

July 2015 Commodore's Log

Luis Rivas, Commodore

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Upcoming Events

The [SCOW website](http://scow.org) posts all events year round.

*Flying Scot
Pick-up Racing
Wednesdays at 6 pm*

*Social Sail
Thursdays at 6 pm*

Maintenance Day 7/25

Membership Meeting 9/15

Submit feedback, ideas, content and photographs for next month's issue to editor@scow.org

I hope you had a chance to visit l'*Hermione* while she was in town. What a magnificent ship! A few members and guests took advantage of our Social Sail offering by paying her a visit on one of our cruisers. It turned out to be more of a 'taxi' service back and forth for the duration of Social Sail and it was a great success.

Now that the long days of summer are finally here, with plenty of sunlight every evening after work, I hope you will take advantage and go out for an evening sail. Enjoy the great weather while it is here and don't get discouraged by the rising temperatures. And, if you don't know how to sail, you are in luck. While I want to extend a big thank you to the members who registered for SCOW training classes this year, please note that we have several opportunities available for our final offering (fall) that starts September 2nd. To register, please complete the form on our members only page and mail it with your payment to our snail mail address - PO Box 25884, Alexandria, VA 22313. Alternatively, you can make an online payment via PayPal to payments@scow.org (please include your name and training session in the PayPal comments field) and send the completed form to the above address.

July marks the ending month for SCOW's Special Olympics program/support. I want to extend a big thank you to the many volunteers who have donated their time and talents to support our program and, most importantly, the Special Olympics athletes.

And, don't forget about our traditional mini-maintenance day. This year it will take place on July 25th. Please mark your calendar and keep an eye out for email announcements as the event date nears.

Last, in every ChaNNels issue this year, I have been including a riddle in an effort built up excitement for a significant announcement. Unfortunately, no one has yet deciphered the riddle. The clue for this month is July as the clock keeps on ticking. If you happen to decipher the riddle, send me an email. The announcement and winner of the riddle will be revealed at the same time via this publication.

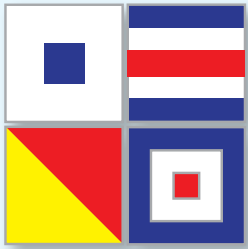


Luis poses with a crew member of l'Hermione. Photo by Rob Reuter.

If you have any questions or have any issues accessing our members only page, please email me at commodore@scow.org and I will be glad to lend a helping hand or put you in touch with one of our great volunteer directors.

Fair winds,
Luis





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SCOW Teams Up With Special Olympics Athletes

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Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.
-Motto Of The Special Olympics

SCOW has a long-standing summer tradition of partnering with Special Olympics, making the sport of sailing and sailboat racing accessible to athletes from both Virginia and Maryland here at the Washington Sailing Marina. This tradition continues, with strong support of our club.

After two weeks of weather-related cancellations, club volunteers turned out to serve as skippers, crew and support at the Monday night practice on June 15th, only to be delayed by rain yet again. Everything but spirits were dampened, and after an hour the storm cleared up, boats were launched and all set sail for the evening.

As of this writing, we've had four practices, and the athletes will compete in a regatta scheduled for July 11th, also at Washington Sailing Marina. If you have never experienced the Special Olympics movement or one of their organized competitions, you are cordially invited to join us on Saturday, July 11th and witness the regatta and the pot-luck style picnic and awards ceremony that follows in the afternoon in the grove. All the opportunities, support and encouragement that the athletes receive from SCOW is very much appreciated by them and their families. Please join us if you can, races will begin around noon and the picnic follows at around 3:30 pm.



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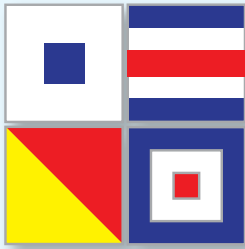
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July 2015 Updates from the Maintenance Locker

Jim Talley, Maintenance Director

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With the middle of the sailing season fast approaching, all SCOW members should plan on attending the Mini Maintenance Day on Saturday, July 25 from 9:30 - 2:00. The rain date will be Sunday, July 26. A list of maintenance activities will be emailed out to the club about 2 weeks in advance. You do not need to have any particular skills or expertise to participate, all are welcome.

**Mini Maintenance Day
Saturday, July 25
9:30 am - 2:00 pm**

I'm disappointed to report that the club is suffering from a rash of missing VHF radios. Three (3) radios have been reported missing this season and it seems hard to believe that all those radios have been lost or accidentally dropped into the river. These radios cost more than \$100 each, so please be diligent when operating and caring for all our equipment. If you have any ideas on the best ways to secure our radios, please email me at maintdir@scow.org with your suggestions.

As a reminder, please email me and the boat's bosun, if you notice any particular issues or safety concerns with any of our boats or equipment. Also put a note in the boat's log book.

Our boats bosuns and email addresses are:

Caroline: Julian Mallett - caroline@scow.org

Elisse: Jim Klein - elisse@scow.org

Ms Ellie: Vince Penoso - msellie@scow.org

Selkie: Sean Hollowood - selkie@scow.org

Sunset Song: Marty Branham - sunsetsong@scow.org

Susie-Q: Dick Vida - susieq@scow.org

Hiatus: Luis Rivas - hiatus@scow.org

Rebecca: Steve Youngblood - rebecca@scow.org

Skirmish: Laura Scandurra - skirmish@scow.org

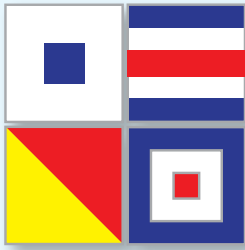
Thanks and see you on Mini Maintenance Day.

What Knot?



This knot is commonly known as the Alpine Butterfly Loop, a good knot to know when you need a secure loop in the middle of a line. It is more stable than either the Bowline or a Bight or the Figure 8 Loop - both of which may roll over. Even after a heavy load, the Alpine Butterfly Loop remains reasonably easy to undo. [Click here to learn how!](#)

From <http://www.animatedknots.com/alpinebutterfly/index.php?Categ=boating&LogoImage=LogoGrog.jpg&Website=www.animatedknots.com>



Sailing is a Risk Sport

Dave Beckett, Vice Commodore

July 2015

Sailing is a risk sport. We have policies and procedures to manage and minimize the risk, but it's still there. Despite the guidelines and limits set by SCOW policy, in the end, it's up to every sailor to manage their own risk. That means making one's own decisions, sound decisions, on all kinds of things like when to sail, to go or not to go, who you take with you as a skipper, who you sail with as crew, what to wear and where you sail.

I don't ever remember wearing a lifejacket sailing, but I wear one now. There were a few times last year when hiking hard while racing, that I felt like I almost went over the side. It was only core strength and reflexes that kept me in the boat. Once while racing with my son, he was hiking hard and slipped off the rail during a race. He never lost physical contact with the boat, but cost us the race. By the time I could get him back aboard, the best we could do was second. But more importantly, I started thinking, maybe not as much or as quickly as I should have. This year, I bought a nice kayaking PFD for when I'm instructing or racing in heavier winds because I recognized that I'm usually sailing with people that are less experienced than me and I don't ever want to put them or me in a position where my life could depend on their ability to execute a perfect Crew Overboard maneuver on the first attempt. It's not always popular with my boys, but sometimes we don the PFDs in a race when it's not mandated by policy and I know other skippers that do that as well.

Similarly, I've observed experienced skippers, whom I respect, decide not to get underway when the wind was up above their comfort zone, but just within SCOW limits, even though some other skippers decided to get underway. They made their own decisions; sound decisions. They took a cautious approach and there is no error in that. It's a mindset that wouldn't hurt some other, less experienced skippers to emulate.

Whenever I take out new sailors at Social Sail or for training or just for fun, I always tell them, "the boat heels but we aren't going to capsize so don't worry about it. The one thing that can really hurt you on the Flying Scot is the boom. So there are three things you need to remember about it; 1) always keep track of where the wind is coming from, 2) know where the boom is at all times and 3) keep your head below the boom." Well, in this case, two out of three isn't good enough. Ironically, as it turns out, I sailed half of the Spring Series Playoff this year with a concussion and the accompanying headache because I messed up on item # 3.

It happened during a 360 degree penalty turn for touching the windward mark. I knew we were jibing. I knew the boom was coming. I was crouched low but had my head cocked to the left to keep an eye on two boats approaching from behind. I wanted to ensure we stayed clear until the turn was completed. I simply miscalculated the height of my head

with respect to the boom and took the full force of the boom swinging about 90+ degrees powered by 12-15 knots of wind right into the back left side of my head, which left one knot. We sailed on, but later, I knew I was concussed and got checked out by a doctor. I haven't been back on the water since then (May 31st) because of it.

When I do get back on the water, I will wear a helmet while doing any sailing for a while and for racing indefinitely. It's a little embarrassing to think of wearing a helmet on something that isn't a foiling catamaran or a sexy sport boat, especially on a Scot, and there are other issues like the fact that it actually makes your head a slightly bigger target. But when you're over six feet tall, it's hard to keep your head below the boom all the time and I can't afford to risk another blow like the last one without some protection. So I made my own decision on it. Back in May, I saw one of the Georgetown kids wearing a helmet when he was landing one of the 420s they race. At the time I was pretty sure I knew why. Now I'm going to do it.

I'm not going on a PFD or helmet crusade for the club. I love sailing and I don't want to miss out on it, so I'm just trying to make the right decisions to manage risk based on my circumstances and encourage others to take appropriate risks while making their own right decisions.

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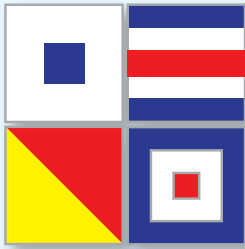
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July 2015 A Note to Skippers

Rob Reuter, Skipper Certification Director

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SCOW Teams Up With Special Olympics Athletes	2	
Updates from the Maintenance Locker	3	The Scots are Cruisers are being well employed for private reservations as well as club functions. The new Scot sail stowage procedures and rigging are becoming second nature. Thanks for all your efforts are adherence to the SCOW Way. Both the Board and I appreciate it.
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Can I Use An e-Signature?	8	Here are a few things to keep in mind based that merit mention having looked aft mid-season.
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Handheld Radios - Treat these as though they are as important to enjoying sailing as the boats and sails are themselves. Add radio care, stowage and handling to your thought process used in sailing and stowing sails. Take care of these assets.
Scot Safety Bags - Do the same as above for the safety bags. Lets not leave them outside next to the boats overnight.

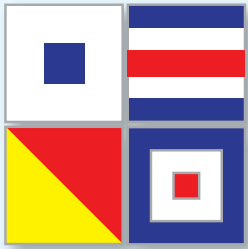
Fenders - Have your crew lay the fenders on the deck as a first step in raising or deploying them. The making or un-making of the fender line is much easier with two hands. Dont worry if they are messy because of the following mention.

Wash off the Boats - Hose off the Scots and get the bucket and soap out of the dock box to scrub off the cruiser deck and freeboard. And remember to remove all trash and food items and wipe down the sink and the cabin sole (floor).

Cleat Hitches - All Skippers had to demonstrate the cleat hitch to be certified. Use this skill to tie up the cruisers especially.

These are just a few from the observations mid-year looking aft. The over-arching SCOW mantra is to "Leave the boat better than how you found it". This is a great policy to keep in mind because its a way of "Paying it Forward". What you put in you will get out!

If you have any comments, questions or generally observations related to the skipper process or requirements, please drop me an email at skipper@scow.org.



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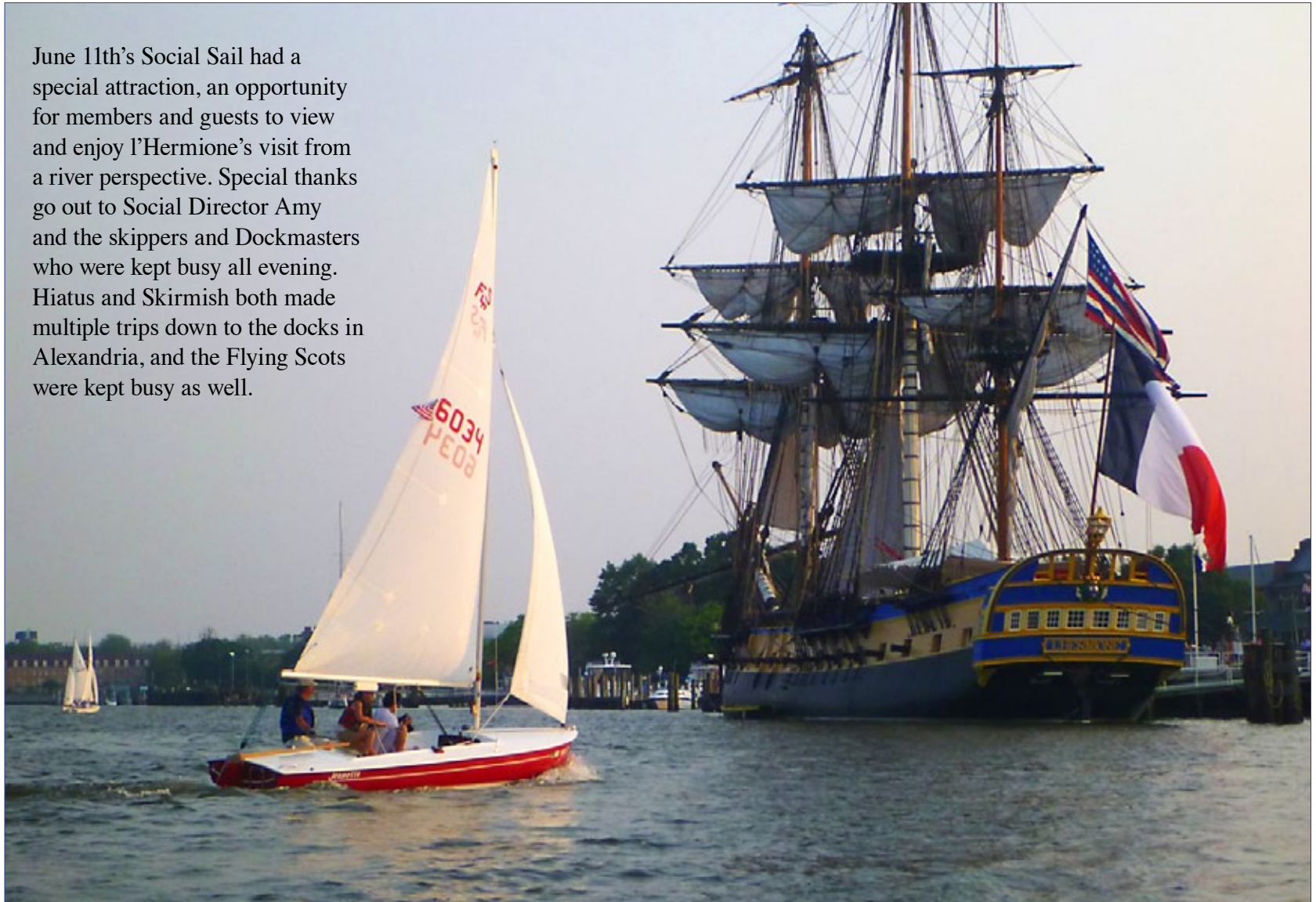
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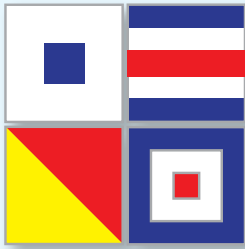
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Members Enjoy l'Hermione's Visit to Alexandria

June 11th's Social Sail had a special attraction, an opportunity for members and guests to view and enjoy l'Hermione's visit from a river perspective. Special thanks go out to Social Director Amy and the skippers and Dockmasters who were kept busy all evening. Hiatus and Skirmish both made multiple trips down to the docks in Alexandria, and the Flying Scots were kept busy as well.



*SCOW member Richard Kaiser, backed by his wife and son, moves in to board French frigate l'Hermione, cutlasses and pistols at the ready.
Photo by Mike Hooban.*



July 2015 Solstice Sail a Big Success

Amy Deckelbaum, Social Director

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On June 25th about 60 SCOW members and guests participated in SCOW's first ever "solstice sail." This event gave members and guests a time to socialize, taste some homemade food, and get a bit of sailing time.

Thanks to our attendees, the event had a range of food items from pies and cookies to fried chicken and salad. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and no one left hungry (and several left with more food than they came with). The event also served as an opportunity to learn about the Leukemia Cup and fundraising opportunities with several members raffling off Leukemia Cup related gifts.

Social Sail is held each Thursday. Please read your email for more upcoming social events.



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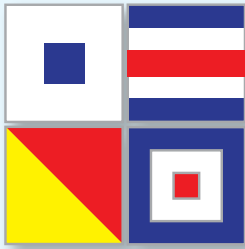
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July 2015 “Can I use an E-signature?” Unfortunately, Not Yet

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A number of members and prospective members have asked “Can I use an e-signature to sign the annual Membership Agreement and Skipper Agreement?”. The answer is “Unfortunately, not yet.” Here’s why.

Background: SCOW by-laws require a member to both pay fees and waive liability every year to renew membership and skipper status. At present, this means downloading a copy of the Membership Agreement from SCOW’s website, printing it, signing it, and sending the signed document to SCOW. Hoping to simplify the process, we did some research on e-signature functionality and the companies providing it.

How an E-signature works (at its simplest): The companies providing e-signature functionality all do it much the same way. Someone, in SCOW’s case the Membership Director, logs in to the company’s website, uploads the document that needs to be signed, and sends the new or renewing member an email with a link to the document (in this case, the Membership or Skipper Agreement).

When the member receives the email and clicks on the link, he is directed to the site where the document is resident, clicks “Sign” and “Save” and is done. The document is stored on the company’s website and everyone receives a copy

Why we can’t implement this, yet: At present, almost all membership emails are system-generated in response to specific events initiated by the member (applications, renewals). The Membership Director responds to information about those events by updating member records and filing Agreements, either electronically or on paper. The email requesting an e-signature, however, can’t be generated from within SCOW’s membership database; each one has to be generated by the Membership Director from within a different system. The work load, for over 400 members, would be unmanageable, given that we are all volunteers with full-time day jobs. A more complex solution that requires less effort could be implemented but it involves modifications to SCOW’s membership management software. This isn’t allowed by our software provider and would in any case be too costly.

Suggestions welcome! Perhaps we’ve overlooked something. If you’re familiar with e-signature functionality, have implemented it in your own organization, and can think of how we can get around the cost and effort constraints I’ve described, please contact me at: membership@scow.org with your suggestions.

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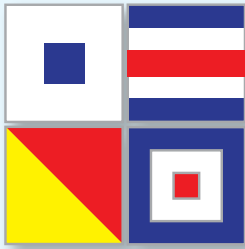
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Contact the Board

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2015 Officers

Commodore.....	Luis Rivas.....	commodore@scow.org
Vice Commodore	David Beckett	vice@scow.org
Secretary	Barbara Thacker	secretary@scow.org
Treasurer	Mike Hooban.....	treasurer@scow.org

2015 Board Members

Training Director	Jonathan Thron.....	training@scow.org
Skipper Director	Rob Reuter.....	skipper@scow.org
Social Director	Amy Deckelbaum.....	social@scow.org
Maintenance Director	Jim Talley	maintdir@scow.org
River/Bay Director	Kristine Sadusky	river@scow.org
Racing Director	Julian Mallett	racing@scow.org
Membership Director	Elisabeth Graham.....	membership@scow.org

2015 Board Appointees

Chair, Training & Skipper Certification Committee.....	John Rodgers	TSCC@scow.org
Chair, Boat Assets Committee	Alex White	BAC@scow.org
Chair, Investments Committee	VACANT	investment@scow.org
Chair, Audit Committee	VACANT	audit@scow.org
Channels Editor.....	Barbara Thacker	editor@scow.org
Membership Coordinator	Henry Cheng	members@scow.org
Email Administrator	Jeff Teitel	postmaster@scow.org
Picasa Pictures	George Clark	pictures@scow.org
Web Editor	Luis Rivas.....	webmaster@scow.org

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In the mean time, sail!