



# *The Old Man*

*The Monthly Newsletter of the Magothy River Sailing Association*



February 2022



## *Commodore's Comments*

*"Damn the torpedoes! Full Speed Ahead!" Admiral David Farragut, Battle of Mobile Bay*



While the admiral only had to worry about a few dozen mines, shore batteries, and one barely-functioning Confederate ironclad, we have this damn Covid thing. Although we are a bit more cautious than the intrepid admiral, a full schedule of MRSA cruises, races, post-race raft-ups, Junior Training activities, picnics, dinners, and brunches has been prepared for 2022.

As I write this, key Covid numbers are looking good, and are headed in the right direction--down. We expect to maintain our projected activity schedule, which will be published in the 2022 **Red Book**.

You'll be able to pick it up at our Spring Brunch which will be held at the Gibson Island Boat House on March 27. We hope to see you there!

*Joe Berchielli, Commodore, 2021*



## *Honoring a Long-Time MRSA Member*



■ Former crew members held a surprise birthday party for Drew Dowling (front row, third from left), owner and skipper of the former J-30 Encounter, on the occasion of his 90th birthday. Drew campaigned Encounter from 1989 to 2014 in Magothy River Sailing Association and CBYRA races. Drew welcomed and trained new crew members regardless of their experience, providing hundreds of people the opportunity and enjoyment of sailing.

## *Racing Corner*

*The first rule on any sailing ship is: “One hand for the ship, and one for yourself!”*



*Wikimedia Commons*

As of March 1<sup>st</sup>, it will only be 50 days to the first race so still plenty of time to get the boat ready but as you know time flies so don't let that first race on April 20<sup>th</sup> sneak up on you. As we are still officially in the off-season (unless you are frostbiting or travelling to a warmer location), it's a good time to talk about safety before the upcoming season.

When I first started work back at Baltimore Gas & Electric just a few decades ago (or about 33 years) the safety culture was second to production. Our motto at the power plants used to be “megawatts first.” Megawatts was just a substitute for production and while we talked about safety, having a motto that says production is the highest priority doesn’t necessarily reinforce that notion.

So where am I going with this??? The company that I retired from in 2017 was a much different company in terms of safety. The safety culture changed dramatically over the years to where safety is truly the number one priority. I’ve seen a similar change in safety culture in sailing, we have better safety equipment, more accurate weather forecasting, and have seen an increased focus on safety throughout the sailing industry.

Unfortunately, accidents still occur. We had some racing tragedies in the last few years (2021 Race Week PNW and the 2018 Chicago-Mac) that reminds us that we need to continue to remain vigilant when we are sailing. So, a few safety-related topics to help you and your crew to sail fast, safely!

### Crew Overboard



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One of the scariest incidents that can occur is when someone from the boat goes overboard. *Incommunicado* lost someone overboard (very briefly) last year during a bad broach. We were lucky that when the spinnaker was released, we were able to pull our crewmember back on board quickly as the boat righted. So, remember that part of the US Sailing Nearshore requirements, that our fleet is required to follow per our sailing instructions, requires:

*“Annually, two-thirds of the boat's racing crew shall practice man-overboard procedures appropriate for the boat's size and speed. The practice shall consist of marking and returning to a position on the water and demonstrating a method of hoisting a crewmember back on deck, or other consistent means of reboarding the crewmember”.*

There are several good resources for Crew Overboard procedures so if you haven't found one already, Google "Crew Overboard Procedure" to come up with one that works for you, your crew, and your boat – then practice it! And since we are talking safety requirements also check out the 2022 US Sailing Nearshore requirements (posted on our website). Do you have a heaving line???



*Wikimedia Commons*

### **Inflatables**

If you or your crew are using inflatable lifejackets, please make sure you perform the required maintenance per the manufacturer. Auto inflatables don't always work so make sure you know where the manual pull tab is and which side the inflation tube is in case the unit doesn't inflate even after you pull the manual tab.

We had two units last year that had hydrostatic activators that were expired so please check your inflatables before the beginning of the season.

### **Knife**



*Wikimedia Commons*

Though it's not required by the US Sailing nearshore safety requirements, we've found that having a serrated knife located in an easily accessible location on deck is invaluable when things go wrong. We have used it to slice a line that fouled a prop when we were caught in a near gale with a fouled jib sheet which was preventing us from lowering the sail. We keep our knife taped to the boom vang so that anyone can grab it.

Safe sailing this year and feel free to pass along any other safety tips so that we can share with the fleet.

***Cheers and sail fast!***

**Ed**

## Junior Training



We're delighted to report that we are ready to build the next generation of racers through the return of our popular Junior Training Program. After a two-year hiatus due to Covid, we're relaunching with a new leader, Grace O'Brien. She recently answered a few questions for the *Old Man* editor.

### ***What brought you to sailing? Did you go through the JT program yourself?***

Living in Severna Park and by the water my whole life, I knew I wanted to be on the water in some way and one of my friends had done the summer camp a year before me and encouraged me to try it. After that first summer, I never looked back. I went through the JT program and was an instructor.



***Joe mentioned you raced on the Old Dominion sailing team. Is there a particular race that stands out for you?*** The Women's ACC's qualifier in Fall 2021 really stood out to me. My skipper and I were sailing against some really good teams and we worked really hard to qualify to send our team to Harvard later that season!

### ***Sports are great for teaching leadership and other life skills to children. Is there something special that sailing teaches them?***

I think that my biggest takeaway from sailing is communication and teamwork. No matter who you are on a boat with, you're working together to sail the fastest course and you cannot do that without good communication and teamwork. This lesson has helped me on and off the water.



If it wasn't for the JT program, I would not be where I am today. This program introduced me to the lifelong sport of sailing and helped me gain the courage to try out for my high school team and eventually sail in college.

***Thanks, Grace, and welcome aboard!***

## ***Racing Social Chair***

Winter is trying to say goodbye and so is Covid, but so far, neither has succeeded. Planned social events still seem “precarious” knowing some members have rightfully chosen not to vaccinate, some to vaccinate, and some choose to err on the side of caution, avoiding unvaccinated gentry and or close contact with others in enclosed areas.

My personal opinion is “tolerance and acceptance” of any decision made by all members, and their decision to act accordingly. As an organization, we may need to err on the “safe” side ...or not....and that has been quite the conundrum. I offer no advise or opinion and don't even welcome yours LOL...since what matters is what the BOG decides and how you respond.

That said racing season is going to be awesome and beer raft ups seem to be IMHO about as safe as we can be and gather. I proposed that we offer a 1 to 1 credit for beer boat and race committee boat, but the numbers don't support that. We barely have enough boats to do RC.

I am going to do one Beer Raft up myself and would love two more. Please email me to volunteer for Beer Boat duties, and if we are lucky, you may be put on the short list of RC duty credit.

## ***Cruising Corner***

***From cruising co-chair Toni Hughes:*** The cruisers met via zoom Saturday Feb 12<sup>th</sup> to review and update the cruising schedule for 2022. We will be sharing it on the website and publishing in the ***Red Book***.



*Wikimedia Commons*

### **SAVE THE DATE: MRSA SPRING BRUNCH**

**WHERE:** Gibson Island Boat House

**WHEN:** March 27th, 11:00 am

**COST:** \$48 Plus a Cash Bar

**SPEAKER:** David Gendell

***More Details to Come! Watch your email.***



## **The Old Man**

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Please do your part to restore the Bay and ***actively make it cleaner.***