

the Tell-Tale

**BLUE MARSH
SAILING ASSOCIATION**

December 2002



COMMODORE'S MESSAGE

I sit at the computer far from home writing this and as I do I think about all the first commodores messages from the past each setting an agenda for the coming year. This year I would like to start by thanking my predecessor, Commodore Joan Whan she lead our association to another great year, she had the help of a board of talented officers and committee chairmen and the support of the membership in making the activities of our club a success. I regret not being there at the Commodore's Ball to thank Commodore Joan Whan and Dick Durofchalk and Jan Dougherty for their hard work as Treasurer and Secretary, let me extend those thanks now.

What I have come to realize about our club is that we are lucky to have some very talented people who give there best to make this club work and it has for 23 years been the secret that has made BMSA a success. In this spirit I would like to thank

everyone who has helped out in my absence to get things going for next year especially Vice Commodore Mike Adair.

The first messages in the past have had some philosophical notes to them and I would like to share some of my thoughts with you..... Sailing is in many ways a metaphor for life, the quiet moments on a windless day give us time to reflect on the events of the day and to think about the future the windy days require all of our thoughts to the job at hand and work like a vacuum cleaner on the mind to empty it of the detritus of every day, we sail not because it is easy but for the joys that comes from doing something that challenges us to be our best, to meet any challenges that comes up ,to enjoy the voyage with friends and family weather it is a day sail at Blue Marsh or a journey of 2000 miles, we weather storms and cold winds and bask in the sun and warm

gentle breezes all to enjoy a sport that is as much for the soul as for the body.

Commodores first messages also have a set of goals for the year mine are simple to keep making BMSA a great sailing club providing a place were friends old and new can meet to enjoy the experience of sailing. If you have any ideas to make the club better let me know BMSA is your sailing club together I hope we can make it even better.

*Dave Miller
Commodore*



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Events For December

Friday 12/6:
Christmas Party.

Saturday 12/7:
Baltimore Boat Parade.

Monday 12/9:
Board Meeting.

Saturday 12/14:
Annapolis Boat Parade.

Visit our website at <http://hometown.aol.com/kristela/myhomepage/club.html>

*Meetings are held at the Lower Heidelberg Fire Company
the second THURSDAY of each month unless otherwise announced.
(7:30 Social, 8:00 Meeting)*

Minutes of the November Board Meeting

The November Board Meeting was held but the secretary didn't send me any minutes so this space is vacant.

Tentative Schedule 2003

In Dave Miller's absence a firm discussion about the 2003 calendar has yet to occur. At the December Board meeting we will be creating the 2003 calendar. If any members have ideas for activities or events they would like to see on the calendar for next year please let an officer or chairperson know so it may be presented at the December meeting.

Tentatively our calendar for 2003 looks a lot like 2002. We once again will have a Spring and Fall Cruise, 5 Races, 4 Vagabonds, and some day sails. The social calendar will include the GPS rally, game nights, and the Commodores Ball to name a few. We once again plan on road trips to the Atlantic City Boat Show, and Annapolis Boat Show. Community events will include the Water Safety Festival and participation in the Blue Marsh Lake Clean-up. We will be continuing our evening sails during the summer months. Is Wednesday a good night or might we get a larger turn out if we switched nights? Please provide any suggestions for activities as soon as possible so they may be considered for the 2003 calendar.

John Hackman



Dancing at the Commodores Ball

Commodores Ball

Your Attention Please!!!

Thirty-seven members of the Blue Marsh Sailing Association diner and danced to the music of Denny McConnell at the twenty-second annual Commodore's Ball, held at Crystal Springs Restaurant on November 9. Master of Ceremonies Alex Whan kept the festivities moving with his humorous commentary. Nine past commodores were present at the event.

The business portion of the evening included the installation of officers for the coming year. Vice Commodore Mike Adair, Secretary Jan Dougherty, and Rear Commodore Joan Whan were installed. Commodore Dave Miller and Treasurer Bob Hartwich were absent, and will be installed at a later date. In the absence of Commodore Miller, Mike Adair gave the New Commodore's

Message. Kristel Adair presented the gavel to outgoing Commodore Joan Whan and Mike Adair presented her with the Past Commodore's trophy.

Tom Stoner announced the race results for the year and presented the racing trophies. Sean Hollis received the revolving trophy for winning the Turkey Race. Brown received the trophy for Most Active Sailor of the year, based on his participation in many races, vagabonds, cruises, and Wednesday night sails.

The committee for the event consisted of Pat Gery, Robb Mutzel, and Evelyn and Russ Marker.



The Fish attended the Commodore's Ball with its hosts, Don and Ruth Miller. Unfortunately, during the course of the evening's festivities, it was spirited away. No further information on its well-being is available at this time.

Any member with information about the whereabouts of the Fish should contact a member of the board immediately. A reward of one beer glass has been offered for information leading to the safe return of the Fish.

Russ Marker



Lou Brown receives the trophy for Most Active Sailor in 2002.

Russ Marker

2002 Racing Champion

Our racing season this year was made up of four race days which included eleven races. With this few race days we had no throw outs. No one raced on every race day so it was important which race day you missed. Our winner this year only missed the Turkey Race. On the three days he did race he had 3 firsts; 5 seconds; a 3rd; and a 4th. Congratulations to our Club Champion this year- Armando Antonini! Sean Hollis was second and I was third.

A big thanks to Gene Paris for his help as chase boat. I also want to thank the following for their help on the race committees: Russ Marker, Dave Miller, John Hackman, Kristel & Mike Adair, Sally Koch, and Donna Ferron.

Plan on joining us next year. We are planning one race a month. It's a lot of fun and another great excuse for enjoying our wonderful sport!

*Tom Stoner
Racing*

BMSA Christmas Party

The annual BMSA Christmas Party will be held on Friday, December 6 at the Lower Heidelberg Fire Company. The party starts at 6:30 with a delicious buffet. Bring your favorite side dish, casserole or salad...the main entrée and desserts will be provided! After dinner, we will have the annual Chinese auction. Bring a gift to receive a gift...be it old or new! Later we might even have a Christmas carol sing-a-long, so bring your fine voices, too! Come for a night of food, fun and holiday cheer!

*Sally Koch
Social*

Atlantic City Sail Expo

The Atlantic City Sail Expo will be held on Thursday, Jan. 9 to Sunday, January 12 at the Atlantic City Convention Center. There is interest in taking a bus down to the show/casinos on Saturday, Jan. 11. More information will be available at the Christmas party on Dec. 6. If you are interested in making the trip, please send a message to salkoch@email.msn.com or sign up at the Christmas party.

*Sally Koch
Social*

ARSTER DRUDGIN' on THE SKIPJACK MARTHA LEWIS

It was Saturday night and most of the family was gathered around the dining room table. We all joined hands in the great circle, which is our tradition, and as I spoke a few words of thanks, I caught myself peeking through closed eyes at the great seafood dinner we were about to devour. There before us was the greatest array for Chesapeake bounty ever gathered in this house. Connie had steamed some clams and mussels; Sean had cooked up some shrimp wrapped in bacon hoes-de-vours, there were steaming bowls of crab soup: there was potato salad, crab cakes and rolls. But what really took my eye, as I approached the "Amen" in my prayer, was a huge pan just taken from the broiler. Fresh oysters on the half shell. My friend Clive Walker had given me the recipe and it was my first go at it- shuck the oyster, add a dab of Bulls Eye Barbecue Sauce, some crisp, crushed bacon, and some grated cheddar. Broil until "done". Amen.

We all had a great time that night and everyone came away stuffed and happy. The oysters were delicious, as was everything else. But the oysters had special meaning because just a few days before I had helped haul them aboard the Skipjack Martha Lewis, from the oyster beds just off Seven Foot Knoll, just southeast of Sparrows Point.

Since we keep our sail boat, "Full Moon", on Rock Creek, we have sailed out the Craighill Channel many times, right past the oyster beds, never knowing they were there. Years ago, there had been a screwpile lighthouse on Seven Foot Knoll but now it stands along the waterfront in Baltimore's Inner Harbor as a reminder to the heritage of the Bay. Now-a-days, Seven Foot Knoll light is a 42-foot steel tower with a flashing red aid to navigation on top.

Back on September 14, Connie and I had sailed on a charter cruise aboard Martha Lewis with our sailing club, Blue Marsh Sailing Association, from Reading, PA. During that cruise we got to know Captain Mark Sanford, a very informative and seasoned skipper. He told us the skipjack operates through the Chesapeake Heritage Conservancy, a non-profit organization. He also mentioned that he was planning some dredging cruises for those who wanted some hands-on experience. This struck me as a once in a lifetime opportunity since I have passed the 60-year mark and the Martha Lewis is one of the very few remaining working dredge boats. She is in about as good-a-shape as I am. I told Cap'n Mark to put my name on the list.

On October 25, I received an e-mail from the Martha Lewis office informing me that there were openings for November 4. There was enough room to invite a friend or two, so I called my Ocean City sailing buddy, Clive Walker, who also jumped at the opportunity after completely re-arranging his social calendar (in a matter of minutes). Clive and I have had some great times together, not to mention a few Intra-Coastal passages. This experience would be added to that list of unusually fine moments. We were in!

We slept at the marina on rock Creek Sunday night, so as to be near the action Monday morning, November 4. As we crossed the Key Bridge on our way to Markel's Boat Yard at Sparrows Point, I looked out over the Patapsco towards the Bay, and the adrenaline began to flow early. Arriving about 08:00, we checked in with the crew and jumped into the fifth layer of clothing. We cast off about 09:00 and enjoyed chatter with the other "crew" members as the diesel powered push boat took us out North Point Creek. We soon passed North Point Shoal and headed about 160° to our oyster bed destination. It was quite cool, so I was glad for all the clothing and the gloves I was toting. Captain Sanfork was sporting a Peruvian wool cap with ear-flaps and a pair of bib coveralls.

As we headed for the oyster beds, Captain Sanford gave us the low-down on his expectations from us. We had plenty of time to examine our work stations and the dredges, winches, and empty bushel baskets which were stacked forward. The Martha Lewis is in remarkable good condition for a wooden boat built in 1955. Bronza Parks built the skipjack at Wingate, Maryland, and the boat was restored in 1994 in alliance with the City of Havre de Grace and the Havre de Grace Maritime Museum. She is 49 feet, 5 inches long with a beam of 16'7". Tradition has it that the formula for this boat calls for a mast equal in height to the length plus the beam. It draws only 3'8" allowing for easy maneuvering over the Chesapeake flats. The boom carrying the main sail is practically as long as the boat, giving the rig enough sail area to power the boat while dragging two dredges about 5 feet wide across the bottom. The jib is larger than the main sail on our 28' Islander sloop. It has been said that back in the 1800's any house carpenter could have built a Skipjack.

The Captain and several crewmembers explained the dredging operation, how to bring the dredges aboard with their load, and how to sort the oysters for legal size. We were supplied with some homemade chipping hammers to separate the oysters from other oysters and the mussels that are always attached with an amazingly strong secretion of cement. The hammers had measuring prongs attached to the handle to be used to help us beginners cull out anything less than 3 inches.

The roof of the doghouse, just aft of the mast, was removed to reveal the six-cylinder engine used to drive the dredge winches. We checked the oil, which is always low for some reason, greased all the fittings on the winches, filled the gas tank, and were ready for action. Without any hesitation, Captain Mark attached the exhaust pipe and muffler and pulled a screwdriver out of his pocket, shorting the wires for the starter. The engine coughed several times as he toyed with the chock mechanism and the sparks flew off the screwdriver until it came to life, pouring a little black smoke until it warmed up. Sometime in the future the starter switch will be replaced.

He then tied a small line to the throttle linkage and fed it aft to the control station. When he pulled the line the engine would rev up, signaling the winch operators to begin hauling in the dredges. I immediately built confidence in the crew, seeing this crude but simple operation. Most Chesapeake watermen are

bred with this mechanical ability- to make something out of nothing, and these guys had it.

After coming to the suspected oyster bed area, we threw the first dredge overboard to verify the bed location. The engine revved up, so we began to haul the cable in. The dredge was brought just up to the rail, which is equipped with a roller. At this point, a man on either side of the dredge pulls the basket aboard by grabbing the large metal rings attached to either side of the basket. The contents are spilled on deck and the dredge is thrown overboard again for another scrape.

Success! We had landed a huge pile of oyster shells, rocks, and general debris. We scrambled on hands and knees to cull through the pile for legal catch, using our little hammers to check sizes and remove mussels. Most mussels could be removed with a gloved hand. We had caught about three dozen keepers. The smaller oysters, mussels, and debris were promptly shoveled overboard to fall back on the bed.

This catch proved our proper location, so the boat was turned around and brought back to our original location. A large, plastic detergent bottle (painted fluorescent orange) attached to a home-made grapple welder from steel rebar and attached to a line was thrown overboard. We were again using the waterman techniques of ingenuity- something out of nothing. This home-made buoy would mark our starting point as we crossed the beds several times. The waterman ingenuity- of using what's available to overcome a problem reminds me of a time when Clive and I were sailing a Morgan Out- Island 41. We were both going crazy trying to trim the sails but could not seem to get that little flap out of the top of the jib. Later that day I was reading the owners manual. It clearly stated that sail trim was not to be expected on this boat and that a little flapping and rustling of the sails was to be ignored. It said that this boat was not a 12-meter racer, it was a family cruiser. (Just do what you need to do and forget the technical stuff).

After about ten dredges, we came up with only rocks and mud. This signaled the end of the bed. As experience was quickly gained, we soon were able to cull oyster size "by eye" and it was no longer necessary to measure each one.

After an hour or so we had to give the dredge engine a break to check the oil. We added another quart and sat around deck to rest our own bodies. By now we had four bushel baskets full. Believe me, this is hard work for what you get in return. On some dredges we only got six or eight oysters! We returned to work, hauling in more dredges and culling as fast as we could to keep up with the captain's revving signals. I think he was testing our will.

We broke for lunch and were surprised to find the cook(s) had some oyster stew, seafood chowder, and bean soup heated up on the stove in the aft cabin. This cabin is only four steps below deck and is large enough for the stove and about six people to sit down along the bulkheads. Along with the soups were some fine corn bread muffins and brownies. It was good to finally sit down for a little while after chasing for oysters on hands and knees and shoveling shells and debris overboard all morning.

After lunch Captain Sanford pointed out a fleet of oyster "tongers" about a mile off our starboard bow and decided to give us a tour of tonging. We motored over to the fleet and watched the watermen doing their thing with their mechanical marvels. There was one man on each boat managing the whole operation. The tongs are lowered to the bottom and then the catch is brought up by cable running on a boom hanging over the side. The waterman then releases the catch on a slanted tray in front of him and culls out the catch while the tongs go below for another grab. It looked like a slow and monotonous drill.

About this time, we were given an opportunity to resume dredging or head for the slip. There was still a little gas left for the winch but we chose to call it a day. We had dredged up ten bushels of legal catch for the day. The "crew" was allowed a few dozen keepers each and the balance of the catch went for sale to local restaurants, the profit being turned back into the operation.

As we sailed back to port I thought of how hard it was to realize a profit from this meager operation. Back around 1880, the yield had been 15 million bushels from the Chesapeake Bay. The winches were operated by hand then- very hard work. A "buy boat" would come along-side and transfer the catch so the Skipjack could keep working without returning to port.

In 1999, the catch was 3800 bushels. In 1910 there were 2000 Skipjacks working the Bay, today, less than ten. The Skipjacks are the only sail-powered working fleet remaining in the United States. I now have a completely new understanding of the hard work the watermen encounter, day after day, and the value of preserving the beds.

We arrived back at our slip by late afternoon. As we helped make up the dock lines, a small fishing boat pulled up along side. The boat captain asked how our day went and if we had any oysters. Captain Mark replied in the affirmative. "Wanna sell a bushel?" he shouted. "Yes, sir." The fisherman handed up some crisp bills and we handed down the heaping bushel to our first customer and he motored off with big grin on his face. I looked over at Clive and he had the same smile.

"Arster Drudgin" is a local waterman term, according to James A. Michener, in his book "Chesapeake".

Dick Martin



ICW Wrap-up

{The following is pulled from emails sent by Henry and the crew of Determined after they reached Florida.}

Well, it's all down hill from here. Today we have been aboard Determined for one month. I'm not sure just where I left off on the last note but I'll start at the top of Florida. A couple of weeks ago we passed by the optional Okechobe waterway across Florida to Cape Coral and decided to head all the way south to Key West instead.

Came in off the Atlantic to spend a great anchorage opportunity at Palm Beach. Did some swimming in the clear light blue warm water in the afternoon and had a nice dinner aboard. Headed out into the Atlantic in early morning for the trip to Ft Lauderdale. Meet our pilot John Huntley just inside the entrance of Port Everglades. A huge boat show was taking place and it was a madhouse. John guided us up the very long river opening 6 bridges. Boat traffic like this was something I had never experienced before. At almost every hairpin turn there was a mega yacht coming in the other direction. This is not a very wide river and boats were tied up on both sides. Went by the very memorable River Walk restaurant area. We finally got to a marina and took a slip for 3 days. John and Pat Huntly took us to a great restaurant that night. My daughter Julie came for us the next day for a delightful stay in Miami at their condominium. Meals and a Miami South Beach tour were included along with laundry and Internet service. It all came to an end too quickly. Returning to the boat Monday morning John Huntly was our guide again down the river and into the main harbor. This had to be made at slack tide. From here we headed to Miami by boat through the Outer Cut and the Government cut into the port of Miami. Here we found an Anchorage right in the heart of Billionaire row. Dingy drill and a swim took place immediately after. Next day we left Miami past Julie and Thomas's building to head for Key Largo. Arriving late in the afternoon we radioed to the state Park for a slip and were warned about the low tide and marginal conditions but we decided that the worst that could happen was that we would get stuck for a few hours. Promise of a hot shower was a great incentive. We made it in with no problems. Tied up and walked to a great seafood restaurant for an excellent dinner.

Late this afternoon we tied up at a slip in the Key West Municipal marina. Hooked up the electric and took off for a tour of the town. It's really different from any other place of the earth says Dave. Watched lots of entertainment at Malory Square at sunset and went to the Hogs Breath Saloon for drinks and dinner. Look for us on their live web cam at Hogs Breath.com. Plan to lay over here another day tomorrow. This is really a cool place to be.

We left Key West after two days of exploration. We thought we could go around the back of the keys and come down the gulf to Marathon. However, were not able to uncover a very direct channel. So we went on Hawk Channel on the Atlantic side. Hit strong head winds and pounded the whole day till finally we arrived at an anchorage at Boot Key. Refueled, the next morning. Took off and made our way under the 65 ft bridge of Rt. 1. From here we headed across the Gulf of Mexico to the tip of Florida

and up the West side. Not in need of fuel we skipped Flamingo and headed directly to the Little Shark River. This is a beautiful place as it is surrounded by 60 mangrove trees. We traveled up the river for several miles discovering it was totally uninhabited. Huge fish jumped all over the place. We could have kept on going but they say you can get really lost in the everglades. We returned to the outer bay. We put up the bug screen for the night and thought it would be fine as there was a nice breeze. By dark the wind stopped and the bugs found all kinds of openings to get at us. None of us got much sleep that night, as it was one of the worst nights of the trip.

By 4 am we decided to pull out. It was a mass scramble to get up the anchor and start the engine in pitch dark. We found our way out and headed to Capre Pass about 60 miles north. By 3 PM, we arrived at Marco Island and put in to a beautiful anchorage behind Coconut Island. After a great swim and a walk on the beach we decided it was time to see if the dingy could hold the three of us. No problem. We motored several miles exploring the territory. With the sun going down so we headed back to the boat when suddenly the sheer pin on the small outboard broke. The tide was headed the other direction very fast. We had miles to go. The oars could barely get us ashore. But our luck held. Coming up right behind us was the towboat (Seatow) We flagged him down and he pulled us all the way back to the boat. We asked the charge and he said no Charge as he is a sail boater also. What a stroke of luck.

The next morning we pulled out and headed north past Naples, Fort Myers Beach to the Sanibel Island Bridge. At this point I called Marian and said we were a day early as we were making great time We hung at the bridge for a half hour till it opened for us then made our way up the very scenic Calosahatchee River. Hung a left at Bimini Canal and the rest is history. After 37 days and almost 2000 miles, we pulled into our dock here in Cape Coral. The sun was shining and it was about 83 degrees. What a great trip. Marian brought out the champagne and we had small celebration by the pool attended by our friends and neighbors. Armando's wife Christa flew down here the day before. Phyllis and John Didyoung also drove over. We started off loading the boat, which by the way fits great at the dock right behind our condo. This had concerned me all along as to whether it would be deep enough. It is nice having it so close. I can do all kinds of work on it as it now resides right at the back door.

And that's the rest of the story!!

*Henry Borneman
Armando Antonini
Dave Miller*

December 2002 Events & Birthday's

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Leonard Mayernik	3	4	5	6 Christmas Party	7 Baltimore Boat Parade
8	9 Board Meeting Eileen Tumminello	10 Rick Spleen	11	12	13	14 Annapolis Boat Parade
15	16 Bill Carroll Roger Clary	17 Tom McCaffrey	18	19	20 Bob Page	21
22 First Day of Winter	23	24 Joel Koch	25 Christmas Sissie Elder	26	27	28
29	30	31 New Years Eve				

Happy Birthday to all Members Celebrating December Birthdays

Have a Safe and Happy Holiday Season!!

Reflections after the ICW

After 2000 miles and 37 days we have seen some many that very few will ever see. We shared a rare experience with friends the days were some times long but looking back on the trip it was over to soon. We all remarked that it was as if we were only sailing for a few days. It was a long weekend that went by to fast. We all developed a deeper appreciation for the natural world and the beauty it has for us to discover. We saw birds and dolphins' sea turtles and fish wild life was all around us we got to observe the weather and the sky. Watching it change as fronts moved through sun sets and sun rise were always special events to watch and ports of call were the high light of the trip. We meet many wonderful people along the way that helped make our trip a success. I think that we all would encourage any one else who has the opportunity to do the ditch and make the trip south.

Dave Miller

Membership

The membership renewals for 2003 will be mailed in early December. Keep an eye on your mail for there arrival. If anyone has a friend interested in becoming a member please let me know and I will send them a newsletter and membership application. I am looking for advertisers for the 2003 Membership Logs. If anyone has a business or knows someone interested in advertising with us please put them in touch with me.

Jeff Weikel
Membership



2003

BLUE MARSH SAILING ASSOCIATION

OFFICERS

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REAR COMMODORE	Joan Whan	610-396-1416

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CBYCA DELEGATE	Russ Witzke	610-775-9704
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