

FEBRUARY 2021

CHANNELS

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE SAILING CLUB OF WASHINGTON



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PHOTO CREDIT: MARTHA MOORE

COMMODORE'S LOG

BY BRIAN MCPHERSON

If Punxsutawney Phil's shadow is any indication, we are expecting another six weeks of winter. Thanks to our dedicated team of volunteers, we are able to connect as a club virtually. In fact, many of you joined in for our annual *Afterglow* party. Thanks to **Marie Brennan** for organizing. It was great to see many of you logged in and sharing sailing stories!



Keeping with that theme, our new Racing Director, **Bonnie Sylwester**, presented the first of several planned webinars. Bonnie's topic on "Crew Development" was well attended and reviewed the responsibilities and expectations of BOTH crew and skipper, whether cruising or racing. It was followed by an amusing discussion between skippers and crew.

Stay tuned for additional webinars that will get you ship shape for the upcoming season. The presentations will have something for all our members. Topics will include a racing rules update, Coast Guard safety, cruising basics (Feb 17), understanding weather, and *Rub of the Rust*. Other topics are also being explored. Be sure to check the SCOW [website](#) for "UPCOMING EVENTS."

Membership Renewal

As you may have guessed, we will not have our traditional *Re-Up Brunch* this year, but renewing your membership is as important as ever. Renewal emails will be sent February 15 – take advantage of "Early Bird Special" pricing. Our club's slip and storage fees are increasing for 2021 by over \$5,000. That's a 29% increase over last year! The "Early Bird Special" ends March 31 and allows our members to benefit from last year's rates. After March 31 the fees will increase a modest amount.

Practice Your Knots

Avoid the embarrassment of the first time out this spring realizing you've forgotten your basic sail knots! There are many resources available, including the *American Sailing Association* videos found [here](#) or *Animated Knots* [here](#) and on page 3 of this issue.

-Brian

In honor and celebration of *Black History Month*, here's a great read about **Captain Bill Pinkney**, the first African-American to solo circumnavigate the globe in 1992. Fascinating man and journey -- both on the water and off!

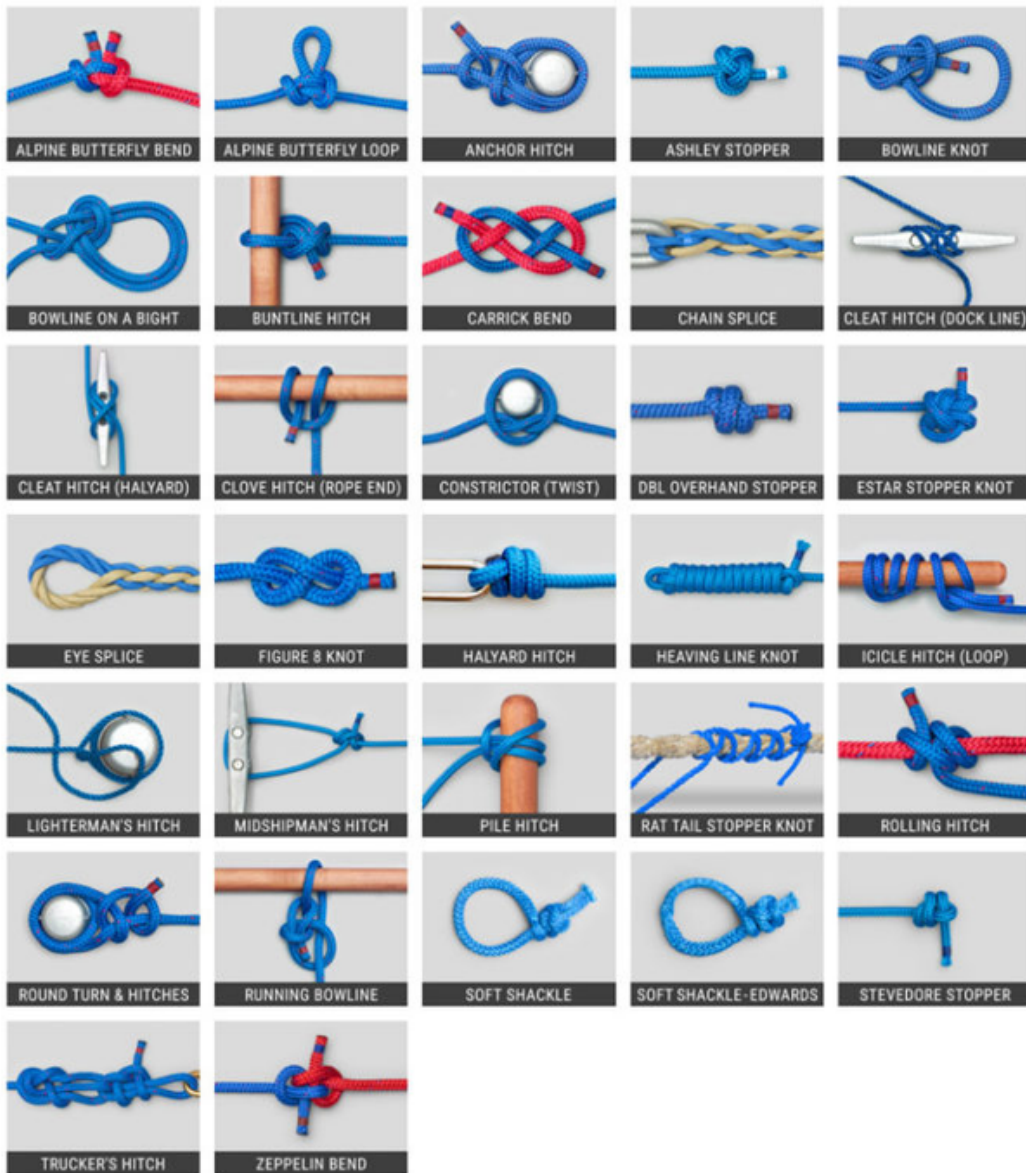
[**As Long as it Takes: Meeting the Challenge**](#)



LEARN SOMETHING *new*

BOATING KNOTS

[CLICK HERE FOR STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS AND TUTORIALS](#)



ANIMATED KNOTS™ BY GROG

COUCH SAILING

BY SCOTT MCCONNELL

I usually subscribe to the notion of real personal interaction over anything my cellphone has to give me. Because of some acquired personal time this year I have found myself looking for a sailing game for my phone. I have searched the digital seas and have come up with one that is most like our Wednesday night racing: [Virtual Regatta Inshore](#). I have found it to be the most popular, least glitchy and able to sail without paying any money or blood.

VR Inshore has daily regattas that last 24 hours and are almost always three to five races scored. You can do a hundred races in a day but only the top races will be scored. I would say three quarters of the people racing are active sailors. The game is available on iPhone, Android and PC. Gameplay controls are a little slow for the serious video game crowd, but the game is supposed to be a tactical challenge, not teach you how to sail.

The one main difference from real sailing rules is the protest, there is none. Time and opportunity are thrown out the window in favor of not sticking your nose where it does not belong. The computer judges interactions and makes the calls very well. When you do foul someone, the computer will show you the rule you broke and slows your boat down for seconds while you suffer for your ignorance. Not once have I witnessed the computer make a bad call.

The first race of every regatta the game gives you all the help for free. Help comes in the form of the computer steering the boat to velocity made good (VMG), wind forecast, time to the line and it will show you the wind shadows. After the first race, it's up to you to choose the help you need or want.

I recommend only using the VMG because the others are almost useless and they cost credits. There are two rewards for racing, a blue credit and a green credit. The blue credit is only good to change the look of your boat and the green credit is for use on the racing helps. The blue ones are worthless and the green ones are a big help. You can always enter your credit card and buy credits, but it's not really needed.

ANNAPOLIS YACHT CLUB, EASTPORT AND EVEN THE PRESTIGIOUS VIENNA SAILING CLUB ALL HAVE ONLINE TEAMS AND RACES.

VR Inshore is a great racing trainer because of the realism. Wind shadows, strong winds and course corrections are all part of winning the game. There are little and huge wind shifts to keep everything fair. Downwind some boats have spinnakers and some do not. One tip I have learned with this game is the downwind velocity made good angles change with wind speed. I've been in a boat for years and that never really clicked until I played on my phone.

Annapolis Yacht Club, Eastport and even the prestigious Vienna Sailing Club all have online teams and races. There is a slightly steep learning curve to the game play but after five or six races anyone can get the hang of it. Playing the game is a good way to learn the rules and nuances of the sport in a safe environment free from mistakes. Even if you sail in San Diego Bay doing the one hundred race schedule, you won't get as much helm time. I will warn you about an extremely smart and good looking guy who only sails orange boats. He is nasty aggressive before the start.

JANUARY SAILING

PHOTOS BY TIM BLISS

Ready, SAIL set



TRIVIA: TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

- 01** Your disabled sailboat has been taken under tow. When a fog bank rolls in, what sound signals should you make?
- 02** What is the origin of the term "mayday" for an emergency call?
- 03** Where on a sailboat are you most likely to find an angel?
- 04** Few people with anacraophobia become sailors. Why? What are they afraid of?
- 05** What is a "spar"?



THE SAILOR'S GIFT GUIDE

With Valentine's Day coming up fast, you may be in need of a gift for your favorite sailor. Take a look at the list below for ideas.

Hint: sailors are known to accept gifts for all sorts of occasions or none at all!

- Rechargeable Headlamp
- Leather Journal and Logbook
- Sailor's Knife
- Travel Coffee Press
- Inflatable PFD
- Fancy Compass
- Racing Watch
- Foul Weather Gear
- Polarized Sunglasses
- Tilley Hat
- Books about Sailing -- you can find a list of eight great books [here!](#)



[CLICK HERE TO CHECK YOUR ANSWERS!](#)

FEBRUARY EVENTS

9 | FLYING SCOT RACING RULES | 7PM
JOIN WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SAILOR, ZEKE HOROWITZ AND ONE DESIGN EXPERT AND SAILMAKER, BRIAN HAYES, TO LEARN THE BASIC RULES OF RACING | [REGISTER HERE](#)

12 | SPINSHEET VIRTUAL HAPPY HOUR | 5PM
VALENTINE'S EDITION ABOUT THE JOYS AND CHALLENGES OF CRUISING AS A COUPLE | [CLICK HERE TO JOIN](#)

17 | SCOW WEBINAR: CRUISING BASICS VIA ZOOM | 7PM

18 | ANNAPOLIS MARITIME MUSEUM WINTER LECTURE SERIES | 7PM
THE 2021 AMERICA'S CUP AND OLYMPIC SAILING. SPEAKER: GARY JOBSON, WORLD-RENOWNED SAILOR, AUTHOR, COLUMNIST, AND COMMENTATOR. \$10/FREE FOR AMM MEMBERS | [REGISTER HERE](#)

19 | SPINSHEET VIRTUAL HAPPY HOUR | 5PM
THE MOST COMMON SOLO SAILING EMERGENCIES | [CLICK HERE TO JOIN](#)

26 | SPINSHEET VIRTUAL HAPPY HOUR | 5PM
COMMON THINGS "JERKS" DO ON THE WATER AND HOW TO NOT BE THAT GUY/GAL | [CLICK HERE TO JOIN](#)

MARCH 1 | SCOW BOARD MEETING VIA ZOOM | 7PM

WINTER SAILING

PHOTO ESSAY BY CHRIS VUILLE-KOWING

This past December, Captain **Bill Davenport**, along with our estimable Membership Director **Esther Petrilli-Massey**, her niece **Krista**, **Dina Khaled**, **Kira Vuille-Kowing**, and **Chris Vuille-Kowing** put in and filled their sails for a glorious (albeit chilly) afternoon adventure out on the mighty Potomac, carried along by the good ship *Firefly*. Plans are in the works to enter *Firefly* into fast approaching races out upon the Chesapeake, and all of the crew is very excited to go for the gold!"



WHO'S WHO IN SCOW

2021 OFFICERS

Brian McPherson, Commodore | commodore@scow.org

Chip Lubsen, Vice Commodore | vice@scow.org

Jenn Joint, Secretary | secretary@scow.org

Mike Hooban, Treasurer | treasurer@scow.org

2021 BOARD MEMBERS

Marie Brennan, Social Activities Director | social@scow.org

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Carlie Smith, River/Bay Director | river@scow.org

Dana Howe, Maintenance Director (Flying Scots) |
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Wayne Williams, Maintenance Director (Cruisers) |
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Bonnie Sylwester, Racing Director | racing@scow.org

Esther Petrilli-Massey, Membership Director | membership@scow.org

Becky Cole, Skipper Director | skipper@scow.org

2021 BOARD APPOINTEES

John Rogers | Chair, Training & Skipper Certification Committee |
TSCC@scow.org

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