



The Clew

BOD & Committee Chairs

Tue. Sept 8 @ 7pm: Monthly BOD Meeting. commodore@smsa.com.

Tue. Sept 22, 630pm—8:00pm, Commodores/Chairs meeting.

Cruise

Saturday & Sunday, Sept 5 & 6, Where the Wind Blows 2, Jerry at w.jerry.taylor@gmail.com or Cruise Chair Phil Sibley cruise@smsa.com.

Chestertown Cruise, Sept 10—16, Contact Carl at carlfkemp@gmail.com or Phil at cruise@smsa.com

Keelboat Racing

Wednesday, Sept 2 & 9, Wed Keelboat Series C.

Sunday, Sept 20, Women's Fall Series, Cedar Pt. Trophy, contact keelboatrace@smsa.com

Saturday, Sept 26, AYC to Solomons Race. vicecommodore@smsa.com

ALTS & Training

Saturday, Sept 19, Adult Learn to Sail Combo Class, 9am—3pm
Sign up at smsa.com. Contact learntosail@smsa.com



The Clew

Small Boat Racing

Thursdays, small boat races through Sept. 10. 6:30-8:30pm with rendezvous.

Saturday, Sept 12, Rum Runners Regatta. See [Smallboat Racing](#).

Saturday & Sunday, Sept 26 & 27, Smallboat Invitational. Visit [HERE](#).

Contact smallboatrace@smsa.com for the above.

High School & Middle School Sailing

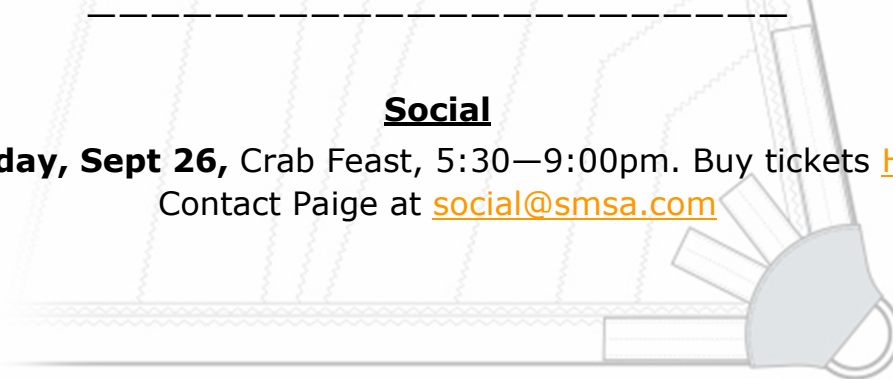
Every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday into November. High School & Middle School practice, 3:15pm—6:30pm.

Contact hssailing@smsa.com

Social

Saturday, Sept 26, Crab Feast, 5:30—9:00pm. Buy tickets [HERE](#).

Contact Paige at social@smsa.com



WELCOME NEW SMSA MEMBERS

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

Nicholas Ishaak: *Howdy! I'm Nicholas Ishaak, but feel free to call me Nicky. I'm originally from central Texas, but I moved to southern Maryland in October 2025 because I accepted a job as an Equipment Operator at CCNPP in Lusby. I decided to take up sailing because I love learning new things and it seems like a hobby I can have for the rest of my life. Also, the folks of SMSA that I've met so far have been extremely welcoming, so I'm happy to be a part of the community. I studied physics in undergrad, and I'm currently earning a master's degree in aerospace engineering. Other than that, I like to hike, run, travel, read, drink beer, and plenty more. I look forward to becoming a better sailor and meeting more people at SMSA.*



Nicky Ishaak

Tegan Leonard: Tegan Leonard joins us from the local area and is excited to learn something new and develop more friendships. Welcome, Tegan!

The Houston Family: *Hi! We're the Houston family- Andrew, Betsy, Jacob and Cora. We're excited to join SMSA! Andrew recently retired from the Navy after 23 years and Betsy is a middle school teacher. We have two children, Jacob (13) and Cora (11), who are excited to be involved with the MS/HS sailing program.*

We currently have two small sailboats: a Sunfish and a Tanzer, that have been patiently waiting for us in Connecticut! It has been quite a while since we've been out sailing, so we're looking forward to getting back on the water, learning more, and making sailing something our whole family can enjoy together.

We joined SMSA because we were looking for a welcoming sailing community where our family could learn, participate, and meet new people. We're excited to get involved in club activities and look forward to meeting everyone!



Houston Family



Gina DeSimone

Gina DeSimone: *Hi I'm Gina. I love being on and around the water. I live in Silver Spring, but also have a house on the Wicomico River near Chaptico where I spend as much time as I can. When I was a teenager an adult friend would take me sailing on a sunfish In Rehoboth Bay. I loved the quiet freedom of being on the water. I didn't learn to sail then, but remembered how much I enjoyed it. I've had a few opportunities to be on larger boats in the last 10 years or so as a passenger.*

A few years ago I acquired a sunfish and just "winged it". I was doing ok, but felt pretty insecure at first. Then I took sailing lessons at Washington Marina and that helped me understand some more about what I was doing. I'm looking at getting out on the water and learning from all the experienced sailors in this club.

WELCOME NEW SMSA MEMBERS

Continued.....

Stuart McLean and Debbie Higgins McLean: *We have owned our home on Solomons Island for 25 years. It was a rental property until 2020, when we moved here part time. We spend summers in this beautiful town and winters on Hutchinson Island on the east coast of Florida.*

Stuart grew up on Skaneateles Lake in upstate NY and sailed, boated and skied as a teenager and young adult. Deb hasn't had as much experience on the water or operating a boat, but being recently retired, has decided to take sailing lessons with SMSA.



Stuart & Debbie

We love this community and the people in it, and are looking forward to meeting all of you. If you are walking on Patuxent Ave and see us on our front lawn in the blue Adirondack chairs, please stop by and say hello and join us for a cold beverage!



2027 ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

In September, the SMSA Nominating Committee will begin reviewing names for the 2027 Officer and open Director positions.

Officer positions include Commodore, Vice Commodore, Rear Commodore, Treasurer, and Secretary. Additionally, two Director positions will be voted on. The Officer positions are one-year terms, while Directors serve three-year terms.

To be an eligible candidate for Commodore, the nominee must have previously served at least two years in an Officer position or as a committee chair. There are no prerequisites for the other open positions. All nominees must be SMSA members in good standing.

Nomination packages must be received and confirmed by the Nomination Committee no later than 9:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 13, 2026.

Those wishing to provide input should send your nomination package, to include the desired position, a short biography of previous SMSA activities and service, and a recent photograph to the Nomination Committee at election@smsa.com.

NOMINATIONS

ARE OPEN

THE SOCIAL SCENE

Paige Smith, Chair



Crab Feast is September 26th! Get tickets now and volunteer to help!



It has been a great month at SMSA for sailing activities and events that included sailing camp, Governor's Cup, Mixed Couple Race/Battle Creek Cruise, Fun Regatta/Un-Regatta, Sharks with Lasers Regatta, Wednesday/Thursday nights racing, and numerous cruise events! While these events did not require Social Committee assistance, several members have put in numerous "social" hours to keep our club members hydrated and fed. Wednesday and Thursday night quick dinners (a la Rendevous) have been a great hit and have supplemented many club members after racing in the heat during dinner time hours!

September looks like another month of great cruising and racing, and will also include the annual Crab Feast! This event will require volunteers to make it another successful SMSA event. Please look for future reminders regarding the planning, set up, breakdown and cleanup for this fantastic feast on September 26th.

BNAC's ARE ✂️ BACK!!!! ✂️

We need YOU
October 1-4 to
volunteer to help
make this the best
Buccaneer 18
North Americans
in history!



Contact BNAC2026@smsa.com TODAY!

Patuxent Pursuit Shirts are Available!!

(limited sizes and quantities)

Presented by:
SMSA



Where the River Meets the Race



**Missed out getting one?
Want another?
Just like the design??**



WHERE TO ORDER:

Go to
<https://smsa-merchandise.square.site/>

(There is also a link to the merchandise store
on the front page at www.smsa.com)

Click here! <https://smsa-merchandise.square.site>

SMALLBOAT RACING



Bill Shoemaker

Smallboat Race Chair

smallboatrace@smsa.com

Busy September and October schedule for small boats at SMSA with Rum Runner, Fall Invite, BNAC

August started with a win for SMSA Smallboat sailors. Jimmy Yurko traveled to Ware, Virginia, August 1-2, and took home a first-place win in The Virginia Governor's Cup. Congratulations!

Thursday night was a mixed bag of events. August 6, we had a great turnout with 23 boats on the water. The following week was the final Smallboat team racing event of the year with 7 boats battling it out in light winds. August 20 had the lasers and 420 sailors rigged and ready to go but the weather unfortunately did not cooperate with thunderstorms popping up just before race time.

August 22 was the scheduled 3rd annual Sharks with Lasers Regatta, but heavy rain in the forecast forced a postponement until the next day. Thirteen racers returned for a great day of racing with steady winds and sunny weather.

COMING IN SEPTEMBER:

September 3 and 10 - final two races in the Thursday night series.

September 12 - The Rum Runner Regatta is a fun event for those who want to get out on the water for this Smallboat distance race.

September 26-27- SMSA Fall Invitational - an event open to all small boats, nationally. This year should be well attended as it falls the week before the Buccaneer 18 North American Championship hosted by SMSA.



*One of the Sharks with Lasers starts.
Photo by Bill Shoemaker*



*Sharks and Lasers Competitors on August 23rd.
Photo by Bill Shoemaker.*



Commodore's Corner

By Russell Miller
commodore@smsa.com



Everyone seemed to enjoy the Commodore's Steak Night and the stimulating Town Hall conversations concerning our club's vision and long-term plans that followed. The handout and accompanying graph were intended to help inform the membership of how we are doing and explore some options for our future. If you could not attend the Steak Night and did not receive an email with the handouts attached, please reach out to me at: commodore@smsa.com

While the Town Hall meeting focused on our finances and some options we could consider for future building improvements, our Summer Camp, Junior Chair and Highschool teams upscaled what was a small weekly event and grew that into a large-scale recruiting event which gave campers a chance to showcase their new skills to their parents.

Many thanks to everyone who helped make the Junior Camp Regatta such a success. Smiles were everywhere!!

Awesome Job!

So many people contributed: organizers Kristi and Jimmy Yurko (Annabelle and Cora); Summer Camp Director Ana Donnelly; Junior Chair Mel Myers (Owen and Jackson) with her amazing trophies; Summer Camp Chair Johna Johnson, who arrived in full costume and served as a water target for many; parent volunteers included cook Steve Birchfield (Tommy), and helpers Haley and Phil Sibley ("Original" Phil Sibley, Ashton, Devin, and Chase); and even future campers' grandparents, Robin and Mark Witte (Bailey). Even our past camp directors Kati and Harry Keith were lending hands to help.

That was not enough, even more support was needed to keep the event running smoothly and safely. All eleven members of the Board of Directors were present, along with club members from across our sailing community who pitched in, including Doug Hays and Don Brown as boat wranglers; Dan Liston, Elliot Peterson, Vladimir Eremeev, and Ryan Ihnacik in safety boats; Jolie Homsher, Jonathan Nepini, Aaron Shiffer, and Dewey Melton on the water; Les Griffith and Jim Whited on the RC boat; Barb Whited and Tim Flaherty on dock safety; Lisa Flaherty, Alexa Peterson and Vatanna Gaines at check-in; and Annabelle, Cora, Chloe, and Max helping with merchandising and games.

A special thank-you goes to Vice Commodore Randy Gross for bringing this idea to the Board and leading the volunteers. To anyone I missed, my apologies. As I walked around and mingled, the excitement was overwhelming, making it difficult to keep track of everyone who came out to help. This event set a new standard and launched what I'm sure will become an annual tradition we will all support and look forward to.

With Great Admiration
Russell Miller
Commodore, SMSA

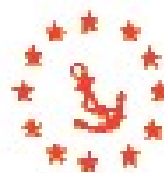
Junior Regatta and Un-Regatta, 2026



Photos courtesy of Kristen Gyorgy, Jolie Homshur and Steve Birchfield

Rear Commodore

Shane Myers
rearcommodore@smsa.com



Myers has bold vision for future of SMSA

When I stepped into the role of Rear Commodore, I took on responsibility for communications, membership, social activities, the bar, and our facilities. It was a particularly interesting time to begin, as the Communications, Bar, and Facilities chairs were all experiencing turnover. That created some challenges, but it also presented an opportunity to take a fresh look at how we operate and, more importantly, how we connect with our members and the broader community.

Communications:

My initial focus has been communications. One of my goals has been to make it possible for us to reach specific audiences with targeted SMSA content rather than relying on a one-size-fits-all approach.

As a first step, Tim created a new SMSA Facebook “page” that is distinct from our existing SMSA Facebook “group”. The group remains an incredibly valuable resource for our members and has grown by more than 300 members this year. At the same time, the new public-facing SMSA page started growing followers and has generated more than 17,000 views in the past 30 days.

Those numbers tell us something important: what we’re doing is working. We are becoming more visible to the larger community and creating more opportunities for people to discover our club and our sport.

I also want to give a special shout-out to everyone who contributes the great content shared weekly in the Facebook group. Those posts, photos, stories, and updates are what make our online presence authentic and engaging. Ultimately, our goal is bigger than simply increasing social media numbers. We want to introduce more people to our sport, invite them into our community, and ultimately attract and recruit new members to SMSA.

Membership:

Membership continues to grow, which is fantastic news. As we grow, however, I am looking closely at the member experience and what will keep people engaged for the long term.

The good news is that the biggest factor in a successful club isn’t complicated: it’s how we interact with one another and the culture we create together. People stay where they feel welcome, valued, and connected.

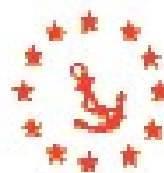
The second piece is making sure membership provides consistent and meaningful value. I am exploring ways to create clearer distinctions between member and guest pricing and access, as well as more comprehensive membership categories.

One model worth considering is the YMCA approach, with clear individual, household, and

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Rear Commodore

Shane Myers
rearcommodore@smsa.com



Myers outlines bold vision for SMSA *continued from page 10*

and family membership categories. A structure like this could make membership more accessible and better reflect the different ways people participate in our club.

I believe the member experience is directly connected to member retention. Growing our membership is important, but creating an environment where people want to stay, participate, and bring their friends is even more important.

Facilities:

The facility has certainly been a topic of conversation, and I know there are long-term goals and plans being considered. At the same time, I believe there are some shorter-term improvements we can begin addressing now.

One area I have been a strong proponent of is acoustical treatment. This is particularly important to me because it falls within my professional area of expertise. The acoustics of our spaces have a significant impact on how comfortable and enjoyable they are, particularly when we have larger groups gathered together.

Unfortunately, we have experienced a bit of what I would call *analysis paralysis* on this issue. I am hopeful that we can soon find some light at the end of the tunnel and begin moving from discussion and evaluation toward tangible improvements.

Another idea I've been discussing is installing a couple of webcams around the property. One could be directed toward the boardwalk and bridge to provide a sort of sunset cam and a way for people to see what's happening on the waterfront. Another could overlook the backyard, giving us an easy way to check in on small-boat and junior activities.

These may seem like small things, but they can make our club feel more connected—even when you're not physically there.

Looking Ahead

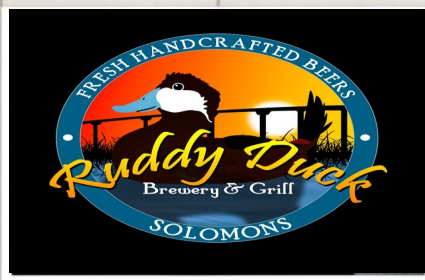
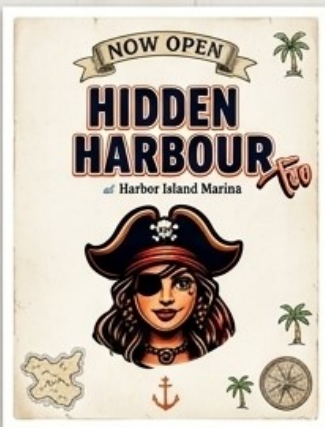
There is a lot happening at SMSA, and I am excited about where we're headed. Communications, membership, social activities, the bar, and facilities may seem like separate areas, but they are all connected by one central goal: **creating a club that people want to be part of.**

We have a tremendous foundation. Our growing membership, active social media community, enthusiastic volunteers, and the energy around our sailing and boating programs give us a lot to build on.

My focus is on continuing that momentum—making SMSA more visible, making the member experience better, improving our facilities, and creating a stronger connection between our club and the larger community.

Most importantly, I want to continue building the kind of club that members are proud to call their own.

THANK YOU SPONSORS



The 2026 Scott Kirby show at SMSA was a tremendous success!

Junior Chair

Melissa Myers

Junior Chair



Mel Myers take reigns as Junior Chair in a big way, seeks family involvement

Hello Sailing Club Families!

My name is Mel Myers, and I am excited and honored to be stepping into the role of Junior Chair for our sailing club!

For the past 16 years, I have worked as an Occupational Therapist, including the last 12 years as a pediatric OT with SMCPs. While you may be wondering what an occupational therapist has to do with sailing, I think the connection is actually pretty perfect!

Occupational therapy is all about helping people participate, connect, build skills, gain confidence, and have fun doing the things that are meaningful to them. Working with children has taught me that sometimes the best learning happens when kids are given opportunities to explore, try something new, make mistakes, work together, and—most importantly—feel like they belong. That is exactly what I hope to bring to our Junior Sailing program.

One of my goals as Junior Chairperson is to help create a community for our junior sailors—a place where kids are excited to show up, spend time together, make friends, and feel comfortable being themselves.

Of course, we want our kids to learn how to sail and become confident sailors. But I also want them to look forward to coming to the club even when they aren't on the water.

I would love to see more on-land and onshore activities throughout the season: games, challenges, social gatherings, team activities, sailing-themed adventures, and opportunities for the kids to simply hang out together. My hope is that we can create a culture where the junior sailors know each other, support one another, and genuinely enjoy being part of the sailing club.

The recent Junior Regatta/Unregatta was a fantastic example of what our junior program can be. The kids had an opportunity to get out on the water, work together, be silly, take on challenges, and experience sailing in a completely different way.

The enthusiasm and energy surrounding the event showed just how much potential we have when we make sailing fun, creative, and engaging.

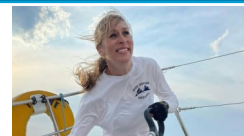
The Un-Regatta wasn't just about who sailed the fastest or who crossed the finish line first. It was about adventure, teamwork, imagination, and creating memories—and that's something I hope we can continue building upon.

Continued next page...

Junior Chair

Melissa Myers

Junior Chair



Mel calls all families for Junior Program *continued from previous page*

As your new Junior Chair, I want to help make our junior program a place where kids can say: "That's where my friends are. That's where I have fun. That's where I belong."

I am looking forward to working with our junior sailors, parents, instructors, and the rest of the club to build a strong and welcoming junior sailing community. I have lots of ideas, but I also want to hear from our families and, especially, our kids about what would make them excited to spend more time at the club.

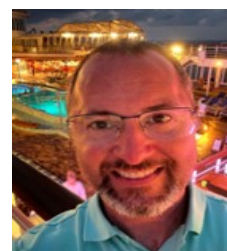
Here's to continuing a great season of sailing, friendship, adventure, and a whole lot of fun on—and off—the water!

Fair winds and fun sailing,

CRUISERS CORNER

Phil Sibley

Cruise Chair



All it takes is two vessels for it to be a "cruise"

This year's cruise season is well underway. Although there have been some cancellations, downed vessels, and rough weather this season, the cruising fleet has made the most of it. Looking forward to this month, we have a long distance cruise to Cape Charles September 16-23. In addition to this long cruise, there may be some other pop-up, raft-up events occurring such as the WTWB to Fishing Creek or others that crew members may lead. Remember, all it takes is two SMSA Vessels to qualify as an official cruising event. Stay tuned for updates on upcoming cruise events as the month of September goes on.

A promotional banner for the SMSA Crab Feast. On the left is a pennant flag with a red cross on a white background, yellow and black sections, and a small anchor. The text "SMSA CRAB FEAST" is in large, bold letters. Below it, "Saturday, September 26th @ 5:30PM" is written. To the right is an illustration of a wooden bucket filled with red crabs, a bottle of beer, and a small crab on a plate. A red button with a white mouse cursor icon says "Click the link at SMSA.com to buy tickets!!" and "BUY TICKETS NOW!". The background is light blue with water splashes and small crab icons.

"Thar be pirates in Solomons!"

Well...maybe not, but also yes... The Buccaneer 18 Class will be returning to Solomons, MD, for the 4th time this October for their 55th Championship.

This lively bunch of seafaring one design sailors are anticipating quite an adventure on the Patuxent River.

The Buccaneer 18 class rotates championship hosting through 5 regions - with 2026 coming back to the Mid-Atlantic region. Solomons has some of the best racing conditions in the region and the October schedule promises some of the best weather opportunities for the year as historical averages go.

The Bucc class is an exceptional group of friendly and competitive sailors who are friends on and off the water whose support for each other goes well beyond our sailing. That is the Bucc way. They're just happy to be together wherever they meet.

We are anticipating 30+ boats to compete with sailors from all across the US and Canada with sailors invading from Alaska to Florida.

After last year's exciting regatta in Big Lake, Alaska, SMSA has a tall order to fill. We will switch from moose and reindeer to a beach seafood boil complete with blue crabs and continue with on shore parties throughout the weekend.

Sailors will compete in two fleets - (A) or (B). (A) fleet competes for the overall class championship and (B) fleet competes for the Sindle Trophy in honor of past boat builder Harry Sindle. Both trophies are highly sought after with the B-fleet winners being banished from the (B) fleet as a class rite of passage.

The SMSA Buccaneer fleet is hoping to put a member's name on the championship trophy as we have been preparing all summer and have our strongest fleet in recent history with young and 'mature' sailors mixing it up regularly in the SMSA Thursday night race series. Xander Moulds, Clarke McKinney, Jolie Homsher, Bill Shoemaker, and Jonathan Stevenson have all been trading places at the top of the local fleet. SMSA has yet to have a team win the championship, though teams have come close. Jeff Moore & Shawn Stanley finished 2nd in the event in 2010, Jimmy & Kristi Yurko also came close with 2nd place finishes in 2013 and 2021. SMSA has stiff competition as the registrant list includes several past champions such as Ed Montano (Kenosha YC), John Weis (Kenosha YC), David Spira (Colorado) and Jeff Neurauter (Sailing Club of Washington)

For more details, including schedules, results, and photos go to www.smsa.com and the SMSA Facebook page.



Buccaneer 18 North American Championship (BNAC)

Host: Southern Maryland Sailing Association (SMSA)

Location: Solomons Island, Maryland

Dates: October 1-4

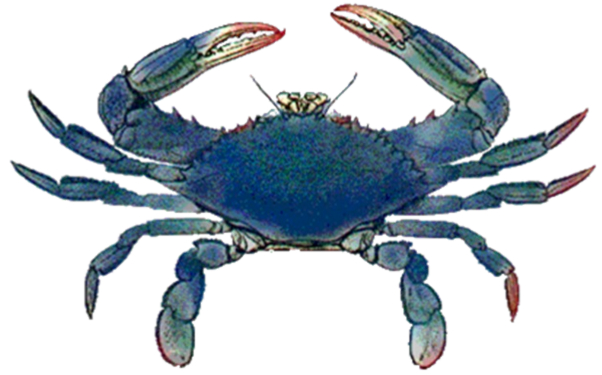
SMSA CRAB FEAST & BBQ

SATURDAY, SEPT 26th, 5:30PM

\$30/ticket

(\$15 Kids 12 and under; 5 and under FREE)

Includes crabs, non-seafood entrée options, numerous sides, and dessert.



Purchase tickets at www.smsa.com

Tickets must be purchased by Sept 20th so we can order crabs & plan sides.

Limited tickets available for sale after Sept 20th. No refunds after Sept 20th.



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

Come in for fun and terrific sunsets on the front patio. We go until about 9:30pm or whenever Ana kicks us out! Sit on the patio and watch the crowds and boats go by!

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:



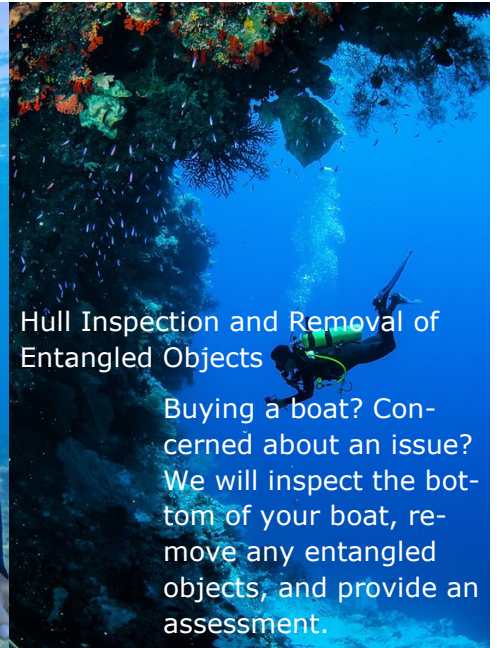
Hull & Bottom Cleaning Plans

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.



Protecting Maryland's Waterways in SOMD



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/>





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

Place
Stamp



May 2026

The Clew

Volume 56 Number 5

 **West MarinePro**

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!

