system.

The standing rules of the Club currently allow a pass holder and up to 9 family members or friends to a day on Sycamore Island in gratitude for service rendered. The recommendation is to change the standing rules about passes and to end the practice of giving wait-listers who serve as substitute caretakers a reward pass. Being a Saturday substitute allows the wait-lister (and immediate family) to use the Island on that Saturday.

Also under discussion are rules limiting who has authority to dispense passes, how many people a pass-holder can bring along, and what services warrant a pass. Anyone who would like to weigh in on this discussion should attend the August 8 and September 12 monthly meetings.

## CARETAKER'S LOG

**Sunday-- July 22, 2018**

Water Level at Little Falls: 6.1    Water Temperature: 75

THE FERRY IS CLOSED!!

I guess that it isn't surprising to most of you that the ferry is closed today, considering the epic rains that we had yesterday. I'm not surprised either, but the sudden rise in the river did catch me off-guard a little bit. I didn't want to rush home last night and deal with the ferry in the dark and the rain so I waited until this morning and I paid for it.

I woke up at Mary's at 7 am and the river was already at 6 feet. It's not fun when your first thought of the day is imagining having to jump off the ferry onto a dock that is two feet under water. I jumped out of bed, skipped the coffee and headed straight down to the river. By the time I arrived, the bell rope had already been torn asunder and the river was creeping very close to the ferry rope. There was the usual, huge pile of branches and debris all tangled up with the ferry chains and being pushed hard against the ferry. Using the pole, I freed up the chains and braced myself for the high-water ferry-trip across the river.

I reached the dock on the Island, but I was reluctant to jump into the river and onto the submerged dock. I grabbed a cinder block off the ferry and stood it up vertically on the dock so that there was still a couple of inches of it above the water. I balanced myself on the block and placed another block two feet closer to the Island. Then I grabbed the bench off of the ferry and, while carefully balancing myself on the teetering blocks, I managed to slap the bench down, and voila, I was on the Island and my feet were dry. Amazing! I'm glad I made it over but I have to



make sure that I continue to balance my dedication to this Club with my own personal safety. Everything seemed alright on the Island. I had to rush over to my mini sailing dock to secure it and to drag the duck boards away from the shore. I also had a canoe down there that needed to be rescued. The biggest hassle might be that there is a lot of stuff collecting on the swim float that we launched last Sunday. There is actually a sixty-foot tree stuck to

it right now.

Since the ferry is closed today, (speaking of dedication) I thought that maybe I could go off and do something off-Island but I think I better stay put. There is still so much water headed this way and they don't seem to have updated the predictions yet. The Monacacy River is in flood stage and the gage at Edwards ferry has already surpassed the earlier predictions. Thankfully, most of the rain fell in the east, so that the gages above the Monacacy are actually going down. But we can't relax, there is still more rain predicted all week, bummer.

### **Friday-- July 27, 2018**

Water Level at Little Falls: 5.9    Water Temperature: 75

The ferry is closed and will be closed again tomorrow.

### **Sunday-- July 29, 2018**

Water Level at Little Falls: 4.8    Water Temperature: 75

The ferry is running again! Yeah!

There is no bell rope up right now so you might have to yell or ring the phone.

### **Tuesday -- July 31, 2018**

Water Level at Little Falls: 4.8    Water Temperature: 75

There is so much to catch you up on. It's been a great month down here with lots of Island activity. I'm especially happy to see the kids enjoying the new paddle board. Normally, July can be a slow month but not this year. I guess there was a lot of pent-up demand after we were closed for so long.

It's great to have all of these kids here but all of this ferry pulling is making it hard for me to stay ahead of the chores. I had to order parts to fix the lawn mower but it's working fine now. We had another tree fall, that makes five this year, so I had to get the chainsaw out again. I've been working on painting the new stanchions for the ferry and I put a new shower head on the outdoor shower.



We had yet another week of high water last week, which is so weird for July that I can't tell you.

We were able to get the swimming float launch two weeks ago but right now there is a telephone pole-sized tree snagged on it.

The river is still very silty and brown and the visibility in the water is nil but it's a nice day with low humidity. Plus, since the water was high, I was able to push the captains float back into the river. I placed it upriver of the arching silver maple so it's kind of stuck between two low-hanging trees, but it's nice to have it out in the water for a change.



## [Minutes for July 11, 2018 Meeting of the Sycamore Island Club](#)

**Attendees:** Adele Seifried, Bill Marmon, Madeleine Carter, Susan Dunham, Alice Bullard, James Kurtz, Gerry Barton, Larry Heilman, David Winer, Lucky Marmon, John Noble, Sherry Fizdale, Louise Meyer, Karen Possner, David Hearn, Mark Friedrichs, Jennifer Hearn, Jim Drew, Florian Kogelnik.

Vice-President John Noble called the meeting to order. Attendees introduced themselves.

The June Minutes were corrected and approved.

**Old Business:** Proposed by-laws change regarding Monthly Meeting Day/Time. In May, Susan Dunham proposed that the By-laws be changed to allow monthly meetings to be held at a more convenient day and time. The goal: to encourage higher attendance at meetings and to

avoid the hazards of walking the path from the island in the dark. A later version of the proposal was more specific, recommending that the Club meetings be held on Sunday afternoons rather than Wednesday evening. Straw polls conducted at both the May and June meetings indicated that the proposal would not pass. It was decided to poll the membership on-line using the app SurveyMonkey.

July Meeting: Once again, there was a lengthy discussion of the issue. Several members suggested that having more speakers at meetings would help to increase attendance. Other members pointed out that they would have a schedule conflict with Sunday meetings. The proposal was voted and defeated 19-2. Many members backed idea of allowing Club officials to explore different options for scheduling meetings.

The final status of the issue: It was the Sense of the Meeting that the ByLaws might have to be changed in order to give Club officials a chance to explore different options for scheduling meetings. This idea was approved unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Florian Kogelnik, who replaced Ned Goddard as Treasurer two months ago, reports that the transition is going well. Ned had a Drop Box set up so that he and Club President Richard Bertaut can financial materials.

Florian reported that the Club balance for April thru June is \$174,241.57, \$11,549.40 more than the balance for Jan.- March.

**Caretaker's Report:** Joe Hage reported that he has been busy making repairs—among them, fixing the swing, the shower head, the lawnmower. He has been whacking away at weeds and dealing with the damage caused by the two recent floods. One of the canoe sheds was completely destroyed and will have to be rebuilt. Once some of these priority chores are completed, he will turn his attention to the screen doors. Joe was complimented on his efforts to cope with the flood damage.

Joe reports that members frequently violate club rules. Some show up with more guests than rules allow and ask Joe if it's okay. Others allow their children to canoe, kayak, and swim without adult supervision. Wait Listers with Work Passes sometimes come on weekends, when they are only allowed to come during the week. Some who are eligible for Work Passes don't buy them but come anyway. In many cases, members ask Joe to make an exception to rules violations when they arrive at the ferry. This puts Joe in a difficult position. He is not a member; he is an employee.

Attendees noted that the Club rules are posted on the ferry. They also noted that it is the obligation of members to know the rules and to enforce them. There was a general feeling at the meeting that those persons violating rules should be reported to a Club official and penalized.

**Swim Supervisor's Report:** Larry Heilman noted that his statements at the June meeting were misreported and that they be stricken from the Minutes. They were the following: *"Larry Hileman said the last Islander water safety letter was good and that a water safety alert should be in every newsletter. Stan thought a rowboat would be useful as part of our water safety equipment."*

Larry, who is no longer functioning as Swim Supervisor, observes that the swim-safety system previously put in place has disintegrated. He feels passionately that the Club must appoint a new dedicated Swim Supervisor and establish a reliable system for swim safety. He feels that the person taking on this position should be a decent swimmer, have life-saving training, and meet regularly with the Club Captain to both establish a swim-safety system and enforce it.

**Archivist Report:** Club Archivist Karen Possner has been sorting through boxes of Club-related material handed off to her by former Club Captain Drew Walsh. The documents had been stored under the pool table. No one knows for how long. So far, Karen has discovered a



copy of the Sycamore Islander dating from 1922 as well as a few other treasures. Drew also dropped off a badly damaged etching/lithograph/ watercolor (?) of a shad, which has been restored and is ready to be hung in the clubhouse again.

In addition, Larry Heilman, an historian by training, has offered to serve as “assistant archivist” – a generous and welcomed gesture.



**Appreciation:** For the past several meetings, John Noble has graciously invited Officers to enjoy hamburgers and veggie burgers on the Island before the meeting. Happily, participants arrived with salads, cookies and other goodies to share. Members thanked John for his efforts to entice us to meetings and for fostering a Sycamore community spirit.

The next meeting will be held on the Island on August 8th at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Lucky Marmon  
Co-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)