



# Potomac River Yacht Clubs Association



Volume 8

Issue 3

July 1996

## Officers 1996

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(National Potomac)

### Vice Commodore

Bud Clark  
(Tantallon)

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(Mount Vernon)

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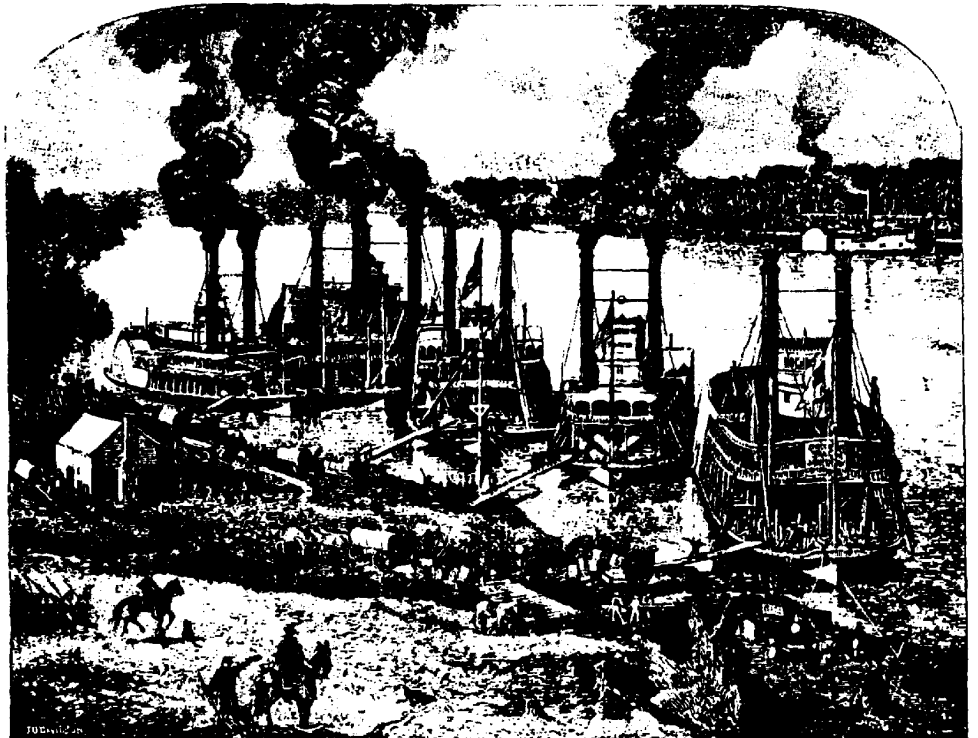
### Members-At-Large

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(Occoquan)

Mark Viehoever  
(Washington)

Jim Ball  
(Mount Vernon)

## 11th Annual PRYCA Float-In July 19-21, 1996



Welcome To The Float-In

Steve Donock

As you read this, you'll note the weather is a lot better than it was last year (we hope)! On behalf of the PRYCA Board, welcome and we certainly wish everyone a safe and enjoyable weekend.

As you know by now, we are celebrating the 25th anniversary of PRYCA. That's a quarter century of fun, friends and boating. Think of that as you meet new people and renew old friendships this weekend.

The 1996 boating season got off to a shaky start for most of us. It seemed the snow had barely melted and we were looking right at Memorial Day weekend. We were able to squeeze in a couple of great events prior to that, however. Safety Day was well attended and a lot of people got some hands on experience with flares and fire extinguishers. Let's hope they never need to use their new skills. Thanks go out to everyone at Mount Vernon Yacht Club, Fairfax County Fire Department's Station 24, and Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 14-6 for all their help with this event.

The Blessing of the Fleet in Washington Channel was also held in May. It seems that weekend and the weekend of Safety Day may have been the only "Spring" weekends we had this year. Thanks to the folks from National Potomac Yacht Club and the staff at Columbia Island Marina for all their help.

Again, welcome to the Float-In and if any of the PRYCA Board can be of assistance during the weekend, please look us up. Have a great time!

From the Commodore

Penny DeMarco

I welcome all of you to the 11th Annual PRYCA Float-In, even though I am writing this article for the Float-In edition of the PRYCA Newsletter before the reservations are even due! Once again we owe the success of this Float-In to Float-In Coordinator Steve Wexler and all the volunteers Steve has gotten to help. I will recognize all these people at the Dinner Dance on Saturday Night, so I won't name everyone here. Although we say it every year, it really does take a tremendous effort from all the PRYCA Board and many other club members to pull off this event. Any of you who have helped know what I mean. What has made the last two years go so smoothly is the careful organization and attention to detail by Steve. Thank you, Steve, from the Commodore and all the participants.

For the rest of this article, I will report on the Spring National Boating Federation (NBF) which was held on April 26 and 27, 1996. This meeting was held at Old Dominion Boat Club (ODBC) in Alexandria so we had a great opportunity to participate. This year, our long-time NBF Delegate, PC Dave Goodman (Aquia Harbour), had to give up this position because his job is keeping him so busy. With some active urging by the current NBF Vice President, Jim Webster, I decided to fill the Delegate position myself.

This was thie first NBF meeting I had attended and I enjoyed it very much. PRYCA offered to provide the continental breakfast for both sessions, the Executive Board Meeting on Friday and the Annual Meeting (the 30th) on Saturday. It was interesting to listen to the business session on Friday and to meet people from other regions of the country who have the same interest in

recreational boating and the legislative issues relating to recreational boating that we do. I was particularly pleased to get to meet Eve Finch, who is a Past President of NBF, Past Commodore (the only female) of CBYCA, and held several positions on the PRYCA Board.

After the Executive Committee meeting, there was a cocktail party at ODBC hosted by Larry Innis, NBF's Washington Correspondent. Several of the PRYCA Board members were able to attend this cocktail party, so I got to introduce them to most of the NBF Executive committee members. After the cocktail party many of us headed up to the Fish Market for a great dinner.

Saturday was the Annual Meeting. A full, very informative day was planned. There were reports from the American League of Anglers and Boaters (ALAB), National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA), National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA), United States Power Squadrons (USPS), and from each of the Regular Members. The Regular Members are associations like PRYCA and CBYCA (both are Regular Members). These associations pretty much cover the entire United States. I made the report for PRYCA.

Some of the highlights of these reports were:

- The ALAB representative gave a decription of the process for the Wallops-Breaux funding that was the best I had heard anywhere. He explained how W-B is part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA—pronounced Iced Tea). This act established a user-fee based trust fund with the \$\$ coming from gasoline excise taxes. The Aquatic Resources Trust Fund (what we know as the Boating Safety Wallops-Breaux Fund) is funded 100% from Boating and Fishing \$\$—gasoline excise taxes on marine fuel, boating and fishing



equipment sales, etc. The Boating Safety funds are subject to a yearly appropriation and the goal of NBF (and all the recreational boating organizations I know of) is a permanent fix which would change this to an automatic appropriation. It was also noted that ISTEAs expires in July 1997. There is a move afloat to do away with ISTEAs. (Some states feel they would be better off if the Federal excise tax were removed and they could collect their own.) If ISTEAs goes away, so does Wallops-Breaux.

- The NMMA representative reported on: 1) State issues are boating safety, taxes, warranty, and titling. 2) Maryland DNR has a contract with the University of West Virginia to study the effect of marine hydrocarbons on water quality. 3) Concerns over the growing competition between commercial and recreational fishing for declining fisheries.

- The USPS report included a description of the new software available for a Boating Safety Course, complete with an exam you can take and send in to get the same certificate you would get if you took a Basic Boating Safety Course. (This sounded really great—supposedly you can really have fun with this program!)

- The NASBLA representative reported that reduced funding and personal watercraft are current issues and that alcohol is still a significant problem on the waterways.

The two most dynamic talks of the day were from Representative Jim Moran (D-VA), who gave a talk just before lunch, and the keynote address by Admiral Robert E. Kramek, Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard.

Jim Moran spoke to the group about the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. Rep. Moran described the various options which are being considered—70 ft. permanent span, 70 ft. draw bridge, higher permanent span, and

tunnel(s). The 70 ft. height is too low for the tall ships and some commercial vessels, both of which are important to the City of Alexandria. The 70 ft. draw span would decrease the number of current bridge openings, but would not eliminate them. The higher permanent span would still restrict some vessels from going through. Rep. Moran favors the tunnel solution, although this is the most expensive. He also described how the main problem with tunnels (he envisions three at Alexandria) is what to do with the material dredged up for them. Now this is where NBF helped Rep. Moran. Past President Al Simon (I'll report more on Al later) gave Rep. Moran a very plausible solution for the fill. Al described how the State of Maryland is restoring Cheapeake Bay Island to their original configuration with fill from the Ft. McHenry tunnel in Baltimore. Al even described how, if the restored islands are made recreational areas, that additional funding can be obtained to help with the project. Rep. Moran was excited about these suggestions and left feeling that NBF was quite an organization.

The Admiral's talk was certainly the highlight of the day. In the first part of the talk, he described the U.S. Coast Guard's (USCG) mission which involves boating safety and the operation of multi-mission facilities with the responsibility for search and rescue, promoting commerce, running polar icebreakers, drug interdiction, and emigration interdiction. The Admiral's goals are for the USCG to be the premier marine service with a leadership culture. The Admiral described many of the things he was doing to meet the Congressional order to downsize the USCG. He feels that the downsizing will not hurt because of measures put in place to do more with less.

He did, however, express much frustration with two things: the failure

of Congress to pass the USCG Authorization Bill again in 1996 (the 1995 USCG Authorization Bill never passed) and that Congress said that no USCG stations were to be closed even though they reduced USCG funding by the \$6M which was to be realized by the closure of several stations. The Admiral explained that the reason the USCG 1996 Authorization Bill had not passed was not that it is not popular (actually it has virtually no opposition), but was because many controversial bills were attached to the USCG legislation with the expectation that they would ride along with the non-controversial legislation. This year, the controversial bill which has been piggy-backed on the USCG bill is tort reform for the cruise ship industry, which has effectively stalled the USCG bill.

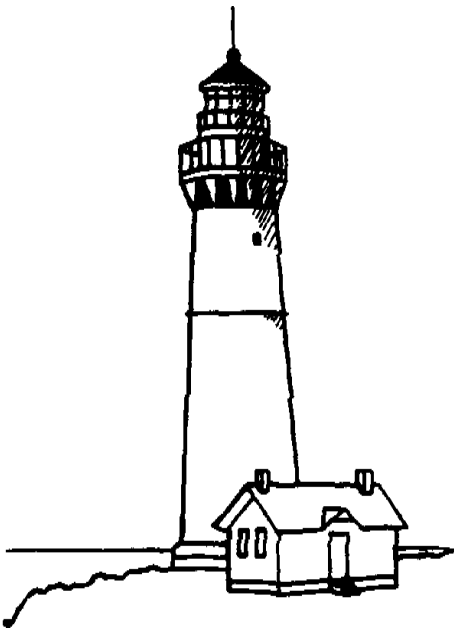
Admiral Kramek noted that he, like NBF, is a strong supporter of mandated funding for the Boating Safety Account (Wallops-Breaux), but he explained that he felt it was very unlikely that this would be realized. He noted that it is very distasteful for politicians to give up control of money, as this is seen as a major source of their power. He told the group that 80% of boating accidents are people failures and that education is what corrects these failures. Therefore, funding for boating safety is a necessity if lives are going to be saved. He noted that it is illegal for him to lobby, so he appreciates the efforts of NBF and other organizations in lobbying Congress in support of the boating safety funding.

Throughout the Annual Meeting, the praises were continually sung for one person, Al Simon, NBF Past President and, incidentally, active in CBYCA legislative efforts through his membership on the Maryland Boat Act Advisory Committee (MD BAAC). Al has been very active this year in the effort to assure that the Wallops-Breaux

\$\$ would be available to the states for their boating safety effort. Al's primary effort this year has been working with Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA), who is Chairman of the Transportation Sub-Committee of the House Appropriations Committee and key to funding issues for the Boating Safety Account. Through his efforts, Al got a promise from Rep. Wolf that he would assure at least the same funding for the account as in 1995 and would try to increase it.

Al has also been very active over the past ten+ years in trying to secure USCG approval for inflatable PFDs. It looks as if this work has finally paid off, as the first USCG approved inflatables are to be out sometime in the late summer or fall.

I thoroughly enjoyed the two days at the NBF meetings and encourage all of you to attend the next one held in our area. You will learn alot!



### From the Vice Commodore

Bud Clark

#### Additional Members for PRYCA

Over the past few years, PRYCA has continued its efforts to encourage all eligible yacht clubs in the Potomac River area to join the Association. In January 1995, Quantico Yacht Club was inducted to membership during the Change of Watch Dinner-Dance. This year several clubs have expressed interest in joining PRYCA and discussions with other clubs are under way. One way or another, attracting new clubs and increasing our membership has an impact on all of us, so a few comments on what's involved are in order.

The qualification and processing of applications for membership in PRYCA are covered in the Constitution and By-Laws, so I'll just hit the highlights here. PRYCA membership is open to any club which is devoted to yachting, operates independently on a non-profit basis, and is controlled by its members. Interested clubs must apply for membership to the PRYCA Commodore or Secretary.

- The key element is making sure that potential members are aware of what PRYCA is and does; this is best done by individual members of PRYCA clubs and by PRYCA officers. So, be sure you "talk it up" when you meet boaters from non-member clubs; to help this process along, a membership information package is available from our Secretary, Ineke Lavoie; just call her (or any PRYCA officer) if you identify any potential new members. This personal contact really is the most important step!

- The PRYCA Qualifications Committee has been established to facilitate the review process. Current members of this committee are

Commodore Howard Gassaway (Seafarers Yacht Club), Commodore John Ludwig (Tantallon Yacht Club), Commodore Gary Farrell (Landmark Yacht Club), and Vice Commodore Bud Clark (PRYCA). Please contact any of these committee members if you need more information or if you identify prospective new members.

- After initial review by the Qualifications Committee and with PRYCA Board of Directors approval, all member clubs are given an opportunity to comment on membership applications. These results of these reviews and comments are considered by the PRYCA Board, and then presented at a delegates meeting for final approval.

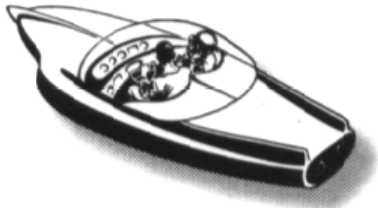
Currently, new member activity and applications are moving ahead. Special recognition is due to Charlie Wilkerson (Vice Commodore of Landmark Yacht Club), whose enthusiasm encouraged The Yacht Club at Swan Point to apply, and this led to interest by Cobb Island Yacht Club and possibly at Dahlgren Yacht Club (these are discussed below). Here's what's happening:

- The Yacht Club at Swan Point (located between the 301 bridge and Cobb Island in Maryland) has applied for membership. If all goes according to schedule, we expect that they will be inducted into our Association during the PRYCA Float-In on 20 July 1996.

- The Cobb Island Yacht Club plans to present their application for membership during an on-site visit of the PRYCA Qualifications Committee to The Yacht Club at Swan Point on 22 June 1996.

- The Dahlgren Yacht Club (at the Navy Base) has been given a PRYCA information packet and is considering joining PRYCA.

- The Daingerfield Island Cruising Fleet (located at the Washington Sailing Marina just south of National Airport



also has been given a PRYCA Information packet and has designated their Fleet Lieutenant Michelle Daniels as their point-of-contact.

These new member clubs, particularly those to the south, offer opportunities for new and expanded PRYCA activities and interactions. As a first step, Landmark Yacht Club, together with Aquia Harbor Yacht Club, has organized a Raft-Up just inside the mouth of Aquia Creek at Aquia Landing park. The idea is to arrange some PRYCA events which will be easier for clubs located down river to attend. With member clubs and potential members located at Quantico, Swan Point, Cobb Island and perhaps Dahlgren, there are more places with PRYCA clubs to visit. Some of these clubs also have substantial sailing activity, while others conduct events such as predicted log races, so that there will be more things to do.

#### More Water Toys

Everyone has noticed that there are more, both numbers and variety, water toys. Personal water craft (the little and not so little jet boats) are probably the most visible examples. With appropriate thanks to "Power and Motoryacht" and other boating publications, here are some of the fun things you can add to your list of boating "must haves":

- Sunfish Laser's "Escape" - a slick 12' sailboat with a AutoSail to make it easy to rig and sail; includes an onboard How-to-Sail card.

- All kinds of Jet Skis and Jet Bikes (the names vary with the manufacturers). These carry from one to three passengers, depending upon the models, and can have over 100 hp. They go like lightning, but remember that they use the jet for steering, so you must apply power if you want to turn (there have been some disastrous

accidents when people reduced power to slow down and then lost steering control). To make life even more interesting, the Surfjet has been added to the list; this is a waterjet-propelled surf board that you steer by shifting your weight.

- Another variation is the jet boat which uses waterjet propulsion in a more-or-less conventional boat hull; again, a variety of manufacturers offer different features.

- Of course it had to happen. For those who want to have both a jet bike / jet ski and a jet boat, several manufacturers now make boat-like hulls that can be mated to jet skis. The jet ski just slides into a pocket in the hull and you have your boat. In one case, after mating together the single jet ski acts as both propulsion and a control station for the combination. In another version, two jet skis slide into the aft end of the boat hull; the combination of two jet skis and the boat hull is then operated from a control station in the boat hull.

- Watercraft that are foot- and hand-powered like a floating bicycle are next on the list. The Impulse Pedal Boat is one example; the surfboard-like Surfbike is another; while the single-place Waterbike and two-place Seacycle are still others. Pick the one that fits your size and weight requirements (and pocket book).

- To add to your options, you can get an Aqua Sled (a giant banana which can carry up to 10 people) to tow behind you boat. And if that isn't enough, Aqua Jump will give you a gigantic "inner tube" with a trampoline which can be bounced on by up to four people.

- For those that want more sedate fun in calm waters, several forms of smaller pontoon boats with electric propulsion are available. Just the thing for a relaxing cocktail hour at sunset.

While it's hard to imagine what combinations or totally new approaches will appear next, you can be sure that they will offer even more pleasant ways to enjoy the wonderful water world of boating. Bet you'll want at least one of them!

#### From the MAL

Monica Lovell

With the 1996 boating season well underway, the PRYCA Board has been busy attending various club events, from flag raisings to 40th anniversary celebrations, to a Hawaiian luau. It's a tough job we have, but someone has to do it!

The Board would like to welcome all returning member clubs, as well as new member clubs, to the Potomac River Yacht Clubs Association (the "PRYCA"). The PRYCA is growing each year and participation in various member club activities have been well attended, not just by the PRYCA Board, but by members as well. It's particularly nice to attend an event where we see officers/members from other clubs showing support for one another.

Speaking of great attendance at member club events, I recently had the honor, along with other PRYCA Board members and approximately 150 individuals, to attend the 40th Anniversary celebration of Mt. Vernon Yacht Club. The evening was filled with wonderful food (all of which was prepared by members of MVYC and served by MVYC "kids"), beautiful weather, stories of MVYC when it started out as a "rowing" club to the present. MVYC also had a display set up with all of the trophies that the club has acquired since its inception, the first oars of the Mt. Vernon Rowing Club, as well as a display of pictures of past MVYC Boards, events, and past

and present members. Congratulations MVYC on a successful 40 years!!

The PRYCA Board welcomes all of you to the 11th Annual Float-In and wishes everyone a safe weekend full of fun and laughter.

### Here We Go Again!!

Steve Wexler

At the conclusion of last year's Float-In I was relaxing at the Fort Washington Marina with Penny DeMarco, Joe Orth, Bud Clark, Steve Donock and John Robey. We were all congratulating each other on a job well done with 115 boats, 250 people and a rousing good time. I naturally seized the moment and suggested that another Steve should handle the 1996 event. Unfortunately, Donock seemed to go immediately brain dead (apparently not an unusual occurrence for him) when he indicated that he didn't know any other Steves...I thought about Tanner (Prince William), Shipley (National Potomac) and Worcester (Occoquan)...but they weren't there. Over the course of the next few months, I discovered that your Commodore is not only very competent, she can be extremely persuasive. So she set her hook, I bit...and here we go again. I reported last year that the enormity of the effort was mitigated by having the guidance and notes from John Robey available. Well this year should have been even simpler...if I just could have found my coordinator's book from 1995. Thank goodness that Paula is so organized and keeps every scrap of paper we've ever produced.

Actually, I totally enjoy orchestrating a wonderful group of people...particularly since each of them is the captain of their own vessel. Theodore Roosevelt once said that "The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good people to do what he wants done, and self-restraint

enough to keep from meddling with them while they do it." So I've taken the position of just stepping back and letting the job get done...and it works!!!

There are some special notes of appreciation:

- Commodore Penny DeMarco for her leadership, flyers, registration packages and overall information. Thank goodness for Penny's computer, historical background, and boundless energy. And as usual, Bell Atlantic would like to present Penny with a special award for her uncanny mastery of the telephone and facsimile lines.

- VC Bud Clark for arranging the tent, chairs, tables, and particularly those fans.

- RC Steve Donock for the overall coordination of the event.

- MAL Mark Viehoever for The Wright Touch and the PRYCA Bar.

- MALs Monica Lovell and Jim Ball for working with the member clubs' delegates to get all of you here.

- Joe Orth (NPYC/CYC) for arranging the Aquia Cup competition, particularly that tremendous scavenger hunt list.

- IPC Ned Rhodes and Tom Coldwell (OYC) for publicity.

- Linda Bussard (NPYC/DYC) for selling the raffle and 50/50 tickets.

- PC/FC John Robey for once again making the arrangements with Puttin' on the Ritz for the catered meals and for getting us all into our slips without massive confusion.

- Treasurer Harriett Douglas for always being there with the Association checkbook.

- Secretary Ineke Lavoie for preparing letters and other mailings which let all of you know what was happening.

- The Fort Washington Boating Association, Commodore Lou Harris, as the "home" club.

- Fort Washington Marina for successfully "pulling off" another

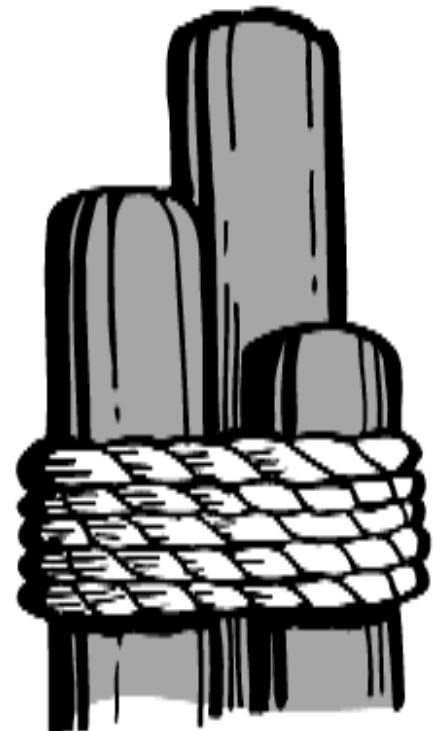
fantastic event—Thank you Aneisa Hall and Chuck Meyer!!

And a personal note for all of the sponsors whose business cards are in your registration packages. Please remember to use their products and services.

And the companies which provided services:

Puttin' on the Ritz  
Wheaton Party Rentals  
The Wright Touch  
Waste Management of  
Greater Washington  
Fort Washington Marina

I sincerely hope that each of you enjoyed the Float-In, and remember to tell your friends and fellow Potomac River boaters to attend next year.





### "...and the river was full of flotsam..."

PRYCA Delegate Henry Lovell

The sun was bright, the wind was brisk, and the river was full of flotsam, which made it like driving through an obstacle course. Determined to get where I was going, I slowed *Hanky Panky* and zig zagged my way to Mt. Vernon Yacht Club for the 1996 Safety Day.

On Saturday, May 11th, Mt. Vernon Yacht Club, with the assistance of U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 14-06, hosted the Potomac River Yacht Clubs Association Safety Day. There was a small but dedicated group of boaters from several yacht clubs that braved the elements to participate in this informative, fun-filled gathering.

U.S.C.G. Auxiliary 14-06 provided great safety demonstrations and products that everyone who owns a boat should know how to use. They had fire extinguisher demonstrations, visual distress signal demonstrations, CMEs, and towing safety demonstrations. The Fairfax County Fire Department was on hand during the fire extinguisher demonstration and during the visual distress signal demonstration. Several members took part in this (nice job Teresa!).

As the afternoon drew to a close, a good size storm blew through, leaving us to take shelter aboard the vessel that happened to be the closest as the storm hit. A few of us had a close encounter with some shrimp of the raw kind, but *Sea Ducks Too* braved the moment to save the day!!

Since the storm left all the charcoal soaking wet, a small but jolly group motored to the Rib Rack for an impromptu meal. Although the weather was challenging, the day was fun and enjoyed by all.

### Marine Safety Day Report

Teresa Sorrenti, OYC

Well, a few weeks ago we had the Coast Guard Marine Safety Day at Mount Vernon Yacht Club, and for a variety of reasons, I was the only Board member in attendance. (Sorry, Walt, but that gives me the sole rights to this subject matter and you have to come up with another article on your own).

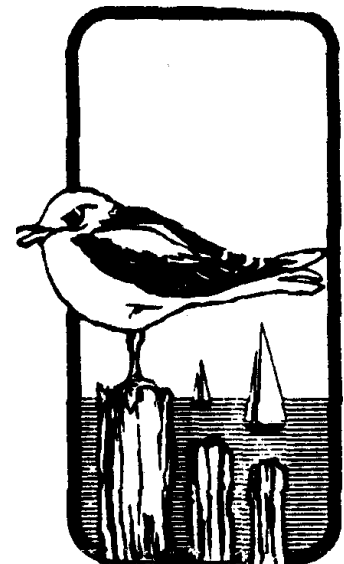
This was the first year we have been able to go, and it was quite impressive. A lot of the subjects are things you go over briefly, but do not necessarily take the time to listen, learn, and even "do." We had to drive, of course, since the new boat was not ready and we would have been leery of MVYC's infamous "low-tide-no-water" conditions anyhow. Unfortunately we missed the fire demo. ADC maps need to be more careful about which shore they mark items on; it makes a big difference when you are driving. When you are on the opposite side and can see the marina "over there" it is back to square one. Much easier by water.

We did arrive in time to shoot flares, something I had never done. I also hope I never need to, but now I know what to expect. We learned about types of life preservers. Rick even learned a knot as part of making a "bridle" during the towing discussion. I am not saying he remembers the knot, so please don't sign him up for the knot contest at the Float-In! There was a terrific wind that day, and we all watched anxiously as Pat and Ray came into the marina. We were afraid we may have to test some Coast Guard lifesaving techniques, but Ray brought her in just fine, showing OYC Commodores know their stuff!

All went well until the time to fire up the grills, when the sky began to darken. We followed the nautical tradition: Head for the largest boat.

*Penny Pincher* was in from Capital Yacht Club, and at 45 feet more than qualified. We made ourselves at home, passing the dip, cooking and eating her shrimp, etc. The one lesson learned here was that it takes an Incredible number of OYC people to read a radar. A group huddled over the screen for two hours watching the green blob creep across. Truly exciting. Meanwhile, some of us tried to open wine: Peggy Ball and I owe Penny a new corkscrew, and hopefully Karla figured out how to get red wine polka dots from Steve's white OYC shirt. (Attn. Quartermaster: may be a potential replacement sale here.)

At the end of the storm we voted to head for dryer ground, made reservations for 17 at a barbecue restaurant and finished up the night with another club tradition: good food and good friends. Can't wait for the rest of the season to continue!



## Potomac River Yacht Clubs Association

Commodore and Delegate Meeting at  
Tantallon Yacht Club  
Monday, 1 April 1996

### Club Commodores / Delegates Present:

AQUIA HARBOUR YC - Comm. Curt Johnson, Delegate Mike Leahy, and PRYCA IPC John Hancock  
CAPITAL YC - RC Norm Cherry, Delegate Ruth Koette  
DISTRICT - Delegate Herman Parker  
LANDMARK - Delegate Charlie Wilkerson, PRYCA IPC John Hancock, and PRYCA VC Bud Clark  
Mt VERNON - Delegate Mitchell Mutnick, and MAL Jim Ball  
NATIONAL POTOMAC YC - Comm Paula Parker, Delegate Steve Shipley  
OCCOQUAN - Comm Tom Egmore, Delegate Henry Lovell and MAL Monica Lovell  
PRINCE WILLIAM YC - Delegate Tim Abel  
QUANTICO YC - Delegate John Boynton  
TANTALLON YC - Comm John Ludwig, Delegate Joe Pokorney, and PRYCA RC Bud Clark  
WASHINGTON YC - Delegate Ivan Bogachoff, and MAL Mark Viehoever  
Absent: COLONIAL, EASTERN, Ft WASHINGTON BTG ASSOC, MARINETTE YC and SEAFARERS

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Commodore DeMarco who welcomed all attendees.

Club Commodores and Delegates introduced themselves.

Commodore DeMarco introduced the PRYCA Board, and presented PRYCA's 1996 Goals and Objectives.

VC Clark gave detailed report on Legal & Legislative Committees, and mentioned that the 25 Jan 1997 Change

of Watch will be coordinated by RC Steve Donock and held in same location as this year's, the Holiday Inn in Alexandria.

Steve Wexler will be Float-In Coordinator for the 19-21 July event at Fort Washington Marina and FC Robey mentioned he'll be doing Fleet Assignments at both the May 19 Blessing of the Fleet and the Float-In Weekend.

Secretary Lavoie handed out the 1996 Officer Roster and updated Boat Roster for further distribution.

MAL Jim Ball mentioned PRYCA Safety Day hosted by Mount Vernon YC Saturday 11 May, and is looking forward to strong membership participation

MAL Viehoever mentioned activities surrounding the upcoming Blessing of the Fleet Sunday May 19: the preceding dinner Saturday May 18 at Columbia Island Marina with live music, followed by a brunch at Gangplank Marina Sunday May 19.

The following club reports were given:

AQUIA HARBOUR - Delegate Mike Leahy mentioned that AHYC has its own safety day, they're a very active club with lots of planned activities, and introduced Commodore Curt Johnson

CAPITAL - Delegate Ruth Koetter mentions that CYC has an open house on Sunday 14 April, and introduces RC Norm Cherry

DISTRICT - Delegate Herman Parker mentioned upcoming 4 May Flag Raising, and invited all to come and visit DYC, transient slips are available

LANDMARK - Delegate Charlie Wilkerson who's also this year's LYC Vice Commodore, mentioned they're putting together the pier destroyed during winter, their flag raising is May 24 at 3PM, and are organizing a raft-up

with South Potomac Clubs at Aquia Landing Saturday, June 22

MARINETTE - no delegate present but PRYCA IPC Hancock says they're 'alive and well'

MT. VERNON - Delegate Mitchell Mutnick mentioned that MVYC's claim to fame is that they're suing one another, but they do host the May 11 PRYCA Safety Day, and their Flag Raising is Sunday May 5 at 2PM

NATIONAL POTOMAC - Delegate Steve Shipley announced NPYC's Commodore's Ball April 13; their Flag Raising is Sat May 4, and CIM will host the Sat May 18 pre-blessing dinner; NPYC's annual cruise is planned for late June and is going to Tidewater and Norfolk; he introduces Commodore Paula Parker

OCCOQUAN - Commodore Tom Egmore mentioned their April 20 'early-bird' cruise to Alexandria, as well as their 'hardy souls' cruise the End of November, with approx 20 cruises in between. OYC had a breakfast and swap meet Saturday May 18, sort of a yard sale to be held at Prince William Marina at a cost of \$5.00 per person.

PRINCE WILLIAM - Delegate Tim Abel mentioned their April 27 Flag Raising, complete with pig roast and wine tasting, and foresees a good club representation at Float-In. He apologized for his Commodore not being there, he last heard of him while trying to cross the Woodrow Wilson Bridge...

QUANTICO - Delegate John Boynton says QYC is glad to be a member of PRYCA, is looking forward to the Float-In, and their club is going on a cruise to Ragged Point weekend of July 4.

TANTALLON - Delegate Joe Pokorney mentioned their May 11 Flag Raising, their 'Luau' long cruise in August and their steak nites held each Saturday; he introduced Commodore

Ludwig who reminded all of the TYC hosted PRYCA End-of-Summer Party Fri 18 Sept - Sun 20 Sept, and handed out leaflets on the event.

WASHINGTON - Delegate Ivan Bogachoff invited all to come and share in the work of doing major renovations to their clubhouse, and MAL Viehoever related how WYC is recovering from winter flood damage.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ineke Lavoie, Secretary

### **This FCC Radio License Thing**

Ned W. Rhodes  
Editor, PRYCA Newsletter

I am not so sure that I am in favor of the recent elimination of the licensing fee for VHF radios. I will admit that I have a bias here since I was one of the lucky ones that had to pay \$115 to get a new license and then watch the fee go down to \$75 six months later and then be eliminated entirely a year later. These are contributing factors, but my real problem with the elimination of the fee is that channel 16 has become CB heaven. Let me give you a few examples.

We were anchored in the middle of Occoquan Bay, enjoying the afternoon, when we hear two cars (and I mean cars) using channel 16 to describe all the historical places around Potomac Mills. When I suggested that they take their idle chatter to a working channel, they replied that more than one person could share a channel. I then reminded them that channel 16 was a hailing and distress channel only and they then decided to sign off. No call signs were used, no boat names and no car names for that matter.

On our way up to Washington DC for the fireworks, I almost had to turn my radio off. There was constant chatter, mostly of the kind "Hey Fred, are you out there?", or just "Hey Fred, hey Fred." The great part is that these phrases are repeated 10-15 times before the caller finally gives up. And I have never been a fan of the "Breaker 16, Bubba, got your ears on?"

I am not sure what the answer is, but I am pretty convinced that no licensing is not the correct answer. I think all vessels that use a VHF should have call signs (not handles) and we should go back to a licensing fee of \$35-\$50 for a five year license. So, if you see *Impulse* on the river, call us on Channel 9, the alternate hailing channel.

PRYCA Red

### **It Is Legal to have a Flare Gun in Maryland**

Chartroom Chatter, CBYCA, May 1996

There has been some debate recently about the legality of flare guns in light of the Gun Violence Act of 1996. Al Simon requested that the Maryland Natural Resources Police provide a comprehensive statement regarding how this law impacts the transfer, sale or possession of a USCG approved visual distress signal (flare gun). Col. John Rhodes, Superintendent, responded with the following. "There is no doubt that the Gun Violence Act of 1996 does not in any way affect USCG approved flare guns." Col. Rhodes goes on to say, "Article 27 Session 441 through Section 446 comprise the subtitle governing the sale and transfer of pistols. The Gun Violence Act of 1996 expanded this subtitle to include handguns and assault weapons and renamed it "Regulated Firearms." Among the other changes, restrictions were placed on the number of regulated firearms an individual can purchase. Background checks were also required before an individual could obtain a regulated firearm. However, the Gun Violence Act of 1996 did not change Article 27 Section 447A. This session is still part of the "Regulated Firearms" subtitle and reads as follows:

"This subtitle does not apply to any signal pistol or other visual distress signal approved by the United States Coast Guard for use as a marine safety device."

Our special thanks to Al Simon for requesting this clarification and to Col. Rhodes for his timely and thorough response.

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**NEWS *From* BOAT/U.S.**

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Boat Owners Association of The United States  
Washington National Headquarters, 880 S. Pickett St., Alexandria, VA 22304 (703)461-2864

Alexandria, VA  
April 15, 1996

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Contact: Dave Pilvelait

### FCC Signs Off on Elimination of Marine Radio License Fee

Over two years of effort to relieve recreational boaters of a burdensome federal fee have been successful as the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) proposed Friday eliminating the VHF radio license requirement for recreational boats on U.S. waters. Even though the proposal will not be final until July, the FCC confirmed that it takes effect immediately, according to BOAT/U.S. (Boat Owners Association of The United States). The U.S. Coast Guard also announced that it will cease checking for a FCC license when conducting a routine safety inspection on the water, however boaters are still required to follow proper operating procedures when making a radio broadcast.

Recreational vessel owners no longer have to submit a lengthy application form to the FCC and, more importantly, no longer have to pay a \$75 "user fee" simply to have a legal two-way radio on their boat to use in case of emergencies. BOAT/U.S. led the fight to eliminate the fee since it was first approved by Congress in 1994. It was originally set at \$115, almost the cost of a VHF radio. Many boat owners simply stopped licensing their radios or, worse, stopped putting this important piece of safety equipment on their boats.

The repeal of the radio license fee was authorized by Congress in the Telecommunications Reform Act of 1996. The FCC's action Friday lifts a paperwork and financial burden on some 581,000 marine radio users, as well as those with EPIRBs and radars. Those with applications pending will receive them back unprocessed, along with the \$75 fee, within the next few months. The FCC also suggests that skippers in U.S. waters who do not have a license identify themselves by vessel name when making a radio broadcast. Those planning a trip to a foreign port, using a single side-band radio, or Inmarsat equipment must still have an FCC license under international rules, and those applications will still be processed. Those with vessels 65 feet or more must also still have a license to operate a radio. BOAT/U.S. recommends that boaters with questions call the FCC toll-free at 800-322-1117.

"We're extremely glad to put this exercise in red tape behind us," said BOAT/U.S. President Richard Schwartz. "It's gratifying to know that our concerns were heard loud and clear, both in Congress and at the highest levels of the FCC."

BOAT/U.S. is the largest organization of recreational boat owners in the U.S. and currently has 500,000 members.



## Have you weighed your Halon (tank) lately?

by Bill Fulford

Many of our boats have Halon Fire Extinguisher systems. These systems are designed to dispense Halon into the closed engine compartment in the event of a fire. As of January 1, 1994, no new Halon can be manufactured in the United States. Existing Halon systems are still usable as long as they are not discharged or leaking.

I have a system manufactured by FireBoy and the only maintenance recommended is to check that the Halon tank is not leaking or discharged. This is done by weighing the tank every six months (I discovered that mine had not been checked since 1987). This weight must be within a few ounces of the manufacturers' specification. The specification and allowable tolerance are on the manufacturers label on the tank.

This spring I removed my tank and took it to a Fire Protection/Extinguisher service facility in Woodbridge and asked them to weigh it. They looked at the tank and said that they would not weigh it since it was over 5 years old. Furthermore, due to its age, it must be returned to the manufacturer for testing and recertification.

At this point I called FireBoy (616-454-8337) and asked them about Halon tank recertification. They said that they have heard this story before and that many Fire Protection/Extinguisher services did not understand Halon systems. This recertification was **not** necessary with the FireBoy products. The only thing needed is to weigh the tank and compare the weight to the specification on the label. If the weight is within specs, record it, the date, and your initials on the tag affixed to the tank. Additionally, they said this did

not have to be done by a Fire Protection/Extinguisher service but any boat owner can do this themselves if they have access to an accurate scale. Next, I called BOAT/US Insurance to see if they had any requirements or recommendations on checking the Halon tank weight. They confirmed everything I was told by FireBoy. Thus, I took my tank to an accurate postal scale at the Merrifield Post Office. Finding its weight to be in agreement with the label specification, I updated the tag attached to the tank and reinstalled the tank on *Happenstance*.

In the future, I plan to weigh my Halon tank **myself** every year during spring recommissioning. Hopefully, my experience will save you some time and effort when it comes to checking your boat's Halon system. This is a very simple process, just be sure to handle the tank with caution since damaging or discharging it would be a very costly problem to correct.

## Aquia Creek

Landmark Yacht Club Newsletter

For the past 29 years I have called Aquia Creek my home port. Each time I travel on the river and seek the entrance to the creek I think that the early Americans could have easily missed this deceiving entrance. But quite the contrary, as early as 1650 an Indian Mission was established right across from where I stand. In 1697 George Brent asked the Governor of Maryland for help because of Indian problems in Aquia Creek.

John Hunter's Iron Works of Stafford, Va. specialized in small firearms for the Revolutionary War and shipped all of these out of Aquia Creek.

There were no bridges across Aquia Creek because this creek was deep enough for sea going ships to dock. The quarry by Aquia Harbor had

been opened for the sandstone. This type of building stone in the Potomac and Chesapeake Bay region was used in buildings such as Gunston Hall, Mt. Airy, Fort Washington, Mt. Vernon's steps and walls, the White House, and First U.S. Capitol, National Portrait Gallery, and U.S. Patent Office. The Virginia Governor established Aquia town in 1652 near this then undiscovered stone quarry, and a tobacco inspection station and warehouse soon went up there. However, the tobacco trade was quickly forgotten in the fifty acre town site when the discovery of the stone quarry occurred.

Because of a lack of bridges from Washington, D.C. to Fredericksburg, Aquia Creek also became a transportation terminal. To get from Alexandria to D.C. to Fredericksburg and Richmond, travelers came to Aquia Creek by boat and got on a stagecoach to Fredericksburg. When railroads were built, because of all the bridges needed from Alexandria to Fredericksburg, Aquia still played an important part. Car barges were used to bring train cars pulled by steamers to Aquia Creek where tracks ran out on a wharf. These tracks ran up to Brooke.

At the start of the Civil War the south hid a whole flotilla in Aquia Creek to make a troop landing in Maryland. They also used Aquia Creek to blockade the Union ships from using the Potomac. When President Lincoln ordered Aquia Creek and all creeks from Alexandria to Fredericksburg to be secured, the Confederacy burned all wharves, docks, forts and bridges. The Union quickly built these back.

100,000 Union soldiers landed on the wharves in Aquia Creek, including President Lincoln. He landed here to check out a bridge the Army Corps of Engineers built across our neighboring Potomac Creek.

Aquia Creek remained a starting

point for the railroad till a railroad was finally built from Alexandria to Fredericksburg in the early 1900s.

The quarry opened and closed several times up until the 1950s. Aquia settled into a fishing and duck hunting type of life, as the railroad passed over and by Aquia Creek. Stills and plenty of moonshine were known to come out of the creek, up into the 1950s.

As more homes were built along the shores, the duck blinds and commercial fishing have disappeared in my lifetime.

Aquia Creek has played a big part in our history, and who knows maybe it still does.

## Virginia Legislative Report

Nicole Larson

Chartroom Chatter, CBYCA, May 1996

The Virginia General Assembly returned for its annual "veto session" this week to reconsider any bills that Governor George Allen had rejected or sent back to the legislature with amendments. Just prior to legislators' return, Governor Allen had to meet a constitutionally mandated deadline to accept, reject, or amend any legislation passed by both houses of the General Assembly. Only two bills directly relating to boating were passed this year by the General Assembly, far fewer than in recent years. Several bills placing new restrictions on crabbing survived the legislative process. Here's a wrap-up of the results of the surviving bills that we tracked this year:

**HB (House Bill) 1313** relates to zero tolerance for drunken boating for minors. This bill revokes the privilege of boating for six months and imposes a \$500 fine on anyone under 21 who operates a boat while having a blood alcohol content of 0.02 to 0.08. (Note: Legislation is already on the books prohibiting operation of a boat by

anyone with a blood alcohol content greater than .08, in parallel with the legal limit for driving a motor vehicle. This bill reduces the legal limit for those under 21; this also parallels driving laws.) This bill was signed by the Governor on April 5th. Because it is considered "emergency legislation," it took effect immediately upon his signature.

**SB (Senate Bill) 362** makes it a misdemeanor for an individual to operate a watercraft when that person's operating privileges have been revoked for operating while intoxicated. This bill passed both houses unanimously. Governor Allen chose to amend this bill by broadening its application, and recommended adding an emergency clause. Both houses accepted the Governor's amendments and passed the amended version with its emergency enforcement provisions. Once this bill is signed it will take effect immediately.

**HB 531** in effect gives the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, which oversees crabbing, the right to adjust the definition of "peeler crabs" without having to go to the General Assembly for further legislation. This bill passed both houses, was signed by the Governor.

**HB 1010** allows the Virginia Marine Resources Commission to open the winter dredge crab fishery season late and close it early, or close the fishery entirely for a season in the interests of conservation. This bill passed both houses overwhelmingly, was signed by the Governor.

**HB 1441** and companion bill **SB 597** clarify requirements for returning undersized crabs to the water. Crabbers must return undersized crabs to the water, but this restriction does not apply to a purchaser. Undersize crabs which have been transported more than five miles from the nearest salt water do not have to be returned to the water.

These bills passed both houses unanimously, and were signed by Governor Allen.

This session was more collegial and decorous than the previous two sessions, although strong disagreements remained between the General Assembly and the Governor. From the viewpoint of boating related issues it was one of the lightest in recent years.



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## VA Personal Property Tax Phase Out?

by: Bill Fulford

Sounds too good to be true doesn't it? I recently ran across the following article in the Fairfax edition of the JOURNAL newspaper. All Virginia residents, especially boaters, should like this idea. If any of the ideas in the following article appeal to you, contact your respective Virginia legislators and request their support for this change. Note that the last paragraph of the article uses the key phrase "If the public supports the elimination of this tax". Therefore, we must do what we can to encourage and display public support.

### *How to cut the personal property tax*

*It is time Virginia took steps to abolish the personal property tax. I have found it is Virginia's most unpopular tax.*

*When we buy an automobile in Virginia we pay a 3 percent titling tax. On a \$20,000 automobile, that's \$600. I live in Prince William County, and the personal property tax rate is \$3.75 per \$100 of a vehicle's assessed value. The rate is \$4.75 per \$100 in Alexandria, \$4.71 in Falls Church, \$4.57 in Fairfax County, \$4.40 in Arlington and \$3.29 in Fairfax City.*

*On my hypothetical \$20,000 car, the personal property tax will be \$750 the first full year after the purchase. The tax will be assessed each year thereafter. During the first few years of ownership the tax will drop only slightly.*

*Once we have paid the original tax on an item we have purchased we should not be taxed on that asset year after year as we are with the personal property tax.*

*How do we eliminate it? In my county the personal property tax generates \$47 million a year. The county cannot operate with a \$47 million hole in its budget; therefore, an alternative source of revenue must be found.*

*If the sales tax were increased from 4-1/2 percent to 6 percent, with the localities receiving the increased revenue, this 1-1/2 percent increase in our county would generate approximately \$40 million a year, leaving only \$7 million to be generated through the personal property tax. This would not eliminate it, but would result in a dramatic reduction.*

*The \$750 personal property tax bill referred to above would be reduced to \$100. The legislation would be written so that a cap is placed on the personal property tax revenues, and in Prince William's case future revenues from this tax could not exceed \$7 million.*

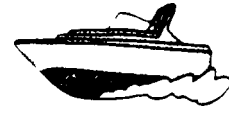
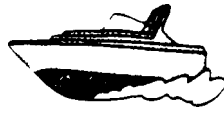
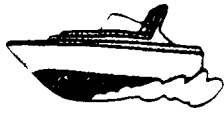
*The reduced personal property tax could then be phased out over a period of years by the amount of the sales tax revenue increase.*

*Another alternative could be a lesser increase in the sales tax plus a slight increase in the income tax.*

*During the 1996 General Assembly session, I introduced a resolution to create a joint subcommittee of the House and Senate to study the possible elimination of this tax. The resolution passed the Senate unanimously but died in the House of Delegates. The Senate then passed a resolution directing the Senate Finance Committee to do the study, which will be completed by December.*

*If the public supports the elimination of this tax, it may take a while, but it will be eliminated.*

SEN. CHARLES J. COLGAN  
D-Manassas



### Whistle Signals

Submitted by Art Murray (U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary),  
CBYCA Safety Committee

Many recreational boaters fail to use or respond to whistle signals. This may be due to ignorance or indifference. Whichever the reason, it is dangerous to ignore whistle signals. The Navigation Rules define the whistle signals to be used by all vessels in various situations and weather conditions. The primary purpose of the rules is to, prevent collisions between vessels. Ignoring the whistle signals specified in these rules can result in a collision, or place the vessel in some other dangerous situation.

When one is cruising through a harbor area where there is some amount of commercial traffic, there are specific whistle signals that should be understood and responded to. The Inland Rules state: "When a power driven vessel is leaving a dock or berth, she shall sound one prolonged blast." This whistle signal is most often given by larger commercial vessels, and any vessel, including small recreational vessels, should proceed with caution when hearing it. Three short blasts mean: "I am operating astern propulsion," which means I am backing down. If your boat is cruising past some commercial piers and you hear one prolonged blast followed by three short blasts, you should make sure that some vessel is not bearing down on you, and take evasive action if necessary.

There are other whistle signals in the Inland Rules that the recreational boater should know in order to maneuver safely. When vessels in sight of one another and within a half mile distance, the following signals shall be given when meeting, crossing, or overtaking: One short blast means "I

intend to leave you on my port side." Two short blasts means "I intend to leave you on my starboard side." In the meeting situation, either vessel may initiate the signal. In the crossing situation, the vessel which has the other on her starboard side shall initiate the signal. In the overtaking situation, the overtaking vessel shall initiate the signal. Upon hearing the signal, the other vessel shall, if in agreement, sound the same whistle signal and then take the necessary steps to effect safe passing. If there is any doubt or failure to understand the intentions of the other vessel, or, there is danger of immediate collision, the vessel in doubt shall sound at least five short, rapid blasts on the whistle. This is the danger signal. Refer to the Navigation Rules (Inland Waters) for sound signals to be used during restricted visibility. Indeed, it is a good practice for the prudent skipper to review the Navigation Rules periodically and to follow them at all times.

### Global Positioning System Fully Operational

News Release, July 17, 1995

The Air Force announced today that the Global Positioning System satellite constellation has met all requirements for Full Operational Capability. FOC status means that the system meets all the requirements specified in a variety of formal performance and requirements documents.

This declaration signals the culmination of more than 20 years of research, development and implementation activities that brought the revolutionary navigation system from concept to reality. The program was created by the Department of

Defense in 1973. The first GPS satellite, a Block I developmental model, was launched in February 1978.

"This is a major milestone," said Air Force Vice Chief of Staff General Thomas S. Moorman Jr. "GPS has become integral to our warfighters and is rapidly becoming a true utility' in the civilian community," he concluded.

The first launch of operational (Block II) GPS satellite in February 1989, marked the beginning of steady progress toward a full constellation of 24 satellites. That milestone was achieved in June 1993 and Initial Operational Capability was declared later that year. FOC marks the successful completion of Department of Defense testing of the 24 Block II satellites now in orbit and confirmation of their operational capabilities.

The system gained fame during Desert Storm by providing unprecedented navigational accuracy for allied air and ground forces, but it is rapidly being integrated into a wide variety of civilian uses as well according to Maj. Gen. Robert S. Dickman, director of Space Programs in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition. "GPS is a model for dual-use systems," said General Dickman. "It's both a force multiplier for the warfighter and a boon to the civilian sector."

GPS, operated by the 2nd Space Operation Squadron of the 50th Space Wing at Falcon Air Force Base, Colo., is a U.S. Department of Defense radionavigation system. It provides highly accurate, real-time, all-weather position, velocity, and time information to properly equipped air, land, sea and space-based military and civilian users around the world. For more information, contact Air Force Space Command Public Affairs (719) 554-5285.

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**Ned W. Rhodes, CDP**  
*president*

Software Systems Group



**Aug 5** PRYCA-Board Meeting @ Old Town 7:00  
**Sep 9** PRYCA-Board and Delegates Meeting 6:00  
**Sep 20-22** End of Summer Party @ Tantalion YC

Upcoming Events



**Potomac River Yacht Clubs Association**



1600 N. Oak Street, #1610  
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Address Correction Requested