

THE HORNPIPE

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Commodore's Comments

It must be said that the CCSC is not about competition. Two cases in point: First, the recent club regatta that never was. In canceling the event, George Alberts reported that only one boat, *Mutima*, had thrown a floatation cushion into the ring. That challenge seemingly scared off all other entries. I suggest to our esteemed vice commodore that the Durr Cup (so named by me because of the frequent appearances of Carol's and Bill's names on the trophy) be awarded to Captain Shellabarger by executive fiat. In life, sometimes just showing up is a victory.

The second case in point is the upcoming Best Wine Cruise, scheduled for September 15-16, just as this issue of the *Hornpipe* is scheduled to hit the newsstands. This cultural event will be substitute captained by stalwart sailors and gastronomes Robbie and Ed Sabin (replacing Delmarva Peninsula circumnavigating Ilyse and Jesse Delanoy), with locale switched to the waters off Cantler's Riverside Inn on Mill Creek above Whitehall Bay.

My take on CCSC non-competitiveness may be obscure to the point of senselessness, so follow

me on this! When describing the theme of the Best Wine Cruise to a non-member recently, I was asked what proof is required that any particular bottle in fact costs less than \$10. Simple me. This question never occurred to me. Indeed, why not require a receipt with each entry to keep those surreptitious \$11.99 per bottle sure-winner vintages out of the contest?

The answer to that question gets back to the point I am laboring so very hard to make here — receipts are unnecessary because winning is (relatively) unimportant. Like cruising a sailboat on the bay, the *process* of getting there is the fun, not where you end up or how quickly you get there. Receipts might be necessary if we had as members some of the Wednesday night sailboat racers who, on occasion, cause collisions of their boats instead of surrendering the right of way that they believe the navigation rules give them. But not at the CCSC, where the *process* by which the club identifies the best mid-budget (?) bottle of wine (hopefully avoiding resulting headaches) is more important than being the one that brings the winner to the table (or, more appropriately here, to the anchorage).

Our club may not be much on competition, but we sure know how to drink (in appropriate moderation) and eat! Cynthia and Duncan McDonald did it again — they provided great food and drink at the August 19 picnic. Great turnout, fabulous weather, wonderful event. Jenny Poniske even brought a mascot — a puppy whose name I have forgotten. Like the rest of us, that dog loved the delicacies that came off of Duncan’s barbeque. Smart dog!

Send your replies and rejoinders to the points made above to the Folangs for publication in next month’s *Hornpipe*. Warning: no questioning of the puppy’s appetite or taste will be entertained. (Little chance of that.)

Sail on, and keep those nominations for next year’s commodore flooding in!

Lee Benedict

As Good As It Gets...

Feeling unhappy about our schedules having not been conducive for us to join many of the cruises this season, Nan and I set off around 9:30 a. m. Saturday morning, August 4, with the idea that we would spend the night somewhere in the Chester. After a brutally hot week, and with inland forecasts of high 90s, we were not sure that we would find any relief on the water, but were willing to try. A light breeze of 2.5-3 knots from the north (mostly) was enough to keep up steerage and discourage the flies (mostly) as we cleared the Bodkin 3 mark and took up a heading to the Love Point light. With the bimini deployed to keep the sun from beating down on our heads, and a thick haze minimizing glare, it was much more comfortable on the bay than we would have been anywhere else (except, possibly, in front of an air conditioner...).

True to form for the Chesapeake in August, right around noon the wind dropped to nearly calm. Since we were only halfway from the Bodkin to the mouth of the Chester, we decided that we needed to make better progress if we were going to find an anchorage before dark. We cranked up the Yanmar and settled in to motor/sail, enjoying the breeze we were making with our motion. It was very hazy. At

no time did we so much as glimpse the bay bridge spans, and even making out the one shoreline was difficult at times. After crossing the Swan Point channel, we were overtaken and hailed by two men on a Jet Ski. They were a bit disoriented and wanted to know which way to the Kent Narrows. When we said due south, they replied that they had no compass. We pointed the way and told them to keep the barely visible bulk of Kent Island on starboard. They thanked us, opined that it didn’t get any better than this, and roared off in the direction indicated. They were soon lost in the haze, and we didn’t see them again, so I guess they got where they were going. We decided that they lost points for being out in the bay on a PWC with no way to tell where they were, but that they regained a couple for having the sense to actually ask directions!

We putt-putted onward, down around the bend, continuing to hope that the teasing breeze would pick up enough for us to sail. As we rounded Hail Point at the bottom of Eastern Neck Island, we realized that whatever wind there was, was directly on the nose and we were also being hindered by the out-going tide so we gave up any pretense of sailing and furled the sails.

We had pretty much decided that our destination was the anchorage on the east side of Cacaway Island in Langford Creek, but thought that we would see if one of the marinas we would pass en route still had their fuel dock open. Having motored for most of the day, we were down to a reading of _ on the fuel tank, and the spare jerry can was empty. Half a tank was more than plenty to motor all the way home to the Bodkin, but wouldn’t leave much leeway for emergencies, so it seemed prudent to top up ‘just in case’. After checking the various cruising guides on board, we chose to make for the Langford Bay Marina, just inside Davis Creek. The approach was easy and well marked, but getting to the fuel dock wasn’t so obvious. After failing to raise them via VHF, Nan used her cell phone to call and confirm that the fuel dock would be open for another 40 minutes and that we were on the right course to find it — circling completely around the piers and coming along the shore. We quickly topped up the inboard tank (4.4 gallons) and filled the jerry can (another 2.5 gals), and Nan went to the chandlery to settle up. She says

that they have a fairly extensive and ‘serious’ stock of useful goods — something to remember if you need something in that neck of the bay. They also advertised a regular trolley service to Rock Hall —also nice to know.

As we headed back out into the creek, we took in the lovely cove with a number of permanent moorings right across from the marina, and a quiet stretch farther up the creek where several transients already lay at anchor. It was a pretty spot, and well situated to take advantage of the still-too-light breeze, so we un-slung the hook and found a likely spot to drop it. A little clean-up in the saloon and cockpit, deploying the breeze-boosters in both main and v-berth hatches, and it was time for a quick swim before pre-prandial beverage consumption, AKA happy hour. Nan had cleverly laid in the makings for a meal that required no cooking. The only thing that really wanted warmth was prepackaged noodles, and our extensive motoring had supplied us with more than sufficient VERY hot water for that purpose. As the sun went down, we enjoyed the cat’s paw zephyrs that dried us off and kept the temperature bearable.

After sunset, we were dismayed to find that the house battery refused to hold a charge (a failure on our part to ensure that the maintenance was attended to). We shut down everything except the anchor light and hoped for the best. Fortunately, our position close to the mooring field ensured that anyone coming through would be careful to avoid unlit craft.

After some discussion, and some trepidation about insects, we both opted to haul the settee cushions into the cockpit and sleep *al fresco*. Even with the breeze boosters and a portable battery operated fan of considerable power, it was still very close below. Much to our surprise and delight, we were visited by few mosquitoes and those seemed to be rapidly deterred by Skin-so-soft and Cutter’s. We drifted off to sleep with little difficulty. In the wee hours of the morning, however, the wind rose to a steady 8-10 knots, gusting to 15, and Nan scrounged out the emergency fleece throws she keeps on board. Snuggled under our blankets, we slept for another three or so hours, rising around 7:00 a.m. refreshed.

After downing a pot of coffee and making a second for the road, we got underway as fast as possible to take advantage of the lovely, un-August-like wind from the east. We raced downstream, hitting 7.5 knots at times on a broad reach. In no time, we came in sight of Kent Narrows, jibed ‘round, made the bend, and flew on out of the mouth of the Chester as if we were on fire, dodging barge traffic and slaloming through fleets of fishing boats. The wind held until just after 11:00 a.m. — long enough to reach the **R18** buoy on the Craighill Channel — and then quit, leaving us swatting flies and dispirited. Once more, the Yanmar was pressed into service, getting us back to Hammock Island without incident.

All in all, it was a fine cruise, balancing the new equipment failures (did I mention that the head seawater intake decided not to take in sea water?) against the exhilaration of a fine sail in August after waking up wrapped in a much-needed blanket, the usual assortment of boat bites notwithstanding. It was another lesson in taking circumstances as you find them; planning well, but being flexible; and, above all, enjoying whatever the day brings, being ready to believe that it is, as always, as good as it gets.

Linda Jensen

Labor Day Cruise

For once, Labor Day produced some remarkably good weather. MacDonalds on *Heather II*, Zerhusens on *Octavia*, and Bakers on *Courtney II* left on Friday; MacDonalds to Tilghman on Chesapeake; and Bakers and Zerhusens to West River, meeting unexpectedly there. On Saturday, we rendezvoused at Dun Cove. There were six boats, including the above mentioned, plus Grotzes on *Lauren A*, Callises on *Windsong*, and, fortuitously, the Delanoys on *Agapé* — just beginning their circumnavigation of the Delmarva. The Coyles got a late start and ended up staying in the Severn River, unfortunately missing the raft-up.

After a peaceful night in Dun Cove, the Delanoys and Bakers left. The former headed to Solomons and the Bakers to Sillery Bay. After a lazy morning, the four remaining boats sailed for

Oxford. The Grotzes visited friends on Island Creek, and the other three anchored on the strand and then went on *Heather II* to the Masthead for crabs (tiny but sweet and full). The three then motored to Trippe Creek for a delightful evening and another peaceful night.

On Monday, the Zerhusens and Callises left for a leisurely trip toward homeport. The Callises motored most of the way, but finally got good wind near the bay bridge and sailed up the Magothy to their marina. The MacDonalds had a fine sail on one tack all the way to Cambridge, where they spent the night and drove home on Tuesday. The Zerhusens went around Black Walnut Point and motored to the Rhode River, where they spent a quiet night practically alone. Their trip home on Tuesday was uneventful, except that the wind was just too light for them to sail.

Anecdotes: All was not perfect on *Heather II*. Cynthia decided to take a swim off the finger

pier as she was loading the boat. The only casualty was her glasses, which needed replacing anyway, and some very wet clothes she had been carrying. Then, upon nearing Tilghman Island, the engine began performing its dying tricks, and our approach to the marina was a bit gingerly. The next day, still having cut-off engine problems, we went to the Tilghman Island Marina for fuel, with some interesting moments. The d__n thing runs pretty well with a full fuel tank, and we had little or no problems thereafter.

The Bakers had no major problems, but their refrigeration went on the blink.

All in all it was a great weekend.

Duncan MacDonald