



**VOLUME 34, NO. 6**

**THE HORNPIPE**

**JUNE 2010**

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**Commodore's Comments**

First, a gentle reminder to those of you who haven't yet paid the CCSC dues of \$35 for 2010. Just about everyone has already done so, but we have a few stragglers. Please send a check to Ed Sabin, 1639 Lakewood Drive, Pasadena, Maryland 21122.

The cruising season really picks up this month. By the time this Hornpipe appears, we will have done the Best Wine Cruise to Hammock Island. Upcoming cruises include the now-traditional Breakfast Cruise to the Sabin's lovely waterfront home a short distance up Bodkin Creek from Hammock Island on June 19 and 20.

Regarding the cruise on the weekend of June 26, I'll be the cruise captain for that one, which is listed as a cruise to Havre de Grace for the Blues Festival. I'm open to suggestions on this one. It's a fairly long haul to Havre de Grace and best done with an extra overnight on the way up and/or back. If folks would prefer to do that, I'll be glad to oblige. If a cruise closer to home with just a Saturday overnight suits folks better, I'm fine with that as well. Please let me know what you prefer. And, of course, we will then have the Southern Bay Summer Cruise beginning on July 3.

I'd like to share some interesting plans Jutta and I have for August. We've decided to do some sailing along the Maine coast! No, I won't be single-handing *Breezing Up* up to Block Island, through the Cape Cod Canal, and on to the northeast

to meet her there (But I did consider it.). We've signed up for a four-night Windjammer Cruise out of Rockland, on the *American Eagle* — a 92-foot schooner that was once part of the Gloucester fishing fleet. Along with the other 28 passengers, we'll be exploring the waters and islands of Penobscot Bay and eating some lobster! Then we'll spend a few days at a B&B in Belfast, exploring down East by car.

In the meantime, hope to see you out on the water!

**George Alberts**

**News from Octavia — May 31 2010**

We know we've been remiss in not keeping up to date on our travels. We sort of fell into vacation mode, and it seemed just too much trouble.

So here it is, round trip:

Nautical miles traveled: 2,107

Engine hours: 413 (four oil changes)

Water pump belts replaced: One (in the ICW)

Mainsail time: Zero, zip, nada

Genny time: Lots

Travel time each way: Six weeks, of which about 12 days were weather delays.

Offshore time: One leg each way of 30 hours each (These were around Georgia, which is notorious for shoal water in the ICW.)

On March 4 we drove to Florida in our car, reprovisioned *Octavia*, had a great visit from Carol and Bob Gwin at Titusville Marina (They drove two hours over from Gainesville.), then took off south (60 miles) to Vero Beach, Florida, and a mooring for about three weeks.

We met a Marylander with a car, and he provided a ride to retrieve our car from Titusville, so we had our car to use in Vero Beach. (Since then we have traveled to Florida by train to pick up our car and drive it home. But that is another story.)

On April 4 we started north. Our first stop was at anchor in the Indian River opposite Cape Canaveral to watch the shuttle launch the next morning. At 6:20 a.m. — with lots of smoke, noise, and lights — the boat trembled as the shuttle lifted off. We both had goosebumps. It was so exciting!

From there it was a daily motor north toward home. Along the way we spent 15 nights at anchor. It seemed that every time we even thought of anchoring, the wind picked up to 20 knots. Once it piped up to 25 knots as we were trying to enter a slip.

Marina stays totaled to 20 nights; some were more than one day, as we waited out the weather. In Southport, North Carolina, we reconnected with Hank's cousin, who was single handing on a Morgan 384.

We had two free tie-ups that were greatly appreciated — one at Elizabeth City, the other in the Great Dismal Swamp. Easy off the boat to walk, grocery shop, and eat out.

Once again, crossing the mouth of the Potomac River was an ordeal; but once we reached Point No Point and land protection, things improved. For the crossing, the wind and waves were almost opposite each other, and a large tug with barge was alongside.

Anchoring in Solomons Island was, as they say, “a piece of cake.” It was calm, sunny, and warm. However, we experienced a weather front at about 7:00 p.m. with gusts up to 34 knots, at anchor. The boat danced and heeled very nicely.

Our last day motoring home began dead calm and stayed that way, allowing us to reach our slip and put out all lines easily — Hoorah!!

It was a very interesting winter weather-wise. We have met lots of great people. Some have become good friends, as we have seen them again and again over the seasons.

We have improved our planning skills immensely, have more faith in our boat, and consider ourselves fortunate to have made this trip five times. But it is so nice to be home again!!

*Jan and Hank Zerhusen*

## Memorial Day Cruise 2010

The weather gods said it would be nice, and it was! Not great sailing — in fact mostly motoring — but no storms. It was dry and sunny, there were no bugs, and it was cool at night. We, Jan and Hank Zerhusen, aboard *Octavia* anchored in the Corsica River, put out the fenders, and waited for company. Jutta and George Alberts, aboard *Breezing Up*, arrived first, followed by Kay and John Baker aboard *Courtney Two*. We also expected the *Annie Rose* with the McGheehans. Cocktails started and still no Linda and Patrick. We kept listening to the radio, then decided they weren't coming and turned it off. I checked my cell phone and saw no message, so I turned it off also. As it turned out, *Annie Rose* had a breakdown at G7 in the Chester River and had to be towed home. We missed them and were sorry that they had to eat all their own hors d'oeuvres.

Both nights were calm and quiet. With the lack of wind, most boats stayed put for the whole weekend — which is what we did. And that points out that if anyone is planning to join the group during the weekend, please let the cruise captain know ahead of time.



On Saturday, George, Kay, and Jan took a dinghy ride to the end of the river. George stood guard duty (because he was barefoot) as Kay and Jan walked into town for ice. We found a great little store, met a nice lady, heard her life story, and got a ride back to the dinghy from a nice young man in a

pickup truck! Later the gals and Hank motored over to the beach for swimming. Everywhere we looked, people were in swimming. The water was clean and refreshing.

Monday, it was time to head home. The Chester River was the usual zoo, with lots of boats — especially large power yachts that haven't a clue about wakes. We motorsailed, because with all of the chop from the wakes, we kept stalling.

It was hot! The Bakers found that if they unloaded their boat in slow motion, it could be done.

It was good to be back on the water. Hope we see more of you as the season moves along.

*Jan and Hank Zerhusen*

## Babies in the Boom

What to do, what to do, what to do? We are in a quandary. While we tried to exclude them, a pair of starlings managed to break in and set up housekeeping in the boom.

The aft end of *Mutima*'s boom has a tackle fitting for the mainsail reefing and outhaul lines. For some reason, probably to allow (arguably) easier access to the running rigging, the fitting was designed with a three-by-four inch hole under the block. This hole has become the source of a running battle with the local avifauna every spring, as we desperately try to keep them out and they attempt to claim what appears to be a prime nesting site. Up until this year, we had been successful; but circumstances conspired this year, and a series of unrelated situations resulted in a case of babies in the boom!

Late in May, I arrived at the slip to see a starling perched on the end of the boom. The cockpit was strewn with dried grass and other vegetation (including a fresh parsley garnish) and with considerable evidence that the squatters are really enjoying the mulberry crop this spring. The piece of duct tape that Nan had put over the access hole in the boom had been worked away from one side and pushed into the mouth of the cavity. I pulled out what was protruding from the hole and, not hearing or seeing any evidence of occupation, secured two longer pieces of duct tape over the hole and set about making ready to depart.

When Nan arrived, I relayed what I knew about the identity of the interlopers, and we agreed that we didn't feel much guilt about

inconveniencing them, as starlings are nonnative and certainly not endangered or protected.

It wasn't until much later, as we were enjoying a long beat toward Rock Hall, that the wind dropped and we could hear cheeping over our heads. Having been obediently silent most of the day, what seemed to be a chorus of three finally decided to protest the motion and rising temperature inside their snug cave. Because we felt it was unnecessarily cruel to bake them alive, we quickly removed the duct tape, and there was silence from within again as we discussed the problem. There was nothing to be done while we were underway, but we thought that we could make an effort to evict them once we got back in the slip. We bravely assured each other that we had no compunctions about dispatching the nestlings quickly and as humanely as possible, if we could only figure out a way to extract them.

For the next several hours, we were treated to more and more frequent protestations of hunger and discomfort, especially during and after several jibes as we sailed downwind to the entrance of the Bodkin Creek channel.

We docked without incident and set about making things shipshape before we tackled the stowaway problem. After fishing more nesting material out of the boom with kitchen tongs, but without any luck in removing the babies — or even visually locating them, in spite of their vociferous protests whenever we pulled out grass or feathers — we decided that we would lower the boom and try to shake them loose.

Lowering the boom is a more complicated operation on *Mutima* than on many other craft, because of the lack of standing rigging. First we had to rig the main halyard as a topping lift to support the boom after the boom kicker has been removed. (It was unfortunate that it didn't occur to us to use the halyard until I was standing on the cabin top supporting the full weight of the boom and mainsail on my right shoulder. But you learn by doing, I guess...) By slacking off on the lazyjacks, we were able to get about a 30-degree downward angle on the boom — and also our first really good view inside.

The parents had tucked the nest mostly out of sight and a good six to eight inches inside the cavity, behind the hardware for various external appurtenances. We could not see or reach the nestlings.

We considered removing the block in order to be able to reach inside by hand, but were discouraged by the tightness of the screws holding it on. Even if we had succeeded in removing the block without damaging the slots, we didn't have any Loctite to use in reassembly. Although all of the stresses on that block would tend to hold it in place without any screws, it's too important to risk it coming loose.

In the end, we decided to let the parents continue to raise their brood, and to hope that the babies finished fledging before we need to use the reefing lines. We really don't want them to die in there or to get tangled and mangled in the rigging.

The to-do list already includes getting the riggers to replace the second reefing line, which has become too short to use properly, so we will ask them to clean out the nest while they are doing that.

There doesn't appear to be a good short-term solution, but the lesson learned for next year is to replace the duct tape first thing in the spring to ensure that no one sets his or her heart on occupation; or to figure out some sturdier, more permanent way to block access. Any suggestions?

*Jenny Poniske*

## Boat Log Database

Desktop computers, portable computers, iPhones, iPads, GPS, numerous software applications, Internet, and WiFi have all contributed to making our day-to-day boating activities easier to manage. As an engineer for the past 30 years, I have seen and experienced numerous cutting-edge technologies move from their infancies to commercial, everyday use.

My first experience with computers was in college, writing software using punch cards and waiting a day or two to determine if the software I wrote actually worked. The computer filled a room.

With all the new technology now available, I found myself driven to develop (The engineer in me!) something that could enhance my enjoyment of owning and operating a sailboat. I also wanted to develop something that would perhaps be useful to other sailboat enthusiasts like me.

It took me some time to come up with the proper idea, but the light bulb in my head came on after searching the Internet for a software application that I could use for tracking the work I

do every year on the boat. I could not find what I needed, so Boat Log Database was born.

Boat Log Database is a flexible boat management database for Microsoft Access users. The database gives boat owners an easy way to track boat inventories, expenses, trip logs, maintenance notes, repair and service histories, contacts, to-do lists, and more.

I used an existing, free Microsoft Access template (available on the Microsoft website) as the baseline for Boat Log Database.

**Boat Inventory:** A complete database template that allows you an easy way to catalog, manage, and track all of a boat's major inventories.

**Maintenance Expenses Log:** A simple database template that provides an easy way to track all boat-related expenses (service, repair, maintenance, marina, insurance expenses, etc.)

**To Do List:** An easy-to-use database template that provides an easy way to manage, plan, and track boat repairs and maintenance and service procedures.

**Trip Log:** A database that gives an easy way to enter, manage, and track records about trips and cruises; including length of cruise, average speed, maximum speed, engine hours, and more.

**Boat Vendor Contacts:** A complete database that allows maintenance and organization of boat-related contacts: Marina addresses, boat insurance companies, boat service companies, boat warehouses, and online boat-related contacts.

If you do not have Microsoft Access, there is a free look-a-like available at <http://www.openoffice.org/>. This free application works on PCs and Macs. Please carefully read the information provided on this website.

In addition, I have set up a blog to discuss Boat Log Database. This blog can be used to download Boat Log Database, provide feedback, and identify potential upgrades. The blog weblink is <http://boatlog1.blogspot.com>.

Boat Log Database is free to download and use; but if you wish, you can give a donation to help support a local girls' soccer program in my community.

There are no warranties on my part, so use Boat Log Database as you see fit. I hope you find the database as useful as I have.

*Gene Whitney*