

# ChanNels

The Newsletter of the Sailing Club of Washington  
June 2010

## Commodore's Log

*By Chris Von Guggenberg, Commodore*

Dear SCOW members,

June is upon us and with it come long days for socializing, racing and generally being out and about on the water; on June the 2nd our Basic Sailing Summer series class will begin for those of you who signed up for it. We look forward to many more activities during the month, not the least of which is the Tim's River Shore event which at this point seems to be off to a great start.

The board continues to work toward improving your membership experience, one of which is to address the current policy with regard to Small Craft Advisories, a thorny issue which several of my predecessors have tried to address in the past several years. We hope to shape a new policy which balances the club's needs to protect it's assets with the members' desire to challenge their skills in heavier wind conditions.

There are so many of you whom I would like to thank for your efforts, the first of whom are my fellow board members, those involved in training, those who sponsor social sails, the skippers who take visitors out, those who skipper the racing program such that our members can further their appreciation for sailing. In short, there is a great deal to be thankful for.

We look forward to seeing you at the marina.

Sincerely

Chris von Guggenberg, Commodore

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There is a saying in Washington, D. C. -

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“If you don’t like the weather, wait a minute and it will change”.

So true, so true! But wait! We are out sailing on the River or Bay! How safe will we be? What effects will a change in pressure have? Two fronts are colliding – what is going to happen? How much time do I have? What do those clouds mean? How can I “read” the weather for safer sailing?

Come to June 14<sup>th</sup> General Membership meeting to hear member, skipper and trainer Jan Earle’s excellent program on

“Weather and Sailing”

General Membership Meeting, Holiday Inn, Old Town  
June 14<sup>th</sup>

Happy Hour: 6:30pm – 7:30pm

(1/2 price bar menu and drinks)  
Courtesy parking behind hotel

Business Meeting and Speaker: 7:30pm – 9:00pm

At the Old town Holiday Inn , 625 1st St, Alexandria, VA 22314  
(Across from the Giant)

**PLEASE NOTE FOR NEXT MONTH:**

The July member meeting at the Old Town Holiday Inn will be held on **July 19** due to a scheduling conflict with the hotel.

**Happy hour pricing at the Old Town Holiday Inn**

*Special Note from the Commodore*

Please note that the bar's happy hour is contractually extended to 7:30pm (not 7:00pm as described on the menu) on the evening of our monthly meetings. Please further note, as outlined below that the happy hour prices extend only to the bar area, not the tables adjoining the bar area. This from the catering manager of the hotel:

“Typically Happy Hour Pricing is only for guests who order at the bar, this is how it works everywhere. I know the bar got crazy last meeting, however I have informed the restaurant manager and staff with your meeting dates so that they are staffed and prepared. Also, guests

are welcome to let the server know they are with the group, and if there is no room at the bar they can order with happy hour pricing through a table. They must let them know that they are with the group receiving happy hour pricing though, and ensure that the server is aware of this before entering their order.”

The bar menu prices at this point are as follows:

Holiday Inn Happy Hour: (4:30-7:30pm, Monday-Friday)

All Bar Food ½ Price

\$2 Domestic Beers

\$3 Imported Beers

\$3.50 House Glass of Wine

\$4 rail cocktail

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*Next River Event:*

## **Summer Solstice Seafood Soiree Coming Up!**

*By Jack Weaver, River Party Dude*

The fourth annual Summer Solstice Seafood Soiree is coming up on the weekend of June 19-20 (the longest day of the year!). As usual, the fleet will be sailing down to Tim’s Rivershore Crabhouse in Dumfries, consuming copious quantities of crabs and other delicious stuff, and then seeking safe anchorage for the evening. We can attest from past visits that everything Tim’s puts on the table is top drawer. They also have a water-taxi that comes to your boat and takes you ashore and back. The boat drivers are awesome! They can hold that barge six inches off of your transom and never touch you.

After dinner we will drop the hook somewhere for the night. In years past, we have favored Mattowoman Creek/Sweden Point Marina. Unfortunately, that expanse of water has turned into a hydrilla farm. Boats that went into Sweden Point last year had a very difficult time getting in and out.

This year, the club is in negotiations with Leesylvania State Park, located just north of Powell’s Creek on the same side of the river as Tim’s. They have a beautiful little marina, with showers and a snack bar. They have agreed that we can come in behind their breakwater and drop the hook. The club has filed a Special Use Permit application asking that we be able to tie up to their seawall and use the on-shore facilities. Keep your fingers crossed!

So far, six skippers have expressed their interest. As things move along, we will keep you advised, thru the various e-mail lists. Watch for details as they firm up and mark your calendars!

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“The elation that is felt at speed, running before the wind and sea, may be so great as to overcome the seamanlike caution the ocean demands, but sooner or later the sea will catch up with you.”

Hal Roth,  
Author, “Two Against Cape Horn”  
*Quote submitted by Wayne Williams, SCOW Member*

## Exciting River and Bay Activities Planned for this Summer

*By Lisa Carr, River/Bay Coordinator*

**Memorial Day Weekend, May 29 – 31**, is the **Rhode River Raft-Up** with sailing on the Chesapeake Bay. First night raft-up is on the Rhode River followed by a Sunday raft-up at Dunn Cove. For more information contact Jeff Teitel at [Jeff@Teitel.net](mailto:Jeff@Teitel.net).

**June 19 - 20** is our Summer Solstice Seafood Overnight sail and raft up on the Potomac River. A highlight every year is dinner at Tim's Rivershore Crab House. Cruisers are hopefully docking at Leesylvania State Park, which has showers and a snack bar. For more information, contact Jack Weaver, our party dude extraordinaire, at [longweav@juno.com](mailto:longweav@juno.com).

**June 25 at 6:30** (boats leave at 7:00 pm) join us for our monthly **Friday Night Moonlight Sail and Raft Up**. ALL SCOW emails will be sent approximately two weeks prior to the raft-up to recruit skippers and crew.

**July 3-4** we are hosting a raft-up on the Chesapeake Bay. More information will be available closer to the date.

**July 11 from 11:30 to 3:30 pm** the Schooner *Woodwind* is offering a **tour of Chesapeake Bay Lighthouses**. Sail to as many as three lighthouses and learn about their history, importance and present day condition by a lecturer from the U.S. Lighthouse Society. For more information go to [www.schoonerwoodwind.com](http://www.schoonerwoodwind.com).

**July 18 from 1:30 to 5:00 pm** the Schooner *Woodwind* is offering a **Wine tasting Cruise**. Go to [www.schoonerwoodwind.com](http://www.schoonerwoodwind.com) for more information.

**August 7** is the Fourth Annual Smoots Cove Dodge-the-water-taxis raft-up. More details will be forthcoming from Jack Weaver.

**September 19 from 5:00 to 8:00 pm** the Schooner *Woodwind* is offering a “Yo Ho Ho and a Bottle of Rum Pirate Cruise”. For more information go to [www.schoonerwoodwind.com](http://www.schoonerwoodwind.com).

**October 13** is the **start of the Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Race**. Plan to take the day off from work and get on the Schooner *Woodwind* Spectator boat. Cheer on the *Woodwind II* which is competing and watch over 45 schooners, including the *Pride of Baltimore II*, the *Mystic Whaler*, and other beautiful tall ships sail from the start of the race at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge towards Portsmouth, their final destination. For more information go to <https://www.schoonerwoodwind.com/races.asp>. This is an experience that you will not forget.

**October 22-24 from 9 am to 3 pm** is the Cambridge Schooner Rendezvous. One hour sails will be offered in Cambridge, MD from schooners, many of which participated in the schooner race. See <http://www.cambridgeschoonerrendezvous.com> for more info.

**October 28-31** is the Downrigging Weekend in Chestertown, MD. The schooner *Lynx*, a replication of an 1812 privateer from Long Beach, CA is headlining the weekend festival. More information will be coming soon. □

## **Explore the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail**

*By Lisa Carr*

Captain John Smith and fourteen English colonists left Jamestown on a 30-foot open boat, or shallop, to explore and map the Chesapeake Bay on June 2, 1608. The explorers traveled 1,700 miles in a little over three months with John Smith's observations resulting in a 1612 map of the Bay, which was used for nearly a century according to the John Smith 400 Project.

"Smart" buoys are now in place throughout the Chesapeake Bay to mark Captain John Smith's route. The 16 large yellow bay buoys, all part of the Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System (CBIBS), can be located at [www.baybuoy.org](http://www.baybuoy.org). Data from the buoys can be obtained by the internet, by mobile phone ([www.buoybay.org/m](http://www.buoybay.org/m)) and by calling toll-free to 1-877-BUOY BAY). The NOAA Smart Buoys provide real-time weather and water observations such as wind, weather, wave height and currents. The buoys assist sailors in making safe choices before traveling into the open waters of the Bay. The buoys provide trail users with navigational information plus descriptions of that location on the Bay 400 years ago. The buoys also collect and transmit water quality data for scientific and educational uses.

The Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historical Trail is America's first all-water National Historic Trail and it follows the routes of John Smith's 17<sup>th</sup> century Chesapeake Bay trip. The trail was established in 2006 by an Act of Congress with information about the trail sponsored by the National Park Service, the Friends of Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historical Trail and the Sultana Projects.

Captain John Smith's shallop is expected to be heading from Chestertown to Annapolis in May to be part of a six month exhibit on the Annapolis waterfront near the National Sailing Hall of Fame. The shallop will be on display at the Annapolis City Dock for six months.

For more information on the Captain John Smith trail, go to

<http://www.sultanaprojects.org/johnsmith400.htm>, <http://www.johnsmith400.org/intro.htm>,  
<http://www.nps.gov/cajo/index.htm>, <http://www.friendsofthejohnsmithtrail.org/>.

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## **Spring Fling Smashing Success!**

*By Jack Weaver, River Party Dude*

The Spring Fling, SCOW's third annual rendezvous at Fort Washington Marina the weekend of May 1-2, was a total blast! We had eight boats and about forty people, including some who came by land-yacht.

Boats in attendance were: Valhalla, with the Party Dude and his all-girl crew; Tango II, Rob Van Tassel and crew; John Stricklett aboard Moody Blue; Lucid, with Ryan Kautz and friend; Tamarisk, George Umberger and the Caseys; Intrepid, Mike Rothenberg and a sailing buddy from college days; Dragonfly, Frank and Sandy Tugwell's new custom-built Rhodes 22 (truly the prettiest girl at the dance!); and, Topaz, Paul and Judy Cyre up.

Most boats were in by 1600, and happy hour took off in earnest. Around 1800, we fired up the grills and began the "you bring it, you burn it!" routine. Cuisine was varied and imaginative, and nobody went away hungry. By 2100, most crew were safely tucked in.

Sunday morning, the club provided breakfast for all. There was fresh fruit and juices, pancakes, eggs scrambled or to order, bacon and sausage, coffee and tea. What more could anyone (even with a hangover) ask? As always, a very big thank you is in order to Faith Rodell and her stalwart crew for bringing and setting up the grills and stoves for the cookout on Saturday night, and for preparing breakfast on Sunday.

Look forward to the fourth annual Spring Fling again next year, on the weekend closest to “Hurray, hurray, the first of May. See you there! □

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## **1st Lunar Raft-up, Sailing to Mt Vernon and Cinco de Mayo Sailing**

*By Wayne Williams, SCOW Cruiser Skipper*

The first SCOW full moon raft-up happened Friday evening April 30th. Rebecca shadowed Topaz out of the Washington Sailing Marina and down to Alexandria. We motor-mained into the wind and the tidal current and past a very nice Brigantine (with a big square sail in the front and 2 fore aft masts in the back) that is tied up in Alexandria. The ship was named the Peacemaker.

After enjoying the sunset view of King Street and the Old Dominion Yacht Club we drifted back with the light southern breeze and soft wind from the south. Crowes Nest requested Rebecca to be the anchor boat for the raft up and we splashed the anchor in by the shore ahead of the Brigantine so we could enjoy the view of the tall ship. Intrepid joined the raft-up but Topaz declined. We all enjoyed good food and good stories.



The next day - Rebecca had a good day sail by SCOW sailors. Then a fresh crew and I had the opportunity to watch the Kentucky Derby in Indigo with a small gathering that cheered when Borel once again hugged the rail on a wet track and won the race. Once we departed into the sunset and soft Bahama Breeze we practiced our dead reckoning, and gps skills while navigating the marks down to Fort Washington. The stars were bright and the moon came out (about an hour later than the night before) and the light breeze just kept getting better - so after a vote the crew decided to take the turn in the Potomac and head up a bit close hauled into the breeze and down past Mt Vernon. Should we turn yet? No - the sail was one of those once a year fantastic breezes that makes you want to keep going and going and sail into the night and down to the Bahamas (or at least Tims).



Cinco de Mayo arrived - and sadly we found that there was no live music arranged at Indigo this sailing season. Perhaps the economy. Topaz did sail and Rebecca too. Commodore Chris took the boat under the new Woodrow Wilson bridge and we enjoyed looking at the new National Harbor with our binoculars. On the way back - the Brigantine was still there to enjoy.

To read more about the ship, see: <http://www.twelvetribe.com/peacemaker/>

## **SCOW Works with Athletes in Special Olympics Sailing**

*By Allen Flanigan, Sailing Coordinator, Area 26 Special Olympics VA*

One of the more challenging and rewarding activities SCOW participates in each year is Special Olympic Sailing. Special Olympics Sailing seeks to provide people from ages 8-80 with mental disability the opportunity to learn how to sail competitively. It is a Unified Sport, meaning that athletes with mental disability are typically paired with nondisabled athletes (partners) to form a sailing team. The Special Olympics athletes participate in the handling and sailing of the boat based on their abilities, just like on a regular sailing team.

Washington Sailing Marina has hosted a Special Olympics sailing program for well over a decade. Ben Ackerman and his wife Jeanne, long time Hobie Fleet 96 sailors (and tireless volunteers and helpers in support of sailing at the WSM), initiated a program for Montgomery County athletes that continues to this day, with the help of volunteers from local fleets, including SCOW. Over two dozen athletes from Montgomery County and Northern Virginia show up on Monday nights in June and July to learn how to trim sails, steer the boat, and sail round a race course with help from experienced sailing partners. Their hard work culminates in a one day regatta at the WSM in July, and a weekend regatta hosted by St. Mary's College in Maryland.

I can assure you that working with these athletes is one of the most rewarding things you can do, on or off the water. We need skippers, safety officers (on the boat volunteers who can help out if needed), and help launching and retrieving the boats. Bring a smile, a positive attitude, lots of patience, and prepare to be amazed by some of the Washington area's greatest athletes!

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## **What should be SCOW's policy regarding safety and bad weather?**

**Or**

## **Should we revise the small craft advisory (SCA) rule for the Flying Scots? And, if so, How?**

*By John Rogers*

*Chairperson, SCOW Training and Skipper Certification Committee*

*2007 Commodore*

There has been much talk over the past few years whether the club's Small Craft Advisory policy and policy for use of Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) on SCOW boats should be reviewed and revised. The Training and Skipper Certification Committee would like to hear what SCOW skippers and other members think about this to help determine how the club should proceed. Following is a brief overview of the club's current policy, the issues, and some initial thoughts on possible changes.

*(continued on page 8)*

### **Current boat use policy:**

“SCOW boats shall not be taken from slip during severe or unsafe weather conditions, including high winds and lightning. In addition cruising boats shall not be taken away from slips if there is (or is a forecast for) winds of 25 knots or more; daysailers shall not be taken away from slips when small craft advisories have been issued or if there is (or is a forecast for) winds of 20 knots or more. Even in lower wind or fair weather, no skipper should take a boat out in conditions in which he or she feels that the safety of the crew and boat could be at risk; this is a judgment based on the skipper’s confidence, skill level, experience, crew experience, and weather conditions.” (SCOW SKIPPER REQUIREMENTS AND BOAT USE POLICY)

### **Problems with the current policy**

As many skippers are aware, there are times when there is a small craft advisory and the winds are not at small craft advisory levels, resulting in “I’d-rather-be-sailing” frustration. Of course, there are also times when the winds are above SCA levels and there is no SCA. The problem is aggravated by changes to how the SCA is defined for our sailing area.

Although the formal definition of a small craft advisory is complicated, it amounts to the following: an SCA is issued if the forecast winds or gusts are above 17.5 knots. Prior to several years ago, an SCA was issued when the winds or gusts were above 20 knots. At that time the SCA rules agreed fairly well with the other provisions in the SCOW policy. Many years ago (perhaps 10 years) there was no wind speed restriction; it was left up to the skippers.

One concern I have about the current policy is that we cannot teach sailors how to sail in higher winds. Sailors must learn when they get caught in a storm.

### **PFD Requirements**

SCOW requirements for life jacket (PFD) use have always agreed with or exceeded local laws regarding what PFDs must be carried on the boat and requiring children under 13 to wear PFDs. The Flying Scot SIF requires that non-swimmers also wear a PFD.

In the interest of safety, there has been some discussion within SCOW of requiring life jackets at other times or in certain situations. Some states have considered requiring life jackets at all times; however, no laws have been passed.

### **Legal Issues**

THE SKIPPER IS ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SAFETY OF THE CREW AND VESSEL. This includes deciding whether to sail in the existing and anticipated conditions and whether to require all crew to wear PFDs.

*(continued on page 9)*



SCOW may also impose additional restrictions on the use of SCOW boats in order to limit liability, protect the SCOW boats and assets from damage, and provide some protection against poor judgment and unanticipated circumstances. SCOW's current SCA policy is an example of such a restriction.

The SCOW Board will consider the legal liability issues when evaluating possible changes to the SCOW policies. The first purpose of this article is to review issues that skippers should consider when going sailing and issues SCOW might consider in any revision of the current policy. The second purpose is to solicit comments from SCOW skippers and other members on what they think might be appropriate SCOW policies. This article does not attempt to discuss legal definitions and issues.

### **Factors to consider**

The factors that affect whether and when to wear a PFD are similar to the factors that affect whether it is safe to sail the Flying Scots. Some factors are under our control and some are not.

**Wind speed.** Obviously, wind speed is an important consideration that is already in the current SCOW policy, which mentions both wind speed and gusts. Should we have a separate limit for the wind speed (a two minute average speed) and for gusts (maximum speed)? Perhaps; however, higher wind speeds are associated with more gusty conditions. Due in part to how gusts are reported, gust speeds average about 5 MPH faster than the wind speeds. So setting a limit on one provides somewhat of a limit on the other.

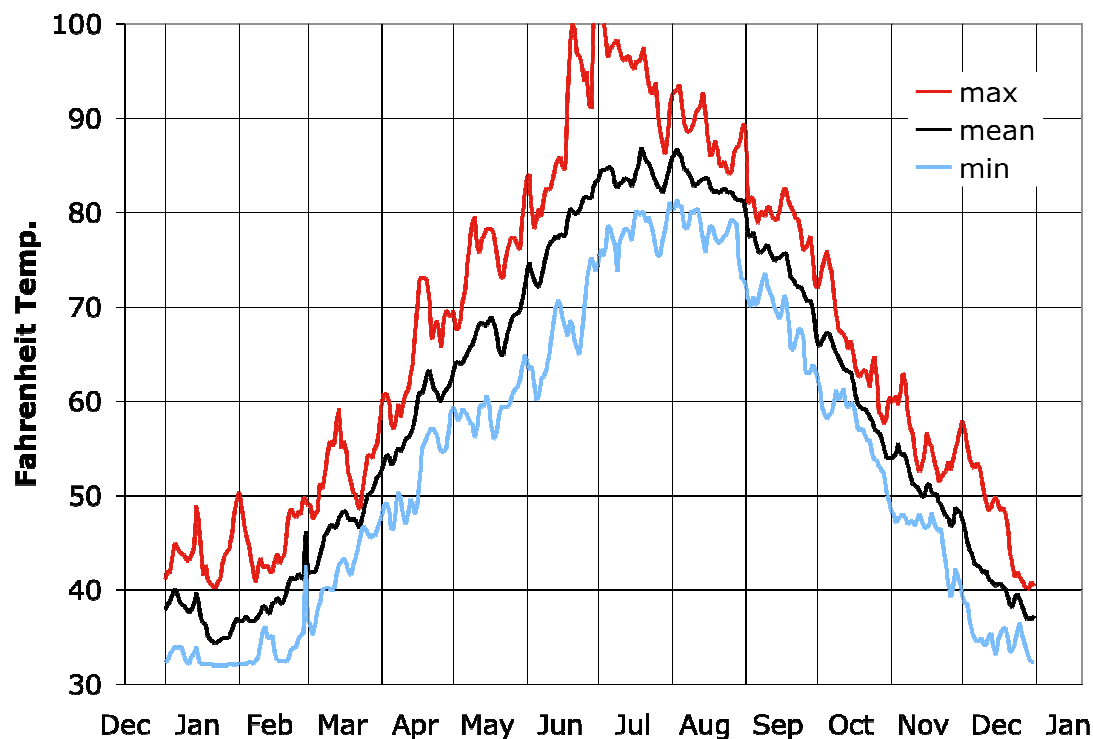
**The skipper and crew.** The abilities of the skipper and crew are important. Should SCOW make distinctions based on a skipper's ability? What if the crew has limited mobility? Should SCOW trainers be permitted to teach when there is a small craft advisory? Should different requirements apply to personal use and to Social Sail, where the crew may know little or nothing about sailing? What if we required two skippers in windy conditions for extra safety?

**Time of year and temperature.** There are many factors that are related to time of year. In the winter, air temperatures are lower, people wear heavier clothes making swimming difficult, the water is colder, survival time (if you go in) is much less, and fewer boats and people are out who can help with a recovery.

Additional information about survival in cold water can be found on the web. In particular, see: [http://gcaptain.com/maritime/blog/cold\\_water/](http://gcaptain.com/maritime/blog/cold_water/).

For reference, the following is a plot of water temperature in the Potomac River at Little Falls dam upstream of Georgetown. The plot shows the daily average, minimum, and maximum water temperatures from 1994 to 2006.

*(continued on page 10)*



**Safety factors that can easily be controlled by the skipper (and perhaps mandated by SCOW policy) include:**

- Reefing the sail;
- Limiting the distance from the marina, such as sailing only in the lagoon;
- Limiting the number of crew in the Flying Scot. In my experience, crew members have difficulty moving around the boat (perhaps reacting to a gust) when there are more than 4 people in the boat; and
- Wearing PFDs.

**Simplicity**

If we change the SCA policy or augment the requirements for PFDs, an important characteristic of any policy on boat use is simplicity; a few rules that are easy to understand.

So, how might the policy change? I do not know, but here is at least one idea:

From October through April, PFDs would be required and the Flying Scots could not be sailed if there was a small craft advisory.

From May through September:

If the predicted or observed winds or gusts were 26 knots or greater, the Flying Scots could not be sailed.

If there is a small craft advisory and predicted and observed winds and gusts are 25 knots or less, PFDs would be required and the Flying Scots could be sailed in the lagoon if reefed *(continued on page 11)*

What do you think? I might have additional limitations for Social Sail (limiting the number of people or the maximum wind to 20 knots). Is 25 knots a bit high? Unfortunately, the marine forecast is usually for winds to 20 knots or winds to 25 knots with no gradations in the middle. Should the rules change for the cruisers, perhaps by requiring PFDs in cold weather?

I plan to survey SCOW skippers on what rules they think are appropriate to protect the SCOW boats and sailors while allowing safe and enjoyable sailing. In addition, if you have thoughts on SCOW policy for the use of PFDs or the use of Flying Scots in windy conditions, send an email to the Training and Skipper Certification Committee, [TSCC@scow.org](mailto:TSCC@scow.org).

Thanks,

John Rogers  
Chairperson, SCOW Training and Skipper Certification Committee

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*From the Photo Site . . . . .*



*Maintenance Director Mark Hogan demonstrates new trailer steps*



*SCOW member Jim Klein in the first race of the year*



*SCOW member Alice Starcke in the first race of the year*

See other SCOW photos at: <http://picasaweb.google.com/Sailing.Club.of.Washington>

### **SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Class Availability -- The following classes have space:

Basic Sailing Fall: 5 spaces

Capsize 1st: 1

Capsize 2nd: 7

For more details, please contact training director Seth Allen at: [training@scow.org](mailto:training@scow.org)

Got an article idea, photos or other content for a future newsletter? Send an email to the editor, Tom Paquin, at: [editor@scow.org](mailto:editor@scow.org).

## Next Membership Meeting: Monday, June 14

**Guest Presenter:** Jan Earle, "Weather and Sailing"

**Location:** Holiday Inn, 625 First Street, Alexandria, Virginia

**Time:** Socializing begins at 6:30pm with reduced price happy hour food and drinks; meeting begins at 7:30pm

**Social Sail:** Every Thursday, Washington Sailing Marina, April - October, 6:00 pm  
**Social No-Sail:** Events and locations vary, December - April, 6:00 pm  
**Board Meetings** 1st Monday of every month, 7:00 pm (open to members)  
**Channels Content:** submit by the 20<sup>th</sup> of every month to: [editor@scow.org](mailto:editor@scow.org)  
**2010 Calendar:** <http://www.scow.org/calendar.html>  
**SCOW Pictures:** <http://picasaweb.google.com/Sailing.Club.of.Washington>  
**SCOW Website:** <http://www.scow.org>



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**For information about club activities**  
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