

The Sycamore Islander

May 2019 | Volume 98 Number 5



Most photos by Sue Super; one by Mark Friedrichs

Newsletter Contents

[Letter to Members re. New Liability Release Forms](#)

[Potomac Downriver Race](#)

[Summer Solstice Campout Returns](#)

[Spring Wildflower Walk Report](#)

[Club Expedition to Rupperts Island Photos](#)

[Spring Work-fest Photos](#)

[Caretaker's Log](#)

[April Meeting Minutes](#)

[Recommended Update of Sign-In Sheet](#)

[Recommended Parental Release Form](#)

May 8: Monthly Club Meeting, 8:00 pm, on the Island (if island is closed, at the home of John Noble); at the meeting:

- A new proposal regarding Senior Membership rules will be presented by the group tasked with developing it (see Membership notes from April Meeting Minutes, below)
- Potomac Riverkeeper, Dean Naujoks, will speak to us about recent efforts to monitor the river's water quality and use technology, such as the website and App "Swim Guide," to communicate those results to the public. Potomac Riverkeeper was donated a vessel, Sea Dog, to assist in these efforts. A recent Washington Post [article](#) described the Sea Dog's river monitoring role and its designer and donor, Adm J. Paul Reason.
- Proposed new liability-release forms (inserted at the end of this Islander) will be discussed

May 11: Downriver Race [Howard Morland, Canoe Cruisers Association; Star Mitchel, Sycamore Island coordinator; if river gauge is over 6 ft, race will be postponed to May 18]

June 12: Club Meeting, 8 pm, on the Island

June 22: Sycamore Island Summer Solstice Campout Returns

Relief Caretakers' Schedule and Online Sign-Up System

To sign-up to be a Relief Caretaker (any Saturday), you can access the "Sign-Up Genius" app from the [SycamoreIsland.org scheduling webpage](http://SycamoreIsland.org/scheduling) (or by clicking the Relief Caretaker Schedule and Instructions icon on the Club's home page). Click on the link. There are simple instructions. [You can also sign-up by contacting the Relief Caretaker Coordinator, Madeleine Carter, at madeleinecpcarter@gmail.com]. **A reminder that Joe Hage will be on vacation June 9 – 20, so we have lots of relief caretaker slots to fill during June – as well as one slot in May.** The app provides a calendar that now indicates ALL of the Relief Caretakers that have signed up through July and provides reminders. Relief Caretakers signed up for the coming month are:

May 4

9 am to 3 pm: Eric Simpson
3 to 8 pm: Sarah Beardmore and Mauro Martinell

May 18

9 am to 3 pm: Hayley Holdridge
3 to 8 pm: Jody & Bobby Benjamin

May 11

9 am to 3 pm: John Stiff
3 to 8 pm: Emily McClinton

May 25

9 am to 3 pm: **Volunteer Needed**
3 to 8:30 pm: Jennifer Urquhart

Thank You to all those that volunteered for April weekends, and to Peter and Julia Smith and Meredith Griggs who actually served.

[Letter to Club Members Regarding New Liability Release Forms](#)

from Richard Bertaut (President), John Noble (Vice President) and Rebecca Beynon (Law Supervisor)

We write to let you know of our recommendation to update the sign-in sheet that all persons must sign when they visit the Island, and to require parents to complete a consent form to enable their 15-17 year-old children to visit the island by themselves. Drafts of the recommended sign-in sheet and parental consent form appear at the end of this Islander. The changes: (1) provide additional language regarding the potential risks associated with the use of watercraft on and swimming from the Island, and (2) clarify that minors who visit the Island under the age of 15 must be accompanied by an adult and that unaccompanied minors aged 15-17 must provide a signed parental consent form. The consent form will be available on the Club website, so that it may be easily downloaded/ completed in advance of visits to the island by unaccompanied minors aged 15-17. It will also be available from the Club caretaker. We believe these modifications are important to ensure the safety of visitors to the Island.

At the Club's next meeting, scheduled for 8 p.m. on May 8, 2019, on Sycamore Island, we will ask for approval of these updates to the sign-in sheet. If you would like to discuss, please plan to attend this meeting.

Potomac Downriver Race, Saturday, May 11

The Potomac Downriver Race is co-sponsored by the Canoe Cruisers Association (CCA) and the Potomac Whitewater Racing Center, and is hosted by Sycamore Island. This historic race has been run every year since 1956. It is one of the longest running whitewater races in the nation. Please join us as a racer or as a volunteer.

This is a race for any whitewater paddler, from the pros to parent/child tandem teams, but this is NOT A NOVICE RACE. All participants should have experience in, and be comfortable with, Class III rapids. Participants may enter with any type of a boat provided it is properly outfitted with adequate flotation (air bags) and all occupants of the boat are wearing a helmet and a PFD (life jacket).

This Maryland Canoe & Kayak Racing Series event begins at Rocky Island on the Potomac River just above Wet Bottom Rapid and continues for 7.5 miles to Sycamore Island. At the end of the race, a free T-shirt and a free lunch will be given to all workers and racers, and there will be a ceremony with awards and prizes for the winners.

Get more information on the race and find the link for online registration at:

http://canoecruisers.clubexpress.com/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=394800&module_id=205240. Advance registration is \$20, day of race the registration fee will increase to \$30. Note also that \$5 per paddler must be included in the fee for insurance unless the paddler is a member of the ACA (American Canoe Association).

VOLUNTEER helpers are needed for safety boats and for helping at the registration at Great Falls and at the finish at Sycamore Island. Volunteers will receive the gratitude of the racers, a sense of participating in an important annual river event, a race T-shirt, and lunch. Anyone interested in helping out with this year's race should contact Howard Morland at 703-525-1429 or e-mail hbmorland@aol.com. DO JOIN THE FUN!!

If the Little Falls gauge is over 5 feet, the race will start at Anglers. If the gauge is over 6 feet, the race will be postponed to the following Saturday.

Please do not bring two cars. There is limited parking at the island and a shuttle back to the put-in will be provided. The island parking is needed for the volunteers bringing in the food, drink, t-shirts, awards and other supplies needed for the lunch and awards ceremony.

Sycamore Island Summer Solstice Campout Returns: June 22



Celebrate the longest day of the year on Sycamore Island! Waitlister Angela Hirsch is taking the lead on relaunching the summer solstice campout with fun and games on water and land, a potluck feast, campfire songs and skits, and camping under the stars.

The campout is scheduled for Saturday, June 22 (rain date: June 29). Please sign up at the [Summer Solstice Campout Evite](#) so we know how many folks to expect (adults and kids). While there, consider volunteering to help with one of the activities (see the "what to bring" list, or leave a comment). We'll need volunteers to have a

canoe safety demonstration and trip, souvenir t-shirts (and perhaps tie-dyeing?), a scavenger hunt, lawn games for kids and adults, and plenty of campfire fun.

This event is open to members, waitlisters, and their families. For more information, contact Angela Hirsch at angela.h.hirsch@gmail.com.

Report on Spring Wildflower Walk

by rg Steinman, with photos by David Winer

Twelve of us enjoyed the beautiful sunny, 60 degree weather for our annual Sycamore Island Spring Wildflower walk on Saturday, April 6. We explored a new place along the C&O Canal – the Gold Mine Tract. The trails took us through the high terrace gravel area in the hills above the Berma Road and down through the ravines in the valley. In the high terrace gravel area we observed the smooth, rounded river cobbles (stones)



and upland depressions left behind when the ancient Potomac River receded to where it is today. We also gained an appreciation for the more subtle beauty of the flowering sedges and Wood Rushes. Skunk Cabbage, an uncommon stand of Indian Hellebore, and Ramps greeted us in the stream valleys. The forest floors were covered with Toothworts, Spring Beauty, and an occasional Rue Anemone. And the steep Valley slopes were liberally dotted with Early Saxifrage. Last but not least, we spied Spotted Salamander eggs and Wood Frog Tadpoles in vernal pools. We lunched amid the blooming Toothworts between ribbons of creeks flowing down the valley. It was a pleasant and restorative time in the forest for all.



Report on a Club Exploration of Rupperts Island

by John Noble and Jim Drew, Co-Leaders, with photos by Mark Friedrichs and others



Eight Sycamore Islanders paddled up stream on Saturday, April 13, to Rupperts Island. At the shortest measure, Rupperts is a mere 300 feet from Sycamore Island. We disembarked on the upstream end of the island. From there we walked the 700 foot length of the Island, before returning to our three canoes and a kayak moored amongst large quartz rocks protecting them from the river's current. In addition to Jim Drew and I, our group

included Mark Friedrichs, Jerry Barton, John Beck, Kathy Carroll, Meredith Griggs, and Renee Dunham. This is a compilation of the adventurers' discoveries:

- John Noble: I was particularly interested in the size of the Sycamores. The largest I measured was 14 feet in circumference.
- Kathy Carroll: When I was a little girl I lived in a house next to Lock 8. I loved to play "Explorer" and pretend to be the first human to step onto the islands in the river near my home. With the Ruppert's trip I got to relive that fantasy with a band of trusty adventurers.
- Renee Dunham: I was so happy to slip into my kayak for the first time this summer to putter about with friends amongst the bluebells. Cormorants congregated in impressive numbers on the small rock islands in the river. Ruppert, however, never made a showing. We noted an abandoned camp where the residents, not Ruppert, were invited to leave some years ago. We found Ruppert's Frisbee and a golf ball which he left behind. He also left some trash. I'm afraid we'll have to pick up after him.
- Meredith Griggs: I was so grateful to John and Jim for organizing this outing, my first to Ruppert's. This bare and flood-swept time of year allowed us to walk easily the length and breadth of the island, admiring bluebells (and aberrant whitebells), without poison ivy or tangled vines.



- Mark Friedrichs: Loved the bluebell field of dreams. We noticed the wisps of grass and other flotsam in low branches that had been deposited by high waters covering virtually all of the island – and verified that Rupperts' high point is about 6 feet below that of Sycamore Island



- Jim Drew: A nifty spot - the up river, Virginia side, corner of Rupperts Island has a secluded almost enclosed harbor measuring about 30 by 90 feet. You can paddle your canoe into this harbor when the river level is about 4 feet. Once inside your canoe is protected from view and from the river currents. From this harbor it is easy to get out and explore.

Photo Report on Spring Work-fest

Photos by Sue Super and John Noble





Participants in 2019 Spring Work-fest:

Rebecca Seifried	Dan Schember	Francis Latapie	Justin Sturm
Adele Seifried	Dan Jameson	Jim Drew	Russell Sturm
Ken Haley	Renee Dunham	Geoff Holdridge	Andrew George
Karen Possner	Emily Miller (Guest)	Christian Holdridge	Roman Kulbashny
Abigail Weve	Henry Miller (Guest)	Marianne Ross	Kathy Carroll
George Malusky	Charlie Miller (Guest)	Reckhoff	Bob McCartney
Maureen Melser	John Noble	P. Ross	Steve Scholz
Stan Wiggins	Sue Super	Alissa Stern	Nancy Shute
Gerry Barton	Greg Super	Ayse Doseman	Debby Cooper
Otis Machex	James Wertz	Lucky Marmon	Schultz family
Richard Bertaut	Matt Goldman	L. Brandt	
Susan Dunham	Max Goldman	Friedman	

CARETAKER'S LOG

Monday -- April 15, 2019

Water Level at Little Falls: 5.2 Water Temperature: 63

The ferry is CLOSED.

Friday -- April 19, 2019

Water Level at Little Falls: 5.2 Water Temperature: 61

The ferry is CLOSED.

There is a lot of rain in the forecast so it looks like the ferry will be closed all weekend. Happy Easter!!

Sunday -- April 28, 2019

Water Level at Little Falls: 4.98 Water Temperature: 63

The ferry is open! yeah! It's so nice to hear the sound of the ferry bell ringing again.

We had a nice workfest here two weeks ago. The weather was overcast but the rain held off and we got a lot done. We launched the docks and did some good cleaning up in the Clubhouse. The early birds were new members Adell and Rebecca. They were super helpful in helping me to carry down all of the supplies out of my car. They also helped me carry down the new, and very heavy, parts for the new ferry railing. Renee and Francis led the charge against the invasive plants. I had already pulled up most of the nasty lesser celandine, so they focused on the other invasives like the knotweed and oriental bittersweet. It is thanks to this tireless work against the invasives, year after year, that allow us to have the abundance of native wildflowers that we love so much.

Jim Drew took it upon himself to protect the trees with beaver wire. Gerry Barton brought a tree surgeon friend and they worked with the chainsaw on cutting a path through the fallen sycamore down by the canoe shed. They had a lot of trouble with it and other members pitched in to help, like new member Hans. It took them the entire workfest to get it cleared, but they got that log moved by god!

Kevin and new member, Dan, were instrumental in getting the docks launched, so glad that that is over. We still need to get the swim float out to the middle of the river but that can wait until the water is warmer, and lower.

Roman, Andrew and Lauren all worked together to install new screening in the screen porch. It looks so much nicer now and I enjoyed teaching Lauren some new screen-installation skills. I also taught young Christian how to

replace the broken valve in the outdoor shower. He's on his way to becoming a plumber! Lauren also painted a table.

Special thanks to George for coming out of retirement as entertainment supervisor and cooking all of the yummy food. There just aren't many people as generous as George.

I picked up the new water slide from Dave Winer's house and carried it down the hill. We put the slide together and we all agreed that it was not a slide of high quality. It might not even be worthy of mounting on the swim dock.

The kids had fun collecting all of the driftwood from the floods and building a fire. It's always nice to have a wood fire going during the work day. Greg did his usual thing of working on the brick walkways and his wife, Sue, took it upon herself to take photos, very much appreciated! Stan cleaned the boardwalks and porches, Lucky swept the ferry, and Cathy, Karen and Julia cleaned the kitchen and windows and doors in Clubhouse. John brought the TP and Russ and his son Justin put up the hammock, very important.

I'm sure that I'm forgetting something or someone but the amazing thing is that we did all of this work without completely destroying the Virginia bluebells that were absolutely everywhere.

Thanks to the enthusiasm and hard work of the members, it was another great workfest. As the caretaker, it really makes me happy to see how all the planning, preparation, and attention to detail that I put into it, seem to be really appreciated by the members! It was great to see all the materials I brought down put to good use: Name tags, trash bags for the invasive plants and other trash, paint, screening, drill bits, screws, gas and oil for chainsaw, wire to protect the trees, new come alongs to move heavy tree, new valve for shower, matches, charcoal, cleaning detergent, rags, paper towels, sponges, etc. I think we're ready for summer!

[Minutes of April 10, 2018 Meeting of the Sycamore Island Club](#)

Attendees: Gus Anderson, Debby Crouse, Jim Drew, Marianne Ross, John Noble, Dan Jamieson, Jennie Rabinowitz, Bill Eichbaum, Maureen McElroy, Paul McElroy, Anne Waidmann, David Winer, Meredith Griggs, Mark Friedrichs, Renee Dunham, Joe Kildea, Tryon Wells, John Membrino, Sherry Fizdale, Gerry Barton, Amber Rickhoff, Star Mitchell, Richard Bertaut, Karen Possner, Cecily Abram, Steve Newman, Eric Aaserud, Joe Hage, Lucky Marmon

Club President Richard Bertaut called the meeting to order. Attendees introduced themselves. The Minutes of the March, 2019 meeting were approved unanimously without amendment.

Membership Issue: Joe Kildea, who failed to pay his membership dues on time and thereby lost his membership in the Sycamore Island Club, has since paid his dues. He requested to be reinstated as a member. Joe attended the meeting and apologized for his failure to pay dues in a timely manner. Members in attendance voted overwhelmingly to reinstate Joe. There were three "no" votes.

New Members: Membership Chairman Anne Waidmann introduced some members of the following eight families who had become eligible for regular membership. All were approved unanimously.

Dan Jamieson and Jennie Rabinowitz: Joined in 2014 with Bill Marmon as sponsor, and were oriented on June 30 that year. Recommended by Rachel Rudy and Lisa Catelone & Rudolfo Castro. They have spent a lot of time on the Island as Waitlisters; Rachel says they have attended nearly every workfest. Dan is a pulmonary and critical care doctor at Georgetown who grew up canoeing and kayaking on the Potomac. Jennie is a former public defender originally from New York. They have three children. Elijah is 11, Naomi is 8 and Jonah will be 1 in May. Jonah's middle name is River, so they expect he'll be right at home on the island! The older two attend the

Washington Waldorf School.

Avi Garbow and Nancy Anderson: Joined in 2014, oriented in May, 2014. Recommended by Molly Newberry, Paul Hagen and Bill Eichbaum. Avi grew up in Arlington and Alexandria, and is an environmental lawyer. He served as General Counsel at EPA under President Obama, and recently joined Patagonia as their first-ever Environmental Advocate. Nancy is a lawyer with a national civil rights organization based in DC. They have three children, Dylan (18), Tai (15) and Cady (12). They have participated actively at Sycamore as Waitlisters, and look forward to spending more time on the Island and contributing in many ways to the longevity and collegiality of the club.

Debby and Bob Cooper: Joined in 2014 with Linda Phillips as sponsor, oriented in May, 2014. Recommended by Maureen Jeffreys and Louis Boorstin. The Coopers live just up the hill from Sycamore Island in Glen Echo Heights. They have three children, Wes (17), Pierson (13) and Avery (10). They say access to the Island has allowed them all to connect more with nature and their children to experience childhood as it was meant to be-- swimming, fishing, kayaking, watching birds and swinging on the hammock and rope swing. They look forward to using the Island more frequently and continuing to soak up all it has to offer.

Eric and Amy Aaserud: Joined in 2014 with Joe O'Boyle as sponsor, oriented in 2018. Recommended by Steve Newman and Madeleine Carter. The Aaseruds have been frequent relief caretakers during their time on the Waiting List and are very excited to become Regular Members. In fact, Madeleine reports that over the past three years, Eric has served as relief caretaker more frequently than most members! Steve looks forward to adding some potentially series bass fisherman (and fisherwomen) to our ranks upon their membership. Their sons Connor (16) and Grant (13) are scholar-athletes at Whitman and Pyle, respectively. Grant made the state ODP soccer team and is travelling to Scotland this spring to play soccer there. The family can't be at our April meeting as they will be in Scotland to cheer Grant on and spend time with family there.

Amber and Hans Rickhoff: Joined in 2016 with Jennifer & Davey Hearn as sponsors. Oriented June 12, 2016. Recommended by Annie Farquhar and Lauren Bauer. The Rickhoffs have three boys; Townes is 9, Emmett will soon be 7, and Pierce is 5. Amber grew up on a lake where she canoed weekly; she is delighted to pass that tradition on to her boys. They are completely enchanted with the Island, and the family has made many wonderful memories there already as members of the Waiting List. They look forward to being able to add many more experiences on the Island as Regular Members. Lauren writes, "I am sure their whole family will enjoy the Island to the fullest, and I am equally sure that the Club will be better off for having the Rickhoffs as members."

Maureen and Paul McElroy: Joined in 2016 with Kathleen Carroll as sponsor. Oriented November, 2016, Recommended by Cary Umhau and Vicki Judson. Maureen and Paul have made their home in suburban Maryland for more than 30 years. Maureen is a Marriage and Family Therapist in private practice in Bethesda, while Paul is a lawyer with a firm in DC. They love to pedal, kayak, canoe, row, swim, walk in the woods and spend time with family. The McElroys have instilled a great love of the outdoors in their children; their 26-year-old son has through-hiked the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Coast Trail and is planning his third long-distance hike, this time along the Continental Divide Trail. Their daughter, an avid whitewater kayaker, is 24 and lives in New England. Vicki says, "The McElroys are just the sort of family with a love of outdoors and a kindness to others that is an ideal addition to our membership."

Roland Backhaus and Avery Roselle: Joined in 2016 with John Noble as sponsor. Oriented July 2016, recommended by Meredith Griggs and Marianne Ross. They have two young daughters, MacKenzie and Harper, and are well known to those who use the Bannockburn Pool, where Roland is on the Board and serves as an active member. He manages the grounds work, played a large part in the recent renovation of the pool house, and serves as King Neptune in the annual Memorial Day bike parade! They live near the Island and will be strong members of Sycamore Island Club. Meredith reports that Roland is a former Navy officer and one-time Seal, so likely will be an excellent help on questions of water safety.

Gus Anderson and Debby Crouse: Joined in 2016 with Star Mitchell as sponsor, and oriented Today! Recommended by Mac Thornton and Jennifer & Davey Hearn. Gus is a fervent Potomac River lover and kayaker. He has kayaked all over the USA and has led countless kayak/canoe outings with the Canoe Cruisers Association, where he served as President. Gus and Debbie are conservation-minded and have supported the Potomac Conservancy and Potomac Riverkeeper Network. Gus's first exposure to Sycamore Island was canoeing with his then 5-year-old daughter in the CCA Downriver Race years ago, and is very appreciative of the club for hosting such a lovely finish line picnic event over the decades. Gus's spouse Debby is an avid birder and looks forward to enjoying the wildlife and relaxing on the island. According to Jennifer, they will share their outdoor passions with others and they understand just how magical a place Sycamore Island is.

The following family will be considered for membership at the club's May meeting:

Chris and Kristen Lemos: Joined in 2014 with Richard Bertaut as sponsor, oriented May 2014. Hoping to be at the Spring work fest to meet members for recommendations!

Also on the agenda for consideration in May will be a proposed change in "Senior Membership Requirements." At the March meeting a subcommittee was formed to look further into this proposal. We will have a report and recommendation for the May meeting.

Communications: An email from Phoebe Hamill requests that the Park Service improve the condition of the path coming from MacArthur Blvd. to the canal. She attached two photos.

The Park Service considered the old path to be dangerous because it went under the badly damaged and fragile railroad bridge. The current path will likely be permanent until the bridge is either taken down or repaired. Our Captain might have ideas as to how it can be improved.

Swim Supervisor: Vicki Judson was nominated and unanimously voted in as the new Swim Supervisor. Richard Bertaut emphasized once again the importance of parents being present when their children are swimming in the river. He also reminded members that swimming is not permitted when the water temperature is below 54 degrees or when the river is above 5 ft.

Treasurer's Report: The club's current treasurer was not in attendance, but President Bertaut noted that the Club spent one-fourth of its budget in the first quarter of the 2019. He commended former treasurer Ned Goddard for leaving the Club on a solid footing.

Financial Secretary's Report: Financial Secretary Sherry Fizdale said that all dues were paid with the exception of those owed by the Club's new members.

Captain's Report: Capt. Stan Fowler was not present. Caretaker Joe Hage will take the lead on Sunday's Work Fest and has a list of chores that need to be tackled. As usual, there are the docks to be put into the water. Long term projects include the following: repairing the ferry railing, replacing the ferry rope, adding a side porch, repair of the canoe shed, additional trail lights, and repair of some of the clubhouse siding. George McClusky will once again bring breakfast fixings and cook hamburgers and chicken for the potluck luncheon.

Archivist Report: Archivist Karen Possner reports that we still do not have access to our papers that are stored at the DC Historical Society. She urges any member who comes across a document that he/she feels is important to the Club's history to give it to her.

Karen also noted that there would be a celebration of the new dock at Fletcher's Boat House on Saturday, April 13th at 12:00. She will write about it for the Islander.

Editor of the Islander Mark Friedrichs encourages members to submit articles to the Islander and noted that they do not have to be about the island.

Old Business: David Winer expressed enthusiasm for the Flower Walk held on Saturday, April 6th and extolled the leaders', John Parrish and RG Steinman, knowledge of botany, geology and frogs as well as of flowers. Dave urges more club member to participate in this "spectacular" event.

Defibrillator: There have been discussions in the past about the advisability of keeping an AED (defibrillator) on the Island. New member Dan Jameison, who is a doctor, said it would be an advantage to be able to grab an AED off the wall and deliver a shock to someone suffering a myocardial infarction. Defibrillators cost between \$1,000 and \$2,000. **FYI: Sycamore Island is located at mile 6.5 of the C&O Canal. That is the coordinate that should be given to medical personnel trying to access the Island.**

New Business: Jim Drew and John Noble announced that they would be leading a tour of Rupert's Island on Saturday, April 13th, leaving at 1:00 from the canoe dock.

Down River Race on May 11th: Star Mitchell urges members to volunteer as safety monitors for this fun annual event. Volunteers will receive a free T-shirt and a box lunch.
Contact: Starmitchell@verizon.net.

A big thank-you to Karen Possner for the generous offering of chocolate chip cookies. They were devoured enthusiastically.

The meeting was adjourned.
Respectfully submitted,
Lucky Marmon
Co-recording Secretary

[Planned Update of Sign-In Sheet Providing for Liability Release/Waiver of Claims](#)

I confirm that I have been advised of and am aware of the many risks and dangers of swimming in and using a canoe, kayak, paddleboard, or other watercraft upon the Potomac River (specifically including the extreme danger of venturing near the Little Falls Dam). These include, but are not limited to, accidents relating to entering and exiting the water, putting watercraft into the Potomac, slips and falls, overturning of watercraft, loss of balance, collision with and entrapment by objects in the Potomac, hypothermia, inclement weather, encounters with animals, and activities of other participants. I acknowledge that I have been advised to wear an approved personal flotation device while engaged in water activities and to carry other safety equipment. I confirm that I will not use any watercraft unless I am familiar with it and understand appropriate safety precautions. I further confirm that I understand there are other risks associated with the use of the Sycamore Island Club's facilities, including, but not limited to, walkways, swings, zip-lines, and stairs. Knowing the risks and dangers necessarily involved in swimming in and venturing upon the Potomac River in such watercraft, knowing that unexpected and foreseen dangers may arise during such activity, as well as the risks associated with use of the Sycamore Island Club's facilities, I voluntarily assume all risks of death or injury to my person and my property that may be incurred in connection with or as a result of any activity I undertake on Sycamore Island and in the Potomac.

In consideration of the permission granted to me to enter the Club premises, to swim in the Potomac, and to use a canoe, kayak, or other watercraft belonging to the Club, or to launch such a watercraft from Club premises, I do hereby for myself, my heirs, administrators and assigns, release, remise and discharge the Club and its officers, directors, members, employees, and agents of, from all liability or claims that may arise as a result of

my activities on the Club premises or the Potomac River or during or as a result of my use of the Club, its facilities, or any Club watercraft or watercraft launched from the Club premises, whether due to negligence or any other fault.

Children under the age of 15 are not permitted on the Island without a parent or guardian, who is solely responsible for their safety and conduct. Parents and guardians hereby expressly acknowledge the foregoing risks and dangers, and agree to the above-referenced conditions, on behalf of their children. Children between the ages of 15 and 18 may enter Club Premises if their parent or guardian has executed a Parental Liability Release/Waiver of Claims form (available on the Sycamore Island website or from the Island caretaker) on their behalf.

I have read and understand the foregoing liability release and waiver of claims. In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal.

Island closes at dark. No alcohol, no dogs.

Date	Name (please print)	Signature

[Recommended Parental Liability Release/Waiver of Claims for 15-17 year-olds](#)

I represent that I am the parent or guardian of _____, and that he/she is over age 15. I confirm that I have been advised of and am aware of the many risks and dangers of swimming in and using a canoe, kayak, paddleboard, or other watercraft upon the Potomac River (specifically including the extreme danger of venturing near the Little Falls Dam). These include, but are not limited to, accidents relating to entering and exiting the water, putting watercraft into the Potomac, slips and falls, overturning of watercraft, loss of balance, collision with and entrapment by objects in the Potomac, hypothermia, inclement weather, encounters with animals, and activities of other participants. I further confirm that I understand there are other risks associated with the use of the Sycamore Island Club's facilities, including but not limited to swings, zip-lines, and stairs. Knowing the risks and dangers necessarily involved in swimming in and venturing upon the Potomac River in such watercraft, and knowing that unexpected and foreseen dangers may arise during such activity, as well as the risks associated with use of the Sycamore Island Club's facilities, I and my child voluntarily assume all risks of death or injury to my child and his/her property that may be incurred in connection with or as a result of any activity he/she undertakes on Sycamore Island and in the Potomac. I agree that my child will wear an approved personal flotation device while engaged in water activities and will employ other safety equipment, as appropriate. I confirm that my child will not use any watercraft unless he/she is familiar with it and understands appropriate safety precautions.

In consideration of the permission granted to me to enter the Club premises, to swim in the Potomac, and to use a canoe, kayak, or other watercraft belonging to the Club, or to launch such a watercraft from Club premises, I and my child do hereby for ourselves, our heirs, administrators and assigns, release, remise and discharge the Club and its officers, directors, members, employees, and agents of, from all from all liability or claims that may arise as a result of my activities on the Club premises or during or as a result of my use of the Club, its facilities, or any Club watercraft or watercraft launched from the Club premises, whether due to

negligence or any other fault.

I have read and understand the foregoing request and release. In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal.

Printed name of Parent/Legal Guardian

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

Name of minor child

Birthdate of minor child

Date



Islander Editor: Mark Friedrichs; suggestions or contributions of content or photos welcome to mark.d.friedrichs@gmail.com
