



The Clew

BNAC Planning meeting

Monday, April 6 @ 6pm. BNAC2026@smsa.com

BOD & Committee Chairs

Tue. April 14 @ 7pm: Monthly Meeting. commodore@smsa.com.

Tue., April 28, 6:30pm—8:00pm, Chairs meeting.

High/Middle School Team practice, Tue., Thu., and Fri., through May, every day at 3:15pm– 6:30pm Contact hssailing@smsa.com

Cruise

Saturday & Sunday, April 25 & 26, Rollins Cove Cruise. Contact the leaders, Todd & Jen. portertodda@gmail.com; joconnordvm@hotmail.com.

Patuxent Pursuit Meeting

Monday, April 20, 6:00-7:30pm

RC Training, ALTS & Tablet Training

Thursday, April 9, 6:30pm, Learn to operate the tablet for bar, merch, ticket and food sales. Contact treasurer@smsa.com

Mon., April 13 & Tue., April 21, Adult Learn to Sail shore sessions 1 and 2. 6pm –8pm. learntosail@smsa.com .

Saturday, April 18, 3pm RC Training on RC boat. Location TBD vicecommodore@smsa.com.

Keelboat Racing

Wednesday, April 8, 15, 22, 29— Wed Keelboat Series A.

Saturday, April 11 & Sunday, April 12. Little Choptank on Saturday, Spring Invitational on Sunday. Rendezvous Sunday afternoon

Saturday, April 25, Double-Handed Race.

Contact the Chairs at keelboatrace@smsa.com

Small Boat Racing

Saturday, April 18, Boat rig and sail practice day, noon –3pm

Thursday, April 23, Thu., small boat races though Sept. 10.

smallboatrace@smsa.com

Members' Corner!



Our Adult Learn to Sail program is a volunteer driven learning program with small group sessions tailored to meet your needs. Designed for beginner sailors with classroom instruction, plus on the water training. Learn and gain confidence. No previous sailing experience is required. Taught on Holder 20s, Sunfish, 420s.

The Adult Learn to Sail program is open to any SMSA member age 16 and up interested in learning or improving skills. Classes start April 13th.

Email learntosail@smsa.com to get more information about upcoming opportunities.

Radio Controlled Racing is on the schedule for Sunday, April 19th & 26th from noon—4pm. Dragon Force 65's and Victorias make up the fleets. Contact Vladimir.eremeev@gmail.com or vicecommodore@smsa.com.



Free CPR and AED training

The Solomons VRS&FD provides FREE CPR/AED training to everyone. Sign up for a class on their website: www.svrsfd.org. Classes are typically held twice per-month. Upcoming classes are April 6th and 18th, and May 4th and 16th. Registration is required.

Learn more about the AED at SMSA and about CPR. Questions?? Write Rebecca Murphy at rebec-casruth@gmail.com or call (412) 401-5083.





Commodore's Corner

By Russell Miller
commodore@smsa.com



Every year we follow time honored traditions in our ancient sport of sailing. We raise the flags of our nations, the burgees of our clubs, the pennants of our officers; fire the cannon and say those immortal words “**Let the season begin.**” That is not simply an SMSA tradition, rather it is a centuries-old tradition held at sailing organizations that are small and large worldwide. We honor that tradition with our Opening Day Ceremony doing our part of keeping those traditions alive and well. Now that the season has begun, we will carry out the plans we have made. The Officers and Directors have met with membership through cruise and race and social Chairs to plan our 2026 season. We built our budget and adopted a schedule designed for us to enjoy a robust season as a community of sailors.

The good news is that my work is mostly done. I now watch as Randy and Shane help the Chairs execute the plans. I still have some Commodore duties as issues come up from time to time throughout the year. Like during the Spring Frostbite Races where we had our second annual Cookie Cookoff. After race one, near the announcement of race results, Diablo (Russell Miller) was awarded “Champion” of the cookie cookoff competition for a second year in a row. However, there was some controversy when Pursuit (Norm Dawley) did not enter his cookies on time for judging. Pursuit protested, requesting redress for a second competition. It was decided by the organizing authority (Commodore Miller) that Pursuit was to be awarded redress, and a second Spring Frostbite Cookie Cookoff competition was to be held at the conclusion of the last frostbite race. The organizing authority noted that all competitors are eligible to compete and that cookie entries should be submitted for judging before the announcement of race results.

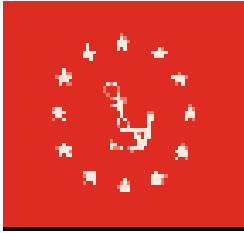
With my first important Commodore decision for the new sailing season having been made, Pursuit took full advantage of their third attempt to dethrone Diablo from this prestigious award. As required, before race result announcements were made, both yachts submitted their best cookies. Judging was conducted by applause with both yachts receiving energetic support. As an audible tie was reached, the Organizing Authority deferred to an independent third-party tie breaking committee (Rosemary Dawley) for a decision. It should be noted that the committee did say that they liked Diablo's cookies better but ultimately Pursuit was awarded the 2026 Cookie Cookoff Championship.

Now that I have made my first major decision as commodore and our 2026 season is underway, I am confident that the racing will be intense, the cruising will be relaxing, and the social gatherings vibrant. Let's fill this season with fun adventures that become tall tales.

Sincerely,

Russell





Vice Commodore

Randy Gross
vicecommodore@smsa.com



SMSA “Boat Bosuns” idea to Help take care of our fleet.

Yes, we own or lease nearly 40 boats!

As most of you hopefully know, SMSA owns or leases a wide and varied Fleet of boats. From our 36' Diesel powered Race Committee (RC) boat, through outboard powered skiffs and RHIBs, and down to kayaks and paddleboards. What you may not realize is that the Fleet consists of just under 40 boats. That is a lot of “holes into which we need to pour time”.

As a club we have done a good job at keeping these boats “functional”, but rarely are they kept in optimal condition. We fix them when they break but often don't get around to doing enough preventative maintenance and cleaning to keep them at an optimal condition. Mostly this is because it takes a lot of time if just a single captain is doing or scheduling the work.

I believe as a club we have members with considerable talent and sufficient time to help resolve this; we just haven't found a way to tap into that resource easily when we need it.

As the current Vice Commodore, I would like to try something different to see if we can make a difference. I am starting a voluntary “Boat Bosun” team, seeking members who are willing to help periodically in boat upkeep and maintenance.

In maritime circles, a Bosun (shortened pronunciation for boatswain) is a prestigious position responsible for a ships hull, deck maintenance, rigging, and supervision. While often associated with the most drudgery of work, the bosun is also often revered for their skill in all areas of seamanship and maintenance. A bosun defines what it means to be “ship-shape”.

The concept is to establish a list of members who we can reach out to with periodic (or regular) boat maintenance and upkeep related tasks. Using primarily email, we will reach out to the whole bosun team with tasks and or boat maintenance events, asking who can help out with that task. I am hoping many will be able to build some new camaraderie at the club while “messaging about in boats”. This team is intended to provide our various Boat Captains with the manpower to get their issues and goals resolved.

There are no minimum requirements for a boat bosun, some of the most important work will be just periodic inspections and cleaning, though obviously some tasks will require specific boat maintenance skills and experience so you experts out there, we need you too!

"Boat Bosuns" proposal, continued...

If you are willing to help out, in whatever capacity you can, please email vicecommo-dore@smsa.com to get added to the email list. Please provide your interests and skill sets if possible.

Some known upcoming tasks:

*420 and Optimist Fleet: Inspect, clean, and repair all boats prior to the Summer Camp kick-off. Buff out and wax the 420s.

*Holders: Annual cleanout and power wash to get ready for ALTS season. Inspect and correct any issues.

*RC Boat: Clean and Paint interior deck, cabin scrape and paint. Weekly post-race check for issues and clean-up.

*Install prop guards on RHIBs.

Contact me at vicecommo-dore@smsa.com to comment or to volunteer.

Regards,

Randy.



**Wednesday Night Keelboat racing begins on April 8th!
The bar is open 7:30ish for all, and food for competitors
and guests is available!**

Camp

Kati Keith

Summer Camp Chair

summercamp@smsa.com



In Summer 2026, we are offering 7 weekly sessions from June 22nd through August 7th. Sailing camp is here at our wonderful SMSA facility from 9 AM to 4 PM. We welcome beginning and experienced sailors ages 8 to 16. We will again offer a discount for campers attending multiple weeks of camp.

Registration is open for everyone, and some of the weeks are filling up. For more information visit our website, www.smsa.com, and look for the Junior Camps tab.

Any other questions? Please contact the Summer Camp Chair, Kati Keith, at summercamp@smsa.com. *Please note the new email address!!*



**HAPPY HOUR IS
EVERY FRIDAY AT
5:30**

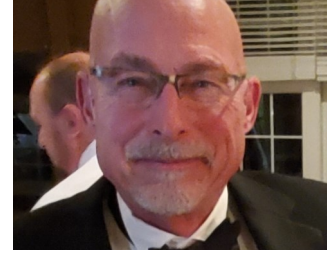
Come in for fun and terrific sunsets on the front patio. We go until about 9pm or whenever Ana kicks us out!

Facility

Harry Keith

Outgoing Facility Chair

Facility@smsa.com



Club Cleanup Day -- Sunday 3/21 was a glorious day for Club Cleanup. Nineteen members turned out to dust off the cobwebs and make the place shine for the season. We started off pretty slow but once the sugar from the donuts kicked in we finally got the most important things crossed off the list! Projects included:

- * Inspect and repair all front room chairs and bar stools
- * Clean/wipe tables, bar, and many other surfaces
- * Clean/organize the middle room and hall
- * Move things to the attic
- * Extensive pressure washing (by one armed Randy)
- * Cleaning/organizing the side yard
- * Moving gravel from sidewalk to driveway
- * Replacing front door closer, fix front door lock
- * Replacing heater air filter

Special call out to those that volunteered for this critical annual event, including Harry and Kati Keith, Jimmy and Kristi Yurko (and Cora!), Jolie Homsher, Vatanna and Katharine Gaines, Mark and Robin Witte, Randy Gross, Dewey Melton, Tom Moulds, Pete LaRoche, John Herbig, Dave Pedersen, Catherine Davis, and Shane and Jackson Myers. This marks the end of my tenure as your Facilities Chair; as Jolie Homsher has taken over the role. If you would like to help with future projects please email facility@smsa.com.

New and returning members at SMSA

We'd like to take a moment to welcome the new and returning members that have joined our SMSA family over the past few months!

Steve & Sheryl Orwig sponsored by Russell Miller,

Dan Sadosky sponsored by Rhonda LaFleur.

And returning members:

Laura Laptham, Cedric Magen, Théo and Chloé.

Michael Hulme



New member profiles!

Provided to us by the new members themselves!

From Steve and Sheryl Orwig:

Sheryl and I are very excited and grateful to become members of the association. We really appreciate the warm reception and the spirit of the members we have met so far.

A little about ourselves: We are learning about what it is like to be retired from working in healthcare and medical devices, to be back in St Marys County after 35 years and connecting with fellow sailors and friends. Our three boys are now grown professionals and we are enjoying watching them navigate new waters. We are in a continuous pursuit of the perfect sunset.

I grew up near the water and sailed as a kid. For 20 years, Sheryl and I enjoyed participating in a fractional lease of a Jeanneau Odyssey 39 out of Back Creek in Annapolis. We're primarily cruisers (campers) and look forward to learning more about racing to improve our skills. More importantly, we are looking forward to making and building new friendships. We look forward to meeting all of you.



From Dan Sadosky:



I decided to join the club because I figured it was time for me to help support the club that has so graciously been allowing me to participate for many years.

My wife Veronica and I have four children, nine grandchildren and one great grandchild. We moved from Odenton Md to Lusby in 1998. I began sailing in 2010 with friends. Just day sailing, not racing. In 2016, in an effort to get extra time on the water, I added racing with SMSA. Since then I've helped my live-aboard friend deliver his boat to Hampton Va and back several times, and helped another friend attempt to deliver his boat from Florida to West Basin. Unfortunately, due to engine failure, that trip was cut very short.

Outside of sailing I enjoy working on and cruising in my classic Pontiac Firebird, going to the beach and playing competitive cornhole. For work I have done many things. I Have worked as a painter's helper at a custom corvette shop, then I was a senior technician at Safelite Autoglass, then I joined the Teamsters union and worked at a printing company mostly doing shipping/receiving. Then I started college and got an IT job with Community Bank, and while there I graduated from college, I now work as a PA on base.



Membership and Registration Updates!

**2026 Membership Invoices were emailed
March 15th**

**Yearbooks, Door Codes and Coupons are avail-
able for pickup at the Clubhouse!**

I Hope everyone is ready for a great '26 season! Planning and prep are well underway and it's going to be a GREAT year.

Race Registration: Remember to head to the Keelboat and Smallboat Racing pages on

Note: If you switch between 2 boats for racing, please register the 2nd boat using the discount code available from the Member's Area of SWSA.com so you don't pay twice (only 1 boat may race at a time).

Contact webmaster@smsa.com with questions or for assistance with this unique scenario or with questions about registration.

Learn our tablet system and help with bartending, merch and ticket sales at our class on Thursday, April 9th at 6:30pm

Want to bartend or help with food or merchandise sales? Just need a refresher? Looking to be able to volunteer in another area? Join us Thursday evening, April 9th at 6:30pm to learn how to use the Point of Sale tablet system. SWSA uses the Square Point of Sale system which is an easy to use tablet app for selecting the products and completing sales.

We hope to see you there!

Please contact Treasurer@smsa.com with questions.



The Patuxent Pursuit

July 17 - 19, 2026

Where the River Meets the Race



Presented by:
SMSA



Shore events/Boat Check-in at:

Southern Maryland Sailing Association
14490 Solomons Island Road
Solomons, MD



Friday - Distance Pursuit Race for all boats

Saturday/Sunday Racing Options:
Windward/Leward Bay Bouy Racing
OR
Pursuit Racing on the Patuxent River
Navigator/Crusier Course



Register here:

www.smsa.com



Food/Drinks/Parties



Daily/Overall Awards



Swag for Purchase

For questions contact: PRO - John Herbig - paxpursuitpro@smsa.com
Chair - Steve Birchfield - PaxPursuitChairman@smsa.com

HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM



Rebecca Wingate
High School Program Chair
hssailing@smsa.com

Our spring high school and middle school sailing season is off to a great start! We had our season kickoff on Thursday, March 26th, and filled the clubhouse with new and returning families. We have 12 returning sailors and 4 new sailors this season! Welcome to Nelleke, Riley, Reese, and Brayden to our new-development team! We are offering a development team for new sailors, 6th grade and up, to come and try us out. Practice begins for the development team Tuesday, April 7th, when they will join the JV/Varsity sailors on the water.



The JV/Varsity team had a soft start in early March to prepare for some early Tier 1 regattas. We've had a good turnout despite the cold practices, and special thanks to Jimmy, Randy, and Vlad for getting them out there! Practices will continue Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 3:15-6:30pm through May. Come and see what the sailing team is all about, if you find yourself around the club when we are practicing.

We attended two Tier 1 regattas in March. Nolan, Tommy, Annabelle, and Asher sailed at Tred Avon Yacht Club in Oxford on Sunday, March 22nd. The sun was shining and the team sailed 10 races in two divisions, placing 15th out of 17 schools. Nolan, Tommy, Owen, and Colt sailed at Annapolis Yacht Club in the "Polar Bear Plunge" on Saturday, March 28th. The regatta lived up to its name, and the team came with drysuits and smiles on their faces! They sailed 12 races in two divisions, placing 11th out of 16 schools. Next up will be a Tier 2 regatta in Kent Island on April 12th.



Our High School Sailors at the Tier 1 regatta at AYC on March 28th.



Patuxent (SMSA) sailors in the middle boat during the Tier 1 Oxford regatta, March 22nd.

Crusty Crab Dive Services, LLC, maintaining vessels in the SOMD area.

Crusty Crab Dive Services started as a passion and hobby for Phil Sibley Jr. Phil began boating at an early age and has been sailing for 10 years, once he completed his dive certifications, he started maintaining his own boats hulls throughout the year.



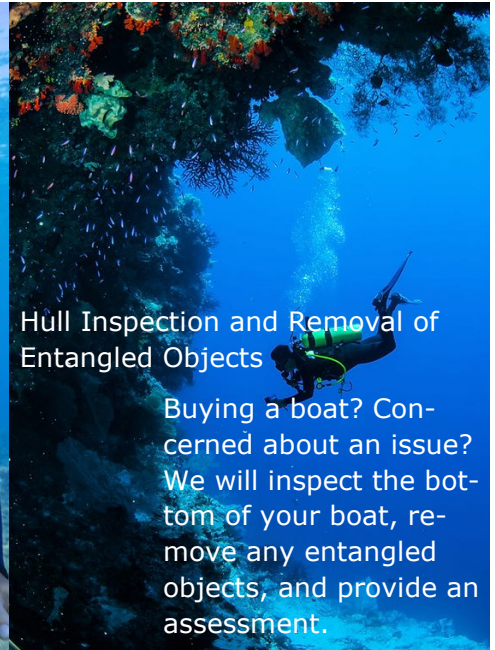
We offer the following services:



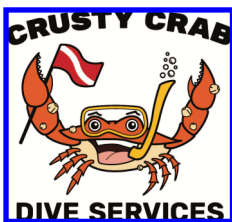
Hull & Bottom Cleaning Plans
Buying a boat? Concerned about an issue? We will inspect the bottom of your boat and provide an assessment.



Hull & Bottom Single Cleanings
Maintain your hull and lengthen your bottom paint by keeping your hull cleaned throughout the year.



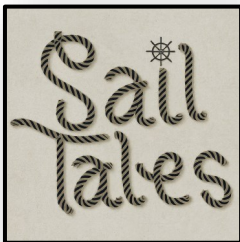
Hull Inspection and Removal of Entangled Objects
Buying a boat? Concerned about an issue? We will inspect the bottom of your boat, remove any entangled objects, and provide an assessment.



For more information contact:
Philip Sibley Jr.
Lexington Park, MD 20653
(c) 484-.390-.4044
CrustyCrabDiveServicesSOMD@gmail.com
Or check out their website:



<https://www.crustycrabdiveservicesomd.com/>



We invite all members to submit an article, story, photos, or anything they want to share with their fellow sailors!
Please send all submissions to clew@smsa.com by the 20th of each month or contact us if you have any questions.

SMALLBOAT RACING



Bill Shoemaker

Smallboat Race Chair

smallboatrace@smsa.com

Important small boat racing dates!

Saturday, April 18th, 12:00 – 3:00pm, Smallboat Rig and Sail Tune-up day

Thursday, April 23rd, 6:30pm—9:00pm. Thursday racing begins.





THE SOCIAL SCENE

Paige Smith, Chair
social@smsa.com



Spring is here! Which means some of us have braved the chilly weather and “fouled up” to harness the spring breeze on the water. March was certainly a busy time for the club. It included some great events: the Frostbite races, Racing Rules of Sailing Seminar, RC sailboat races on Sundays, Spinsheet Crew Party, Trivia Night #3 and the Annual Sock Burning.

It has been fun dusting off the sailing gear and getting back into the racing spirit. Around the clubhouse, the Commodore's Dinner (Passage Meal Themed) and our weekly happy hours kept us warm, fed, and vaguely hydrated. Club Cleanup Day was a tremendous success, and we appreciate all of the volunteers who showed up to lend a helping hand.

Opening Day came early and was a wonderful success. Thanks to all that prepped for the Mimosas and Bloody Marys as we raised the flags for the start of SMSA's sailing season.



SMSA Open House, April 26, 10am-4pm & Solomons Co-op Spring Fling!

SMSA is now a member of the Solomons Co-op, a collective of local businesses and organizations working to promote Solomons. On April 26th, the Co-op will be hosting its first annual **Spring Fling**, coinciding with the Southern Maryland Volunteer Fireman's Association Parade. The parade is slated for noon on Sunday, April 26th, and will include many fire trucks and other apparatus as well as marching bands from Calvert, St. Mary's, and Charles counties. A Farmer's & Flower Market with local vendors will start in the Patuxent Plaza parking lot at 10am. Other events include an Artisan Sip & Shop at No Thyme to Cook, and various restaurant and retail shop specials

The parade is expected to close all vehicle traffic access to the island from 11 am – 2pm on April 26 . With all the foot traffic expected on Solomons, **SMSA will be hosting an Open House from 10am-4pm** to showcase the club to potential new members! We are hoping to have the bar open that day, and at least have some refreshments. COME BE AN SMSA SAILING AMBASSADOR, talking up our wonderful club to new faces. Contact Rebecca Murphy at rebeccasruth@gmail.com or call (412) 401-5083.



Solomons
SPRING FLING
SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 9-3

Farmers & Flower Market
Artisan Sip and Shop
Firemen's Parade & Games
Gardening Demonstrations
Retail Spring Specials & More

Presented by the Solomons Co-op

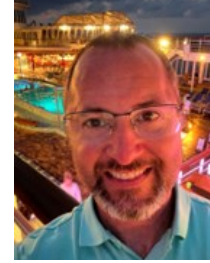
www.VisitSolomonsMD.com

CRUISERS CORNER

Phil Sibley

Cruising Chair

cruise@smsa.com



Spring is upon us. Water is beginning to warm up. More and more sailors are beginning to splash their boats. April is the start of the cruising season!

Although the number of events in April are low, the Rollins Cove cruise to St. Leonard's creak is a great shakedown sail and always a fun reunion for the cruisers to start off the season. Led this year by Tod and Jennifer Porter, this event is guaranteed to be one for the books. Their themed events are typically to die for and always a hit between participants of all ages! Hopefully the warm weather will stay in place and allow for a comfortable night under the stars. New to cruising? This is a great chance to meet the fellow cruisers and engage in some great hors d'oeuvres and spiced drinks! Be sure not to miss this year's sailing opening event!

Go Cruising!

Attention Cruisers!!! Some dates have changed for the Cape Charles Cruise in August!

According to the Cruising Chair, due to the difficulty in getting slip reservations in Cape Charles, there are some new dates posted on the SMSA Calendar. If you have already made reservations in Cape Charles, check the calendar at www.smsa.com against what you have made in Cape Charles and adjust accordingly! Questions? Contact Martha and Carl at marthackemp@gmail.com





GROWING STEMS VEX IQ

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Giving students real skills, real confidence, and a hands-on experience that makes them excited about engineering and technology.

DONATE NOW TO SUPPORT THE TEAM



Donation Amount and What it Covers:

- \$20 A meal for a student on the road
- \$30 One competition jersey (each student needs 3)
- \$209 One night of lodging for a family
- \$350 An airline ticket for a student
- \$500 Gas/lodging for the equipment transport (a 14-hour drive)
- \$2,000 Full Sponsorship for one student's entire trip

Johna sets new Everglades record as she and Vlad compete in the Everglades Challenge

Editor's note: The following article and pictures are excerpted from Vlad Eremeev's post on the SMSA Facebook group page about his and Johna's trip to the Everglades last month.

I, known on Watertribe as CrazyRussian, and Johna Till Johnson, aka ZippyChick, once again had a perfect spring vacation doing that insane thing along west coast of Everglades.

The thing is called Everglades Challenge, 300 unsupported miles from Fort Desoto in Tampa Bay to Key Largo in small boats using wind and human power. Boats used for the challenge are small so the crew could launch it from a high water mark. They also need to be nimble, to access three checkpoints located deep inside of maze of mangroves and coastal channels and shallow flats.

This year I took a high-performance racing beach catamaran Nacra inter F17, slightly modified with hiking benches, reefs, and oars.

Conditions were challenging. We had calms, light headwinds, not so light headwinds, sun and rain. I have tried 15 challenges in last 26 years, I don't recall one with such diverse range of adverse conditions. They weren't particularly difficult, but going from drifting into breaking seas in headwinds over 20 knots around Cape Sable in a matter of minutes was, hm, challenging.

To make a long story short, I finished 5th overall, first solo sailboat and second solo boat. My challenge was over in 3 days and 10 hours, and then started another challenge, watching Johna progress and trying to guess her decisions making. And truth to be told, sailing to the finish was easier.

Johna eventually made to the finish on a crippled boat, in physical pain, but smiling brighter than ever, settling a record of first ever solo female finishing in Hobie trimarans class.

We did it!!!





Southern Maryland Sailing Association
P.O. Box 262, Solomons, MD 20688

Place
Stamp



March, 2026

The Clew

Volume 56 Number 3



Discounts at West Marine—Solomons

SMSA Members can receive a discount at our local West Marine during checkout. Just tell them you are an SMSA Member to receive the discount. West Marine may ask for your name which will be checked against our membership roster and a photo ID may be requested.

Please note: the West Marine Pro discount is only available at the Solomons West Marine.

Don't miss out on this great SMSA benefit!

