



The Clew

Scoring Team Meeting,

Tuesday, May 5 @ 6:00pm–7:30pm vicecommodore@smsa.com

BOD & Committee Chairs

Tue. May 12 @ 7pm: Monthly Meeting. commodore@smsa.com.

Tue., May 26, 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

Friday-Monday, May 15-18, St. Michaels/Oxford. Contact Russ at russeigle@gmail.com or Phil at cruise@smsa.com.

Friday - the next Sunday, May 22-30. Baltimore Cruise, contact Todd at portertodda@gmail.com or Jenn at joconnordvm@hotmail.com

Patuxent Pursuit Meeting

Monday, May 18 6:00-7:30pm

ALTS & Training

Mon., May 11 & Tue., May 19, Adult Learn to Sail shore sessions 1 and 2. 6pm –8pm. learntosail@smsa.com .

Thursday, May 14, ALTS Social Sail, 5:30pm–8:30pm. learntosail@smsa.com

Sunday, May 24 & May 31, ALTS Holder 20 sessions. learntosail@smsa.com

Keelboat Racing

Wednesday, May 6, 13, 20, Wed Keelboat Series A.

Wednesday, May 27, Fleet Building Race. See Circular.

Saturday, May 9, Vice Commodore’s Cup. See Circular

Saturday, May 16, Frost-Goode open to keelboats/cruisers, dinghies. See the Sailing Instructions under Keelboat at the top of the website.

Contact the Chairs at keelboatrace@smsa.com

Small Boat Racing

Thursdays, small boat races though Sept. 10.

Sunday, May 17, Beer ‘n Soda Run. smallboatrace@smsa.com

Former Commodore L.G. Raley has passed away

It is with great sadness that we inform you of the passing of Lewis Gray (LG) Raley on 30 April 2026.

LG was a longtime and beloved member of SMSA and was the longtime Chairman of the premiere yacht racing event in Solomon's, the Screwpile Lighthouse Challenge Regatta (SPLC). He loved boating and sharing boating tales at the club. He will be sorely missed.

Please join us in extending our heartfelt sympathy and prayers to Merrie Ruth, Karen and David during this sad time.

A Celebration of Life will be held, more information as we know more.

On behalf of the Raley's - Don Behrens



"Mr. Screwpile," LG Raley (2nd from right), with wife Merrie Ruth, son David, daughter Karen, and Karen's son Aubrey after a ceremony honoring LG for his long service as the Screwpile Lighthouse Challenge Chairman in July of 2019.

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.

Darkness Falls on the Smallboat Fleet

*Tiny nightlights hang from our rigging after the race
The sun is down and we drift toward home on molten glass
Later, the moon will brush our sails with strengthening silver
Now, in full darkness, we look like a fleet of Galilean fisherman
Waiting for the schools to lift to our lamps*

I wave the towboat away

by Doug Hays

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 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



The Spring Fling Open House and fire truck parade was AMAZING! Thank you to Rebecca Murphy for organizing this fun day. SMSA was open to the public, offering a warm refuge and cookies for visitors. Five remote-controlled boats raced in the creek, and Barba Roja gave visitors sailboat rides to highlight club activities. As a result, I would like to say welcome to our three new member applicants. The six boats that cruised to Rollins Cove joined us while some of the crew from the nine boats that competed in the Double Handed Race shared their stories. It is safe to say that Spring has arrived!

Over the winter we had so much fun with the Commodore's Dinners that several members have asked to keep this going. Now that it is Spring and we are a sailing club that loves to be out on the water, I went a step further and am inviting everyone to join me for the 1st Annual Commodore's Full Moon Raft Up on Friday, May 1st. For the seasoned cruisers with precise autohelm instrumentation, we will rendezvous at N38°18.573' W76°28.030'. For the racing community, we will be near SMSA River Mark L. For new members, we will be across the river from the gazebo near the entrance to Lewis Creek. Everyone is welcome in anything that floats. I plan to have Diablo over there by 6:30 and stay until 9:00-ish. If you need more information, contact me at 301-904-9468 or commodore@smsa.com. The anchor boat will monitor VHF channel 72 and we will make any announcements there.

Later this month is the one-week cruise to Baltimore. I have done this cruise in years past with Mom and Dad on Serenity, and I have raced the Hospice Cup out of Baltimore's Inner Harbor several times. Sailing into the harbor with all the tall buildings and sounds of the city is somehow comforting. Walking the streets or riding on the water taxi to visit the many attractions is exhilarating. The kids loved the Discovery Zone, Mom loved the National Aquarium, I enjoyed the U.S.S. Constellation and Dad liked the lighthouse. I cannot join them this year, but I'm eager to hear the stories. Because I love parties and hanging out with fellow SMSA members, I am planning a Commodore's dinner steak night at the clubhouse on Saturday, May 30th from 5:00 – 8:30. We can welcome our cruisers home and hear all about their adventures in the big city.

You heard that correctly, **STEAK NIGHT!**

Well, sort of steak night. Steve Birchfield will have the grills fired up and happily help you cook your favorite piece of meat that you brought along with a dish to share. This will be just like we did in the old SMSA Rendezvous years before we had a clubhouse. Also, while we are together on Saturday, the Board would like to hear your opinions on a few questions we have about our newly acquired clubhouse. This is your opportunity to help shape the future of our club.

Russell



Spring Fling Shoutout! Open House *VERY* well attended and staffed by our members!

By Rebecca Murphy, event chair

On April 26th, SMSA participated in the first Annual Solomons Spring Fling by hosting an Open House.

Huge shout out to The Birchfields and Blaneys for docking their boats at the T-head and getting people on the water! While the weather wasn't as warm as we all had hoped, the rain held off and the event was a success! We had several new faces stop by - one sailor signed up on the spot - and we expect more new memberships to follow.

Special shoutouts to Kristi Yurko, Tim Flaherty, and John Blaney for getting the new feather flags designed and ordered, and to Randy Gross for setting up display boats. Thank you to the SMSA Board Members, the Kemps, Robin Witte and all the other members who turned up with smiling faces! Here's to bringing in sunny days and new friendships as we sail into spring.



An Email-based Communications Solution for SMSA

By Harry Keith,
Member, SMSA Board of Directors



Problem statement: We have multiple "groups" at SMSA that attempt to communicate in a bidirectional manner using email. It's pretty clumsy. Names are left off, emails can be wrong, old emails aren't removed, and the "to" line gets out of control. Chairs do one-way blasts using BCC, that doesn't allow group responses. For those members who cruise, you feel the pain the most.

Solution: Groups.io runs an exceptional platform for this. I am on numerous groups, and run the Saga owners group. I presented this plan to the BOD at the April meeting, and they gave the green light to implement an SMSA group.

I have, as a starting point, made five subgroups. They are Cruising, DIY, Keelboats, Smallboats, and Lasers.

To participate, you need to do two things.

First, you need to send an email to main+subscribe@SMSA.groups.io and wait for me to approve your request (typically under a day). Note that the "main" subgroup cannot be used to send messages and is reserved for administrative purposes.

Second, once you get notified that you have been approved, you can join any of the subgroups. You do this by sending an email to groupname+subscribe@SMSA.groups.io where groupname is the group you want to join (listed above). You must join at least one subgroup in order to participate.

Once signed up, you can email all members with similar interests (Lasers, or DIY, etc) by sending an email to groupname@smsa.groups.io and it will go to all group members. If you reply to a received email, it will again go to all group members (and the "to" line will be mercifully simple!). A side benefit is that groups.io automatically strips all of the email history out of replies, making them short and easy to read.

Signing up will automatically create an account with your email on groups.io, but unless you go to groups.io and sign in, that's all that happens. I strongly encourage you to go to groups.io and look around at settings – you can change how your name is displayed, you can change settings to get a single daily email (if that's what you want), you can search old email history.

Take the first step right now. Send an email to main+subscribe@SMSA.groups.io.



Norma Floyd unexpectedly passed away on April 20th. A visitation will be held at Demaine Funeral Home, 520 S. Washington St. in Alexandria on May 9 from 11am to 1pm, followed by a Celebration of Life Funeral Service from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm.

Photo from Norma's family via Demaine Funeral Homes.

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!

YOU'RE INVITED: 2026 SMSA KENTUCKY DERBY PARTY



SATURDAY, MAY 2nd
5:00PM - 10:00PM
AT THE SMSA CLUBHOUSE,
SOLOMONS, MD
BRING A DISH TO SHARE
AND WEAR YOUR BEST
KENTUCKY DERBY PARTY ATTIRE!

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

We are midway through our sailing season! We have had a record number of boats out practicing during the week this season, and it's been fantastic to see all of the kids and energy out there. We are using most of our fleet of 420s this season with 16 kids on the team.

We have finished up our regular season Tier 1 (Varsity) regattas and look forward to the Varsity Championships at the end of May. We've had three Tier 2 (JV) regattas in April and more coming in May! Our more experienced skippers are taking a turn as crew to help newer skippers around the course in these JV regattas. Tommy, Jackson, Max, and Beau sailed at Kent Island Yacht Club on Sunday, April 12th and placed 2nd out of 10 teams, sailing 7 races in each division. The regatta was a bit cold and windy, with the wind increasing as the day went on. Joseph, Max, Nolan, and Asher sailed at Baltimore County Sailing Center on Saturday, April 25th and placed 4th out of 11 teams, sailing 5 races in each division. It was another cold and windy day, with winds reaching 15-20 knots and significant waves out there. Racing was abandoned early afternoon because of the number of capsizes. Annabelle, Colt, Jackson, and Hadley were ready to sail at Sailing Center Chesapeake on Sunday, April 26th, but that regatta was cancelled because of forecasted wind and wind direction.



We have several regattas lined up for May, with the season ending at the JV and Varsity Champs at Tred Avon Yacht Club on Memorial Day weekend. Many of these middle school and high school kids are sailing in Wednesday night keel boat races, Thursday night small boat races, and RC sailing on Sunday afternoons- please welcome them if you see them!



Our High School Sailors at the Kent Island Yacht Club regatta.



Most of our Patuxent team assembled in the Yard behind SMSA

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.



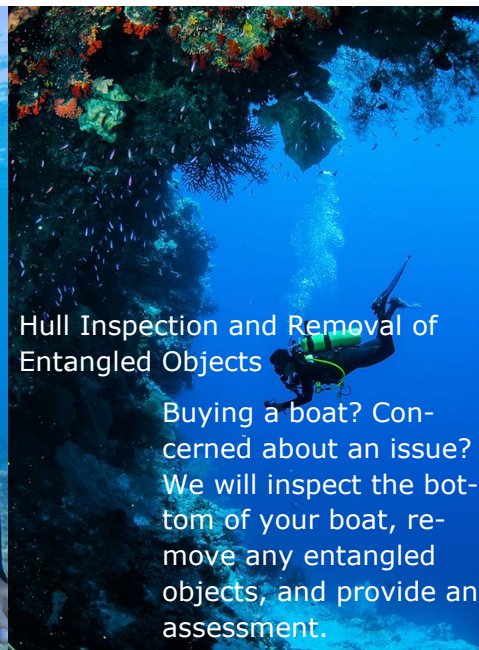
We offer the following services:



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.



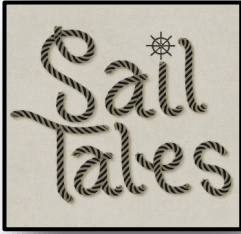
Hull Inspection and Removal of Entangled Objects
Buying a boat? Concerned about an issue? We will inspect the bottom of your boat, remove any entangled objects, and provide an assessment.



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!

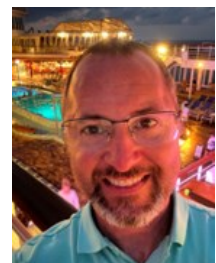
Sunday, May 17th, Beer and Soda Run For more information see the SI's under Smallboat at the top of the website (<https://www.smsa.com>) or contact the Chair at smallboatrace@smsa.com

Saturday, June 6th, 10am—3pm. Smallboat Spring Invitational. See the SI's under Smallboat at the top of the website (<https://www.smsa.com>) or contact the Chair at smallboatrace@smsa.com



CRUISERS CORNER

Phil Sibley
Cruise Chair
cruise@smsa.com



The cruise season is now underway. All cruises for the year can be found on the SMSA website. Please reach out to each individual cruise leader for details on their plans destinations. In addition, continue to make your reservations. As the season begins, some of the clubs favorite destinations will begin to fill up.

The month of May will include distinctions such as St. Michael's/Oxford and a trip to Baltimore. I look forward to hearing from each of you in upcoming cruise events. Until then,

GO CRUISING!



THE SOCIAL SCENE

Paige Smith, Chair

social@smsa.com



March came in like a lion...but April was not so much the lamb! There was some crazy hot weather, followed by cool to almost winter weather. Regardless of the ups and downs of Mother Nature, there were no real social events. There were, however, many club members that gathered and socialized at the club during Friday Happy Hours and after the racing events

It has been great to see everyone back on the water now that the season has officially started. I know that we are all looking forward to a great season of racing, cruising and just being outside.

Please mark your calendars for the following events:

Saturday, May 2nd; 5:00pm: Kentucky Derby Watch Party. Bring a southern dish to share and enjoy Mint Juleps with derby fans! Don't forget to wear your finest derby attire! Race starts at approximately 6:57pm!

Looking ahead to June, the SMSA Luau will be held at Safe Harbor Zahnisers on June 6th starting at 5:00 PM. There will be live music, food and drink, and fun. Volunteers will be needed for set up, working the grill, break down and clean up! More to follow in the weekly reminders.

SMSA
Annual
LUAU

SATURDAY,
June 6TH

5PM - 8PM

SAFE HARBOR
Zahniser's Marina

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
THE SOCIAL CHAIR AT
social@smsa.com**

Creators and collaborators wanted to promote SMSA!!!

Think you're good with a camera? How about that video feature on your phone? Well, then! SMSA Communications has a proposal for you; become a collaborator and/or contributor to the SMSA Facebook page and the SMSA Instagram! We are seeking people with that eye for good shots and for interesting and exciting video to feed us material or become a collaborator from your Instagram account!

What's in it for you? The chance to show your chops and to help SMSA grow by attracting new members!

We actually have a budget this year to run targeted ads through Facebook and Instagram, but we need kick-butt content and more followers to make the algorithms work for us. Email the Communications Chair, Tim Flaherty, at communications@smsa.com to get started!

Oh, yeah, that reminds us; Please join the SMSA Facebook group, AND follow the SMSA Facebook page. The group is where you can post stuff and comment, the page is more of a promotional vehicle and allows us to do some different things the group can't or won't do, but we need to add more followers to maximize its impact. Both the SMSA group and SMSA page are easy to find in searches.



JOIN US FOR THE

1ST ANNUAL COMMODORE'S FULL MOON RAFT UP



For details, contact the Commodore at: commodore@smsa.com



Todd Porter
Guest Columnist
& co-cruise leader



Rollins Cove - A Rock'n Patriotic Cruise

I haven't read Charles Dickens classic [A Tale of Two Cities](#). But Google AI tells me it's a story about resurrection, which seems fitting for SMSA's cruisers reviving their boats for the first outing of the season. Rather than living in 18th century chaotic Paris or rainy London, a Patriotic theme celebrating our country's 250th birthday seemed fitting. Break out the red, white and blue! After checking the weather for the weekend of 25 and 26 April, I wasn't sure what turn-out we'd get. But SMSA is a hecka of patriotic club and despite the London weather, six boats including two without masts, joined the celebration!

Practicing some precision anchoring, after several tries Todd and Jennifer Porter found the center of the small cove and prepared Constellation as the center boat for the raft-up. One at a time, John & Joan Blaney's on 'Thisilldous', Martha & Carl Kemp on 'Serenity', Les Griffith on 'Cloud 9', Laura & Sean Stanley on 'Second Love', and Donna & Jerry Taylor on 'Chesa' joined the festivities.

Rollins Cove, although a tight anchorage for multiple large boats, is a great hurricane hole providing terrific protection from multiple directions. At 38 24.360 N and 076 28.822 W, with depths over 10 feet, SMSA cruisers has enjoyed its anchorage now for several generations. According to Sean Stanley, SMSA previously managed a 32- boat raft-up in Rollins Cove.

It didn't take long to break out the finger food and Jimmy Buffet inspired concoctions. With a new toast for every cruiser that joined the party, it didn't take long either for the celebration to ramp up! Updating fellow cruisers on completed winter boat projects and sharing excitement of upcoming cruising season served to deepen relationships, which is a key to what cruising is all about.

Whiskey tasting, as the special event for the evening, challenged SMSA cruisers by identifying the one whiskey not actually distilled in America. With samples provided in separate-colored chalices, tasted one at a time, most found each quite different. In the end the triple distilled whiskey from Ireland, 'Eire', was voted the favorite and was properly identified by - no surprise - the Blaney's! The runner up was Gentlemen Jack with Maker's Mark a close third. Electing to stay rafted up for the evening, as the evening wore on and a chill set-in, most retired for the evening.

The following morning's dampness was easily vanquished by a round of hot freshly brewed coffee and hope that the weather would clear up by late morning. Several cruisers needing to get underway to join the fun at SMSA for the Solomon's Spring Fling, departed by mid-morning, so the raft gradually broke apart. (*continued on next page*)

Rollins Cove Cruise, continued....

With Constellation struggling to retrieve its anchor from the deep mud, Todd and Jennifer received a few encouraging pointers from Jerry Taylor in helping to defeat the underlying muck's claimed ownership. As Constellation finally motored towards St Leonard's Creek heading for home, Jerry and Donna Taylor's desire to extend the day at a peaceful anchorage further up Rollins Cove reminds me what cruising is all about- a picture is worth a thousand words.



Wookiee the barking welcoming committee surveys the raft-up

Donna and Jerry Taylor's boat far up Rollins Cove



Despite the misty weather, the cruisers kept the party going.



The SMSA raft up in Rollins Cove

**Upcoming cruises:
St. Michaels/Oxford, May 15–18
Baltimore, May 22 –30**



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

Place
Stamp



May 2026

The Clew

Volume 56 Number 5



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!

