



January 2009

Vol. 39 No. 1

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## Officer On Deck



Robert "Smitty"  
Smith

2009 Commodore

Happy New Year! Just one more event until we close out our 2008 season, and, of course, I am talking about the Awards Banquet at the Daugherty Center on January 31st. Carol has put together her last event as Social Chair and I am sure it will be as great as all the other events. I am looking forward to working with the BOD, Officers and the Program Chairs to help the club grow and continue to make SMSA the premier sailing club on the Chesapeake Bay. I am sure that 2009 will be another stellar year for SMSA, as we continue to improve our club by putting together the best race, cruise, junior and training programs on the Bay. We will also be looking to perform more improvements to our clubhouse and just have more fun overall at SMSA. So, keep an eye on the calendar and Clew for upcoming events and activities.

During the Christmas Walk, held the first weekend in December, we had an opportunity to introduce many in the area to our club and the programs we offer. Although it was a fun evening for those who were able to attend, our best recruiters are you, the members of SMSA. If you know a sailor, who is not currently a member, please invite them to the club to meet fellow sailors. Over the years, our members have proven to be our best selling point. If you know someone who has shown an interest in sailing, bring them down to the club and introduce them to some of our members. Your

encouragement could lead them to start cruising or may prompt interest in our big and small boat racing programs. It is amazing how many there are in this community who are not familiar with SMSA and just what we do. So, take some time in 2009 to reach out to potential members and help grow the club, while introducing new folks to the fun they can have on the waters of the Chesapeake Bay, as well as the Patuxent and Potomac Rivers. Cheers!

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## **Social – Awards Banquet January 31, 2009**

Happy New Year to all!



Carole Smith

2008 Social Chair

Well a new year is upon us and I hope everyone had a great ending to 2008. The next gathering is the 2008 Awards Banquet, Saturday 31 January at the J.T. Daugherty Center, Lexington Park. This is an RSVP event and is required before January 18, 2009. We will kick the evening off at 6:00 PM with Cocktails & Hors d'oeuvres. Dinner is at 7:00 PM with the awards at 8:00 PM followed by entertainment until 11:00 PM. There will be wine service with dinner. You should have received your invitation by now and need to drop the RSVP Card into the mail soon. Ensure the checks are made out to SMSA. If you know of boats that participate but are not club members now would be good time to notify the owners/skippers. I hope to see everyone there; this has always been a great evening. I still need a couple of volunteers to help with set up and guest reception, if you would like to help give me a call or shoot me an email [social@smsa.com](mailto:social@smsa.com).

I would like to say thank you to those that have helped me out over the last two years. It has been my pleasure to have been your Social Chair and I have had a great time putting the parties together for you. See you out on the water this summer and at events.

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## **Publicity – Help your club grow! Join Publicity!**

The Clew and the SMSA Yearbook don't happen by themselves. It takes a little bit of effort for them to appear every month or every April. However, it really doesn't take THAT much time on the part of volunteers for these publications to happen, especially when we have a little help.

The most common thing I hear when I approach other members about volunteering to

Tim Flaherty

Publicity Chair

carry some of the load of SMSA is, “I really don’t have the time.”

In reality, none of us really have the time; not the commodore, not the junior chairman, not the bar manager, etc. You get the drift. But we create a little bit of time to support our organization and to further our passion for sailing and camaraderie. But unfortunately, we keep falling back on the same small group of volunteers to do all the work.

This should change and if you haven’t volunteered a few hours per month to your club, then here’s your chance: The Publicity Committee needs volunteers to write articles, stuff envelopes, take pictures, work on web-related stuff, and perhaps represent SMSA at various publicity events.

Why is all of this important? Because we need to grow, and attract the interest of new members as well as keep the interest of existing members. Our message of sailing fun and fraternity needs to be out there! It won’t gobble up all your time to help, and you will I have fun and meet new, interesting people!

Right now, I need to call out some thanks to some people who have helped SMSA in the Publicity department in 2008. Our recently retired Clew editor, Mark Brownhill did a wonderful job of getting both a print and web version together. So, thanks to Mark for two years of service! Mark also edited the past two yearbooks, both of which came out very nicely! Linda Edwards has done a magnificent job of writing articles and sending club updates to SpinSheet magazine. Devon Feusahrens, Carrie Brownhill and Lisa Flaherty have been a big help in getting the Clew mailed in recent months. Thanks to Kate Miller stepped in and has served as the interim editor of the Clew for December and January. And a big round of applause for Kristy and Jimmy Yurko who have stepped up to be the Clew editors beginning with the February, 2009 issue! Devon has stepped up this year to put-together and maintain an SMSA MySpace page. I also hope to complete a project completing an SMSA DVD showing our facilities and all the fun stuff we do. This DVD would be passed along to potential new members, as well as being given out as sort of a “press packet.”

Please contact me at [timfmsa@yahoo.com](mailto:timfmsa@yahoo.com) or call 301-481-7474 to volunteer a couple hours per month. Please just don’t be an SMSA member; be a doer!

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Article By:

## **Racing – Race Committee Refresher**

Keith Jacobs

With the official start of winter only a few days away, now is as good a time as any to take a few minutes to keep ourselves “fresh” on Race Committee topics. After all, the first Frostbite race is only two months away. With that in mind, let’s consider a few

“what if” situations pertaining to starting a race.

The set up is as follows. A steady 10-knot breeze is blowing out of the southeast and 19 boats have checked-in via a radio call on VHF channel 72. You have settled on course K (green) - M (green) - Y (green). The Warning signal is due at 1300.

### **Situation #1**

Q: At 1258, you suddenly realize that the course has not been posted. What do you do?

A: Per RRS 27.1, you are required to post the course by the time of the Warning signal. Given that you now have less than 2 minutes to pull the letters from the flag bag, string them together, and post it on the guardrail, your best option is to signal Postponement (fly flag AP) at 1300, the time that the #5 pennant would normally have been hoisted as the Warning signal. Remember, the AP signal is hoisted with two sound signals. Now you can take some time to ensure that you pull the right letters (in the right colors), string them together in the right order, and securely fasten them to the guardrail.

Next, go ahead and announce the course to the competitors. It is recommended that you use the phonetic alphabet when speaking on the radio. In other words, for this set up call the course as, “Green Kilo, green Mike, green Yankee.” A “K” can sound like an “A,” a “B” sounds like “C” or “Z,” and so on. Also, do not shout into the radio and always shield the microphone from the wind.

Finally, when you and your volunteers are ready to go back into sequence, you will strike the AP signal with one sound signal, one minute before hoisting the #5 pennant as the Warning signal.

### **Situation #2**

Q: While striking the P flag 1 minute prior to the start of the race, the horn fails to sound. What should you do?

A: The simple answer is that you do absolutely nothing. Continue the sequence countdown as if nothing happened and start the boats on time. RRS 26 is very clear about this scenario and states, “Times shall be taken from the visual signals; the absence of a sound signal shall be disregarded.” So, as long as the flags are hoisted or struck on time, you should not go into Postponement if the gun misfires or the horn canister turns out to be empty. Also, never attempt to make the sound signal if the first try failed. It will be confusing to the competitors, and depending upon where in the sequence it occurs, the late signal could be misunderstood as something else. For example, if the horn does not sound at the start of a class, but is pressed 1-2 seconds later, racers may think you have indicated an Individual Recall, even if that was not your intention.

Understanding the rules will allow you to run the best possible race. Errors will occur; stay calm and take a second to think about your next step. Knowing the rules will allow you to manage and overcome these problems. Not only will this help you when

it is your turn for Race Committee, it will help you understand these situations better and how to handle them when you are racing.

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## Calendar

### January

2 (Fri) Membership Social  
9 (Fri) Membership Social  
**10 (Sat) Second Saturday Cruiser's Raft**  
16 (Fri) Membership Social  
23 (Fri) Membership Social  
**24 (Sat) 2009 Cruise Planning Meeting**  
30 (Fri) Membership Social  
**31 (Sat) 2008 Awards Banquet**

### February

6 (Fri) Membership Social  
**7 (Sat) Training Seminar**  
13 (Fri) Membership Social  
**14 (Sat) Second Saturday Cruiser's Raft**  
20 (Fri) Membership Social  
**21 (Sat) Training Seminar**  
27 (Fri) Membership Social

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